

# Calf of Man Bird Observatory



Annual Report **2017**



Manx National Heritage  
*Eiraght Ashoonagh Vannin*

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# Map of the Calf of Man



# The Calf of Man Bird Observatory

The Calf of Man is a rocky islet extending to approximately 616 acres and it is situated half a mile off the south-west coast of the Isle of Man in the middle of the Irish Sea. The Calf is owned and administered by Manx National Heritage (MNH) and it is run as a Bird Observatory and Nature Reserve. The island is an ideal place to study many aspects of bird life, with around 33 species breeding annually, and it is located on one of western Britain's major migration routes. Breeding seabirds include Manx Shearwater, Fulmar, Razorbill and Shag and colonies of the three larger *Larus* gull species. You can also see a variety of species around the island such as Peregrine, Hen Harrier, Chough, Raven, as well as other rare and unexpected migrants.

Since 1959 organised, ornithological work has been carried out on the Calf of Man from spring to autumn each year by wardens. As an accredited Bird Observatory since 1962, the Observatory meets British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) requirements. Currently, MNH contracts Manx Wildlife Trust to employ an Ornithological Warden and an Estate Warden to provide a seasonal presence on the Calf from March to November. Bird ringing is an integral part of the Observatory's work and ringing demonstrations are often held for the public.

*Between 1959 and 2015, 246,733 birds (159 species) have been ringed on the island. Trapping is carried out using a variety of conventional traps including Heligoland and Crow Traps and mist nets.*

## Visitor Information

The Estate Warden and Ornithological Warden are in charge of the day to day running of the islet and visitors must at all times follow their advice and instructions.

The Calf of Man is open to the public daily. The Manx Museum and National Trust and its Bye-Laws, require that certain conditions **MUST** be observed at all times. These regulations are made in the best interests of preserving those aspects of the Calf of Man that we all treasure and enjoy.

**PLEASE HELP US TO MAINTAIN THIS BEAUTIFUL ENVIRONMENT BY OBSERVING THE FOLLOWING:**

- There must be no interference with bird life or other wildlife.
- Climbing tackle and climbing is strictly prohibited.
- Dogs are not permitted.
- No camping and lighting of fires.
- Vessels must not be left unattended at any of the harbours at any time to ensure that the Calf visitor/supply boats have access to the harbours at all times.
- No fishing from 1st April to 31st July.
- Visitors must leave no litter.
- From May to July visitors must keep to paths and tracks and keep out of enclosed fields.
- Manx National Heritage expects the behaviour of visiting parties to be of a high standard. In the event of misbehaviour by any group, individual, or lack of adequate control by the adult in charge of children, the wardens have the authority to terminate the visit and ask the individual/ group to leave the islet at their own expense.
- Manx National Heritage operates a no smoking policy at all of its properties.

Visitor accommodation is available in the Observatory during the summer season – normally, from May to mid-September. The accommodation consists of self-catering hostel style accommodation for up to 8 people with a visitor kitchen, lounge and log burner. Intending over-night visitors must pre-book accommodation by contacting the Calf Bookings Officer, Manx National Heritage, Manx Museum, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 3LY. Tel: 01624 648015. During the summer season, private operators run visits to the Calf from Port St Mary. The vessels operate depending on weather conditions and demand. For more information, please contact:

- Steve Clague – Port St Mary Boat Excursions (Scraayl) Tel: (07624) 490615
- Chris Burton & Jason Fleming – Shona Boat Trips  
email: [shonaboattrips@manx.net](mailto:shonaboattrips@manx.net)  
Tel: (07624) 322765 or (07624) 480682
- Caroline & Phil Roriston – Isle of Man & Calf Boat Trips (Vagabond)  
Tel: 07624 490488 or 07624 466522

# **Calf of Man Bird Observatory**

## **Annual Report 2017**

Ornithological Warden – Aron Sapsford

Estate Warden – Nathan Wilkie

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# Wardens' Report

We arrived on the Calf on the 15<sup>th</sup> March during a brief weather window, our arrival having been delayed a couple of days due to strong winds. We were accompanied by Geoff Mitchell and Shaun



Murphy (MNH), Lara Howe (MWT) and Kevin Scott, who all came along to help get everything up and running. Their original plan had been to stay for a day or two, but with the forecast looking decidedly unfavourable for

the next few days, it was decided that they would just have about four hours ashore before they needed to catch the boat back to the main Island. Thankfully there were no major issues and so, once they had departed, Nathan and I were left to get acquainted with the Calf. I had been warden here previously (1988 - 1990), but this was Nathan's first time on the Calf and so much of the first couple of weeks was spent familiarising with the island and enjoying a good early spring passage of birds.

