



SKOKHOLM ISLAND

Systematic Bird List 2005

Recording period 29 March to 7 October

Omitting the period 10-18 April when island staff had to return to the mainland.

RED-THROATED DIVER

One juvenile seen from the lighthouse on the 29th September.

FULMAR

Showed a further increase in numbers in study plots from 2004. All birds had vacated the breeding sites by the 19th September.

MANX SHEARWATER

Several ashore the night of Wardens arrival on 29th March. The last adults to be heard were on the 11th September. The last fledgling was seen on the 27th of September, a fresh carcass was found on the 6th of October. Several fledglings were found with Puffinosis. Very few incidences of birds hitting the lighthouse occurred.

STORM PETREL

The first adult was heard purring on the 2nd May. Fledglings were still being recorded on 6th October.

GANNET

Seen daily offshore throughout the period of Wardens occupation. Two adults were seen to land on rocks at The Dents on the 28th August for several minutes.

CORMORANT

Between one and ten were seen throughout the season with several small roosts present regularly. Several flocks passed overhead towards the south east in September, 17 on the 23rd and 12 on the 27th.

SHAG

Between one and six present most days feeding just off shore or roosting on favoured rocks such as The Stack.

GREY HERON

June saw visits by individuals on the 10th and 26th and two birds together on the 21st. Each time the birds circled a lot but were seen off by gulls.

SNOW GOOSE

Two 'winged' birds visited the island occasionally, usually with a flock of Canada Geese. One bird stayed on the island throughout late May and early June.

CANADA GEESE

Four were present upon arrival to the island and these built to twenty by the 19th of April. Nine pairs bred this year and seemed to favour nest sites close to footpaths, to the dismay of visitors! No young were raised. Numbers started to decline through July and by August birds were visiting intermittently. Flocks came in to roost on the island throughout September and the beginning of October, often flying in after dark. On the 5th October forty were seen feeding on The Neck.

SHELDUCK

Two pairs were present upon arrival and remained throughout April and May, sometimes being joined by a third pair. By June only one pair remained with another visiting through early June. No birds were seen throughout July, August, September and the start of October.

WIDGEON

Four were present on North Pond on the 4th April but did not stay long. Another was seen on North Pond on the 6th of May.

TEAL

Eleven were present on the 2nd of April, two on the 4th and 20th and one on the 22nd of April. Two were seen on North Pond on the 2nd of June, one on the 4th of September and three on the 22nd.

MALLARD

Two pairs were present throughout April, May and June. One nest was found during a Gull count of The Bog in May. A Duck and three ducklings were seen in the pond at the Well enclosure on the 11th June, but the young were not seen again. Two birds were seen intermittently through July, none in August, eight on the 4th September and two on the 8th.

SHOVELER

Three on North Pond on the 2nd of April and six on the 4th. Two were seen frequently on the pond through the rest of April and one occasionally until mid May. No birds were after May 15th.

COMMON SCOTER

Five were seen on the 9th of May and one on the 12th. Ten passed by on the 25th of June and four on the 28th. Several sightings were made in July with a peak of twenty five on the 31st. Fifteen were seen on the 7th of August and thirty five on the 12th. The last were seen on the 14th September when eight birds were recorded.

SPARROWHAWK

One on May 7th and then none seen again until September. One was seen daily between September 7th and 6th of October, often hunting around the observatory buildings. Two were seen chasing each other over the buildings on the 2nd October.

COMMON BUZZARD

The breeding pair were present upon arrival on the island and one or both were seen most days throughout the season. No young were produced. Three were enjoying some warm thermals on October 5th.

KESTREL

One juvenile seen 8th of August. An adult seen feeding on a mouse at the quarry on the 27th of August and again around the quarry on the 30th. One adult seen around the lighthouse on the 4th and 5th of September.

MERLIN

The first was seen on the 7th of April, then a male on the 3rd of May and another on the 7th. None were seen again until a female on the 23rd of September and another on the 1st of October.

PEREGRINE FALCON

A pair was present throughout the season although they failed to breed successfully. One or both of the birds were seen most days throughout the season.

WATER RAIL

The first was seen on the 8th of August at the Well enclosure where it showed very well and remained for eight days until the 12th. The next was recorded from the 9th of September and between one and five were recorded daily from then on until Wardens departure in early October. By which time birds were present at the ponds and in favoured patches of Bracken.

MOORHEN

At least two birds were seen throughout April and one pair bred at North Pond raising two broods. At least two young from the first brood fledged. Two adults, two juveniles and four young chicks were seen together on North pond on the 3rd of September, but none were seen after the 22nd.

OYSTERCATCHER

Present upon the wardens return to the island. At least 28 pairs bred but suffered losses of chicks through predation, at least eight fledged. From mid-August on birds roosted at favoured sites around the coast. Small roosts of up to five birds were present around the coast until the island was vacated.