There were a few minor maintenance jobs that needed attending to around the Observatory buildings but otherwise things had held up well during the winter. One of our first tasks was to begin clearing several decades' worth of tree and brush cuttings that had been left under the Plantation and around the walled gardens, which resulted in

several very large bonfires. In early April we were joined by the first of this year's volunteers, Belinda Lloyd (the Estate Warden in 2004), who stayed for a couple of weeks to assist with the bird ringing. Kate Hawkins (MNH) also joined us for a few days to explain the process and work plan for the continuation of the Long-tail monitoring programme and to pass on her considerable experience prior to her retirement later in the year. We wish Kate and her family all the best with their move back to the UK and hope that you may come back from time to time and visit.

Around mid-April the Puffin decoys were deployed at three sites along the coast, with a team of "puffin planters" assisting with the main colony at Kione ny Halby, whilst a working group from Thomas Miller Investments spent a weekend having a



'painting party' and doing a fantastic job in getting the inside of the Observatory spruced up in time for the first guests to arrive. Early in the season we resurrected an 'old' Calf of Man Facebook page and began posting about our wildlife observations and conservation work, as well as general 'life on the Calf' stories. These proved hugely popular, and we have received a great response to these posts with many messages of support, and by October had received over 1,500 "Likes". One of the additional benefits that has come from the page was the interest in volunteering on the Calf and the first of the local 'summer volunteers', Mike Prior arrived for a two-week stint at the

end of April; he clearly enjoyed himself, as he came back twice more during the year. Our first paying guests, the Bowers, who have been staying on the Calf for many years now, arrived at the end of April, the start of what was to be a busy summer for those wishing to stay at the Observatory.

Early May was full of birds, and it was great to have a group from the Manx Ornithological Society staying with us during one of the birding highlights of the year – the capture of an adult male Red-footed Falcon. This was followed a few days later by three Spoonbill that flew over the back of the Observatory late in the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup>: a most unexpected new species for the Calf. 2017 was undoubtedly one of the best spring passages seen on the Calf for many years with a constant stream of warblers passing through, along with several Pied Flycatchers and the best spring passage for Redstart for a while; at the end of the month, we also had a number of rarities, including Subalpine Warbler, Red-breasted Flycatcher and Greenish Warbler. The first in a good run of Basking Shark records were also seen off the Calf coastline and we were joined by Alyce Lazenbury, an MSc student from Bangor University, who spent the next six weeks working on a breeding census of Manx Shearwater.



A brief interlude came at the beginning of June, when we were whisked away from the Calf on a surprise 3-day VIP trip to watch the UEFA Champions League Cup Final between Real Madrid and Juventus in Cardiff, courtesy of Heineken PLC.

This was a truly memorable experience and one neither of us will forget for a long time. Many thanks to all those involved in making it possible, including Julia Cullen & Shaun Murphy at MNH, David Bryant and Natalie Perfitt at Exposure.com and of course Heineken PLC for sponsoring us and making the whole experience possible. We arrived back on the Calf just in time for a second Greenish Warbler to be found the very next day. A

re-scheduled trip mid-month saw an overnight visit from His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor of the Isle of Man, and Lady Gozney, who were finally able to enjoy the Calf on a calm weather day. His Excellency, who is a keen birdwatcher,



was able to enjoy good views of a Puffin below the Lighthouses and a large Basking Shark feeding in the Sound, as well as the usual Calf specialities of Hen Harrier, Chough, Peregrine and Raven. Saskia Mori, a second MSc student from Bangor also joined us for a 3-week study of Grey Seals.

During 2017 we contributed to a survey of seabird breeding numbers around the Isle of Man, organised by Manx BirdLife and it was useful to meet up with Richard Hill and Kim Bowman who were working on the project and join them on a round Calf boat trip to monitor seabird numbers. Thanks go to Kim for masterminding several later trips into the less-accessible Shag and Razorbill colonies along the Calf's west coast, to Bob Taylor for excellent boatmanship in getting us ashore

safely and to Neil Morris of MBL for allowing us use of their time and the boat. We had hoped to organise an evening pelagic trip to search for rafting Manxies and see if we could tape-lure Stormies at sea, but unfortunately the weather and availability of the boat never coincided – perhaps next year?

By mid-June the Manx Shearwater burrow surveying was complete and our efforts turned towards monitoring Fulmar, Guillemots and the three large gull species. Again, teaming up with MBL proved particularly useful, and we were able to “return the favour” by hosting Kim for a Manxie and Storm Petrel ringing session. Mid-month also saw the start of an excellent run of Risso’s Dolphin records, with sightings continuing throughout July and into the first half of August and sometimes involving several pods of animals. June also saw the first of two visits by Dave Fisher, who continued his (and Pat Griffiths’) 17 years’ worth of work on repairing the dry-stone walls. It was fantastic to learn from his wealth of knowledge and contribute to almost finishing the Seafield wall.

In early July, the first of our long-term volunteers arrived for the



autumn, with Mike Haigh, an experienced bird ringer helping until mid-August. Stuart Cowper arrived to assist with seabird ringing for a week in early July and hopefully he can come out again, a little earlier, next year. A visit to Kitterland identified the presence of ‘a number’

of long-tails and this necessitated several return visits to deploy bait in the hope of eradicating them from the islet. Alex Dodds a “C” ringer, spent the last two weeks of July helping with the Storm Petrel ringing before jetting off to the Caribbean to experience some hurricanes! During the last week of July we embarked on the major task of dismantling and completely rebuilding Heligoland 1 and are particularly grateful to Mike Prior for masterminding the project. Paul Corrin spent a week helping to clear out and tidy the outbuildings and along with several other volunteers assisted Mike Prior with completing the Heligoland rebuild.

Both Nathan and I had time off for annual leave during August, sadly not visiting the Caribbean, but it was particularly helpful having Mike Haigh and the other volunteers around to help cover our holiday absences. Traditionally, August should be when autumn migration starts to pick up again, however the weather had other ideas and it wasn't until the end of month that things started to happen, with our first record for the year of Olive-backed Pipit being seen on 21st. Although the weather wasn't ideal for birds there were plenty of 'outside' jobs to do and with Bethan Pugh, Sandra Kaighin, Pippa Barlin and Ally Prior all joining us as volunteers, we managed to complete a great many tasks; during the month tasks included the annual sheep round up and shearing, white washing the courtyard walls and gable ends of the farmhouse,



painting a number of windows and gates, more bonfires after several cutting sessions on the Fuchsia around the Observatory and a start was made on coppicing the willows at the Top Withy. August was also an eventful month for the wrong reasons, involving a tractor incident and a night-time emergency evacuation of a guest by lifeboat. Thankfully the two separate incidents weren't too serious, and we can look back and learn from the experiences.

September saw the arrival of Olivia Pargeter, who joined us for a nine-week stint as migration assistant and thankfully we had a good passage of birds to keep us busy. The Manx Ornithological Society visited during the second weekend and again managed to time their trip to coincide with an excellent arrival of birds. However, in general the weather continued with prolonged periods of windy & wet conditions followed by just a day or two of calm. During these lulls in between storms, we were often inundated by birds, and it was great having Olivia and Pippa's help during this time. Helen Ashcroft joined us for the third week of September as the last of our local 'summer volunteers' and at the end of the month Hayden Bridgeman and Jamie Wyler-Owen arrived for a seven week stay monitoring the breeding Grey Seals.

At the beginning of October, a Longtail was discovered around the composting bins at the Observatory and a very busy couple of weeks ensued deploying a contingency grid to try and trap the animal and ensure there weren't any others present. October also saw a series of storms heading our way with Hurricane Ophelia mid-month, followed shortly afterwards by Storm Brian. Thankfully, neither storm did too much structural damage, however Ophelia caused considerable loss of life to the seal pups that were in their nursery areas along the south-west coast of the Calf, with an estimated 20% missing after the storm. During the second half of the month, we enjoyed an excellent passage

of thrushes moving through and an Olive-backed Pipit trapped in the garden on 23<sup>rd</sup> was our second record of the year but the first to be ringed on the Calf.

In early November we were joined again by Paul Corrin, and Pat Griffiths came out for her second time to help complete the Long-tail monitoring, whilst we made a start on packing up the Observatory for the winter. On the 8<sup>th</sup> all the volunteers left the Calf leaving the two of us for a final week to wrap things up.