RINGED PLOVER

One individual was seen on the north coast on the 11th June, and 2 were seen on the 11th of August.

GOLDEN PLOVER

The only sighting was of two birds at North gully on the 10th of May.

LAPWING

There were no breeding birds and the only sighting was of one bird on the 11th June.

PURPLE SANDPIPER

Two on the 9th of September and one on the 20th.

DUNLIN

Between one and seven birds seen on three occasions in May. One on the 3rd of June and individuals on three occasions in July. None were recorded in August. Between one and four birds were seen on four occasions through September and no more were seen after the 21st of September.

SNIPE

One or two birds were seen on three occasions in April and one at the end of May. The next bird recorded was an individual on the 5th of September.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT

One bird present on the 28th of June.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT

Two were seen on the 29th of April and two again on the 30th. Two were still present on the 1st of May and three were recorded on the 3rd and 4th of May. An individual was seen on the 26th and 27th of June. None were seen through July and August and an individual was recorded on the 13th of September.

WHIMBREL

Whimbrels were seen daily throughout late April between three and twenty five birds being present. They were recorded on twelve dates through May with between one and five birds being seen. Individuals were recorded on three dates on July and two dates in August. Between one and eight birds were seen on twelve dates through September and by Wardens departure one bird had been present in South Bay for six days.

CURLEW

One or two birds were seen on the last three days of March. Between two and seven birds were recorded nearly every day throughout April and between one and four birds on thirteen dates in May. One or two birds were recorded on seven dates in June and seven birds were present on the 27th of June. Recorded almost daily through July, August and September with peak numbers being twenty on 29th July, between four and nineteen birds were present through September. Between five and fourteen birds were being recorded until Wardens departure.

SPOTTED REDSHANK

An individual was present on North Pond between the 3rd and 4th of September.

COMMON REDSHANK

An individual was recorded on the 12th and 13th of June and another on the 9th of July and 9th of September.

GREENSHANK

One on the 2nd of June was the only bird recorded.

COMMON SANDPIPER

Individuals on the 5th of May and 2nd of June. Three were seen on the 8th of August and again on the 10th of September.

TURNSTONE

Five were seen on the 13th of September.

ARCTIC SKUA

One on the 8th of September.

BLACK-HEADED GULL

One bird landing at the lighthouse on the 10th of July.

COMMON GULL

One from the lighthouse on May 30th.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

Large numbers of birds were present from the time of Wardens arrival. The annual gull count recorded 2417 apparently occupied nests, breeding was more successful than 2003 with 0.27 young fledged per nest. Few birds were present from mid September onwards.

HERRING GULL

The annual count recorded 255 apparently occupied nests which is a slight decrease on 2003 figures. 0.57 fledglings were produced per nest which is an increase in productivity on 2003 figures. Numbers decreased through late September with only a handful being present by the end of the month.

GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL

A slight increase in numbers since 2003 was recorded with 68 apparently occupied nests, these produced 0.76 fledglings per nest which is a decrease in productivity. Large roosts formed in early September on Northern Plain, these declined by the end of the month.

KITTIWAKE

Present offshore throughout the year, most likely breeding birds from Skomer. Seen or heard most days feeding around the coast with flocks of up to 50 seen regularly. Few birds were seen through September.

GUILLEMOT

First seen on land on April the 4th. Annual study plots were carried out which showed a slight increase on previous years. The young had left by late July after which a couple of individuals were seen on the sea.

RAZORBILL

First seen on land on 4th of April. Annual study plots were carried out which showed a slight increase on previous years. After the young had left by late July only a few individuals were seen on the sea.

PUFFIN

Puffins were present in large numbers around the coast from the Wardens arrival with 2300 being counted on the sea on March the 31st. Birds were first seen on land on April the 9th and from late April onwards some birds were present on land every day. The first Puffin bringing in fish was seen on the 28th of May, the first young was recorded on July the 3rd. The last bird on land was recorded on July 30th, after which a few individuals were seen on the sea.

FERAL/RACING PIGEON

Small groups often seen passing over the island, on one occasion a group were ambushed by a Peregrine at Twinlet Bay. One or two were present on the island from April to July.

WOOD PIGEON

One or two were seen sporadically throughout the season from the day of Wardens arrival until the island was vacated.

TURTLE-DOVE

Two sightings of single birds in September, possibly the same bird. One on the 2nd and again on the 4th in the same location.

COLLARED DOVE

Single bird present between 20th and 22nd of April. One or two birds were recorded on nine occasions in May, seven sightings of individual birds were made in June, July and August. Six individual birds were recorded in September the last on the 25th.

SWIFT

One on the 4th of May, two on the 9th and 10th, one on the 13th and two on the 28th. Three on June the 1st and eight on the 18th. Large numbers passed over the island feeding on June the 25th and 28th with

over 30 being recorded. A few sightings in July with two on the 14th and 28th and one on the 31st. Two were seen on August the 11th and one on September the 4th.