Volunteers & Wardens spelling “CALF” during Storm Ophelia

There have been so many different people that have helped in varying ways throughout the season, and we would like to thank each and every one of you – apologies if we haven’t mentioned you by name. Firstly, we are both hugely indebted to Lara Howe of Manx Wildlife Trust who has always been at the end of the phone or on the quayside for us on many occasions during the season; as well as having the unenviable task of paying for the weekly food shop and picking up and

collecting of volunteers from the boat or plane. The many volunteers that have worked so hard during the season and helped us achieve so much more than would have otherwise been possible and also the 'guests' that have stayed at the Observatory and left us extra food supplies when they depart.

We have been fortunate to have several excellent researchers helping, with Alyce Lazenbury and Saskia Mori joining us as MSc students in the spring and early summer and then Hayden Bridgeman and Jamie Wyler-Owen in the autumn.

The Calf can be a lonely place but during 2017 it has had a real "buzz". This was created by the fantastic people that have been part of the 2017 season, fitting in to life on the Calf so well and becoming "part of the team". We have had a great many laughs and many memorable experiences, in a truly remarkable year.

Finally, but by no means least we must thank Juan Clague, Steve Clague and Anne Kaye who provide the vital support role in delivering our weekly food deliveries and getting everyone safely on and off the Calf. Without their efforts and considerable knowledge, the Calf wouldn't function. As in previous years, MNH field several staff to assist with the Calf and particular mention must go to Shaun Murphy, Geoff Mitchell and Howard Osborne (Oz) for their assistance and support in various ways to keep the place running.

Aron Sapsford

# Monthly Summary - 2017

The table below shows the species totals recorded in each month of the 2017 season and gives a comparison with the ten-year average.

|            | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 2017       | 58  | 82  | 86  | 68  | 77  | 77  | 75  | 91  | 64  |
| 10-yr ave. | 63  | 80  | 84  | 66  | 66  | 67  | 81  | 87  | 58  |

## March

*Weather: Mainly moderate to strong south-westerly wind during 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, then north-easterly until 29<sup>th</sup> when the wind swung back to S – SW. Rain and hail showers and some hill fog were a feature of the first week but conditions improved and the last week of the month was mainly dry and often sunny.*

The season had a slightly delayed start due to inclement weather which held us up for a couple of days; but we made it to the Calf on 15<sup>th</sup> March and as we arrived a pair of **Great Tit** flew up into the Sycamores behind the Observatory. As we opened



the Observatory it was obvious that a small arrival of **Goldcrest** (30) had occurred and a visit to the Withy during the late afternoon produced the first **Chiffchaff** and a **Woodpigeon**, the latter remaining until the end of the month. The 16<sup>th</sup> brought an arrival of 30 Chiffchaff along with an immature male **Black Redstart** and the first three **Wheatear** of the year. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were back on their

breeding sites on Caigher with 21 birds counted, a pair of **Mallard** was on the Millpond and 27 **Oystercatcher** were seen at Cow Harbour. With a strengthening westerly wind on the 17<sup>th</sup>, a seawatch from Cow Harbour produced the first **Eider**, as well as 20 **Fulmar** and five **Gannet** south, whilst Lesser Black-backed Gull numbers on Caigher had increased to 43. Lighter winds on the 18<sup>th</sup> encouraged the first numbers of finches to move through with 20 **Goldfinch** and two **Siskins** seen, as well as a small passage of 70 **Meadow Pipit**, six **Stonechats** and **Curlew & Hen Harrier** were added to the year list. Strengthening winds on the 19<sup>th</sup> meant that passerine migration was restricted with just a **Starling** being of note, whilst non-passerines featured a male **Kestrel**, an adult **Cormorant** and a **Snipe** all being new for the year.

A brief seawatch from Cow Harbour on the 20<sup>th</sup> produced just two **Black-headed Gulls** being blown through the Sound. Two hundred **Great Black-backed Gulls** were taking refuge, from the strong south-



westerly winds, on Caigher and the first of the winter thrushes were seen with **Fieldfare** and **Song Thrush** new in. Up to seven **Ravens** were seen, including a pair with a nest at Amulty. **Meadow Pipits** reached 100 on 22<sup>nd</sup> with a further small arrival of

30 **Goldcrest** plus three **Starling** and a **Merlin**. Light north-east winds with rain just before dawn, produced excellent conditions for a 'fall' on 23<sup>rd</sup> with a further 100 **Meadow Pipit**, 20 **Robin**, 46 **Wheatear**, 40 **Chiffchaff** and 250 **Goldcrest** being noted. A male **Great Tit** was the

start of a small passage through the last week of the month and two **Reed Buntings**, and a **Buzzard** were new for the year. The 28<sup>th</sup> saw 50 Goldcrest remaining, the immature male Black Redstart from the 16<sup>th</sup> was recaptured, three Great Tit were seen, and a single **Magpie** was new for the year.