KINGFISHER

One bird was watched feeding in South Haven for an hour on the evening of the 17th of August.

SKYLARK

Were present from arrival, song flight displays forming a great welcome to the island for the Wardens. Present throughout the season and seen daily, the Common Bird Census identified six territories. Few were seen through August but sightings increased in September and by the beginning of October between six and twelve were being recorded daily.

SAND MARTIN

A few were seen in late April with eight birds recorded on three dates and in May six birds passing through on four dates. Three birds on autumn passage were seen on August 7th and 8th and another individual on the 27th, a couple of sightings were recorded in September. A larger passage started in early October with between twenty and two hundred birds being recorded each day until the island was vacated on the 7th.

SWALLOW

First seen on 9th April and then seen daily from 19th April, with numbers fluctuating between ten and forty two. By mid June passage was tailing off. Five pairs bred on the island this year which is an increase on the usual two or three pairs. Pairs made use of the usual sites in the Garage and Smoking Room at the Lighthouse and other pairs bred in the Red Hut, a bird hide and within an old water tank by the buildings. All nests fledged young with five fledging from the garage. Birds were seen passing through on September the 7th and 12th. From September 23rd birds were seen passing through daily until the island was vacated with large numbers recorded on October the 2nd and 5th.

HOUSE MARTIN

The first were seen on the 1st of May, with eight sightings in total in May of between two and six birds. Two birds were recorded on June the 6th and an individual on June the 13th, another individual on July the 3rd. None were recorded in August. Between two and six birds were seen on two dates in September and two dates in October.

TREE PIPIT

One individual recorded on the 27th of July.

MEADOW PIPIT

Present daily from day of Wardens arrival. Up to 45 present daily through the early part of April. Around 30 territory holding males were recorded on the Common Bird Census. The first noticeable passage was recorded on August the 31st. Through late September and until the island was vacated between 20-45 birds were seen daily.

ROCK PIPIT

Present throughout the season. Good numbers of breeding pairs were recorded on the Common Bird Census and through general observations. Between 20-40 were seen daily throughout the end of September until the island was vacated.

YELLOW WAGTAIL

Individuals on June the 27th, August the 1st and four on September the 11th.

GREY WAGTAIL

Two on the 14th of July, singles on the 25th and 27th of July and another individual on the 7th of September.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Six were present upon the Wardens return to the island, increasing to four pairs by the beginning of April. These were present throughout the season. Small parties passed through in September with up to 30 birds being recorded.

WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba alba*

No spring records. Recorded from September the 11th until the island was vacated. Between two and six birds being recorded on ten dates.

WREN

Present upon the Wardens return and seen daily throughout the season. The Common Birds Census located eleven territories, numbers reached a peak in late summer and numbers declined through late September and early August.

DUNNOCK

Not recorded until the 6th of October when two were present around the buildings.

ROBIN

Between one and two were seen daily from the day of Wardens arrival until the 9th of April. Four were recorded on the 29th of April and singles on May the 4th, 6th, 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th and another on the 5th of June. Autumn return began on August the 11th and between one and three birds were present until the 3rd of September. After this larger numbers began to build up and by the end of September 50 birds were estimated to be present.

COMMON REDSTART

Singles on May the 10th and 13th.

BLACK REDSTART

Single on October the 6th.

WHINCHAT

Between three and six birds recorded on four dates in September and early October.

STONECHAT

Single female on the 29th of June, another single on July the 4th and a juvenile on the 11th. Three were recorded on the 29th of September and three again on the 2nd of October.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe*

Four were seen on the Wardens arrival increasing to twelve by the end of the month. Present daily throughout the season with numbers increasing occasionally as parties of migrants passed through. The Common Birds Census located 14 territory holding males. Several pairs raised second broods. Passage was noted from late August through September, declining by October when between two and four birds were being recorded.

GREENLAND WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*

First recorded on September the 4th when four were seen. Individuals on September the 8th and 12th. Eight were recorded on September the 26th.

BLACKBIRD

Present throughout the season with at least four territories, several of which successfully raised second broods. Fewer were seen in September, possibly as birds become more elusive whilst moulting. Ten birds were recorded on October the 6th.

SONG THRUSH

A single seen on the 1st of May and not recorded again until September when an individual was recorded on the 2nd and five on the 6th.

SEDGE WARBLER

First recorded on the 6th of April when a single was seen from then through to the 8th. Recorded again on the 23rd with between two and six birds being seen each day until the 3rd of May. From then on resident birds were taking up territories. Five pairs bred around the damp areas and in shrubs by the buildings. The well watched pair at the Well enclosure fledged three young in late July. Numbers began to decline from mid September until the 25th after which no more were seen.

REED WARBLER

Single on the 1st of June, two on the 5th and a single again on the 6th. Singles on July the 19th, 27th, 29th, 31st, August the 21st and September the 4th.

WHITETHROAT

Singles on ten dates in May and six dates in August. Two were present on the 4th of September and singles on the 17th and 20th.

LESSER WHITETHROAT

A single present on the 7th of August.

GARDEN WARBLER

Singles on the 29th and 30th of September.

BLACKCAP

One male was present upon the Wardens arrival and remained for two days. No more were recorded until the 20th of April when six were present. Between one and ten recorded between April the 20th and the 30th. Between one and three recorded on six dates in May. An individual on September the 11th and again on October the 6th.

CHIFFCHAFF

One or two present on eight dates in April with an influx on the 29th of ten birds. Recorded in small numbers each day between the 1st and 16th of May. Two were seen on the 25th of May. One or two recorded on four dates in July and between one and three on nine dates in August. September saw one or two birds present on nine dates. Numbers increased in early October with between eight and sixteen birds present each day until the Wardens departure.

WILLOW WARBLER

Large numbers present on the Wardens arrival (March 29th), with 30 being sighted daily until the 5th of April when numbers declined to 12, then onwards between five and fifteen birds being recorded until mid May. Between one and three birds were recorded on nine dates in June. Return migration was noted from 27th July onwards when between one and thirty birds were seen almost daily until the island was vacated in early October.

GOLDCREST

One bird recorded on the 10th of May and singles again on the 18th and 27th of July and the 4th and 9th of September. Numbers increased from September the 27th when between eight and twenty birds were recorded daily until the island was vacated.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER

The first was bird seen was on the 29th of April and another on the 30th. There were up to six birds seen on twelve dates in May and singles were seen on four dates in June. None were recorded in July and then between one and four were recorded on eight occasions in August. Birds were recorded on seven dates in September with five being present on the 1st. The last bird was seen on September the 20th.

PIED FLYCATCHER

An individual was recorded on the 23rd of April. Two were present on the 5th of June. A single bird was seen on the 4th of September and two on the 25th. Two were recorded on the 6th of October.

GREAT TIT

The only record was of two birds seen in the garden around the buildings on the 31st of March.

CHOUGH

Present throughout the season with one pair breeding within the favoured cave making use of a nest box. They raised three young which were first seen on the 12th of June. The family were seen together daily until late August when they started to break up.

JACKDAW

Between thirty and fifty were seen daily in late March and early April. By mid April numbers stopped fluctuating and those present were presumed breeders. Larger numbers were seen again from mid July onwards with fifty to sixty birds recorded on three dates in August. By late September and early October numbers had declined to about four or five birds.

CARRION CROW

At least two pairs were present for most of the season and twelve was the highest number recorded on the 31st of May. Number declined through September with between two and four birds being seen daily.

RAVEN

One pair was present on the island throughout the season and nested on a ledge at Steep Bay just outside the cave where the Chough nested. They fledged five young in mid May and the family of all seven made quite a sight. From September the 7th onwards their numbers were swelled by visiting birds and between sixteen and thirty three birds were seen daily. The visiting birds tended to remain around the lighthouse and Quarry and were quite a spectacle.

STARLING

Birds were present throughout the season and at least two pairs nested in cliffs around Twinlet bay. By the end of June numbers had increased with ten to twelve birds being recorded daily. These were swollen on some days by visiting birds and sixty were present on June the 28th and forty five the following day. In July and August large numbers were seen most days with between eight and sixty being recorded daily until mid September. After which numbers declined and between two and four were seen each day. Another influx of twenty was recorded on October the 6th.

HOUSE SPARROW

One individual seen on the 19th of July.

CHAFFINCH

Three were present on the Wardens return but were not seen after the 31st of March. A female was seen around the buildings for three days in early July the 2nd to the 4th. Four were recorded on the 2nd of October.

GREENFINCH

An individual was recorded on the 6th of June, four were seen on the 8th of September and another four on the 5th of October.

GOLDFINCH

One was seen on the 31st of March and the 23rd of April. Recorded on seven dates in May with a peak of twelve on the 4th. Two were present on the 6th of June, 31st of July and again on the 29th of September. Early October saw more birds with twelve on the 2nd, fifteen on the 5th and eight on the 6th.

LINNET

One on the 23rd of April, another single on the 2nd of May. Two on the 28th of May, a single on the 3rd of June, four on the 4th and another single on the 14th. More singles on the 7th and 31st of August. A flock of twenty one birds was seen on the 8th of September and another of ten on the 6th of October.

REED BUNTING

First seen on the 4th of May, a pair took up territory around the Well enclosure and one or both of them were seen most days throughout the season. It is thought that their breeding attempt was unsuccessful as no young were seen.