A further arrival of 55 Goldcrest on 25<sup>th</sup> also produced a very early male **White Wagtail**, nine Wheatears, a **Coal Tit**, four Great Tits, 25 Goldfinch and four Siskins. Eider increased to nine and the first Butterfly, a Peacock, was seen behind the Observatory garden wall. Fifty Goldcrest were present on the 26<sup>th</sup>, when the Coal Tit was caught and ringed, plus a further two Great Tit and two Lesser Redpoll were new. Birds of prey were notable on the 27<sup>th</sup>, with three 'ringtail' Hen Harrier, Buzzard, three Kestrel and Merlin whilst a Snipe was flushed from the bog above the 2<sup>nd</sup> field. A small passage of wagtails was seen with 15 Pied and a single Grey, whilst Chiffchaff numbers increased to 20, another female Great Tit arrived (remaining with a male to the end of the month) and **Swallow** and **Willow Warbler** were both new for the year. Thrushes started to move through towards the end of the month with 15 Blackbird, 8 Redwing and a single Fieldfare being new in on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

The wind switched back to the south-west and strengthened on 30<sup>th</sup> but produced a male **Shelduck**, three **Teal** and a **Grey Heron**, all at Cow Harbour, whilst 150 Great Black-backed Gulls were sheltering from the weather on Caigher. A seawatch from Cow Harbour during the morning of 31<sup>st</sup> produced small numbers of Fulmar and Gannet moving south along with 22 **Kittiwake** and a **Guillemot**. A slight drop in the wind encouraged passerines to move and 15 Blackbird, a Song Thrush, 25 Redwing, four **Blackcap** and 12 Willow Warbler arrived mid-morning to finish an enjoyable start to the season.

A total of 58 species were seen during the month.

## April

*Weather: The first couple of days started off relatively calm but the general theme for most of the month was for medium to strong winds from the westerly quarter, except for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> when the wind swung round to the south or east. From the 23<sup>rd</sup> the wind became northerly and gave a cold and wintry feel to the last week of the month until it became southerly on 29<sup>th</sup> and easterly again on the 30<sup>th</sup>. The month was largely dry with no significant rainfall.*

Light winds on the 1<sup>st</sup> saw the first and last arrival of thrushes with 25 Blackbird, two Fieldfares and 25 Redwing along with 12 Chiffchaff, 25 Willow Warbler and 60 Goldcrest. A female Black Redstart, a male **Brambling** and a **Rook** were also seen. The first numbers of auks were seen on the 2<sup>nd</sup> with 65 **Razorbill** below the Lighthouses and a Red Admiral was present around Bushell's. Seawatching produced small numbers of Fulmar and Gannet on both the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>, with the latter date also producing a 3<sup>rd</sup> summer **Iceland Gull** off Cow Harbour for 30 minutes and a **Short-eared Owl** near Jane's House during the evening. A **Collared Dove** was new for the year on 5<sup>th</sup>, as was a fly-over **Golden Plover** on the 6<sup>th</sup>, when two Snipe were also seen; on both days at least 50 Goldfinch were present around the Observatory.

Light southerly winds on the 7<sup>th</sup> produced a good fall of common migrants with 18 Wheatear, four Blackcap, 35 Chiffchaff, 100 Willow Warbler and 60 Goldfinch, with a female **Ring Ousel** and **Black Guillemot** both being new for the year. The wind remained southerly for the 8<sup>th</sup> but migrant numbers were considerably fewer and only the first **Sand Martin** was of note. With the wind back to south-west on the 9<sup>th</sup> 70 Willow Warbler and 40 Chiffchaff arrived and Goldfinch numbered 60 again. A pair of Shelduck took up residence at Cow Harbour on 10<sup>th</sup> (with a male in the Puddle) and the first numbers of Eider (23) were seen on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The latter date also produced 30

Oystercatcher, three Buzzards and the first April record of **Greenshank**, initially heard flying across the Puddle and then later flushed from the Millpond. Eider had increased to 33 on the 13<sup>th</sup> and four **Greylag Geese** were an unexpected sight that evening as they flew in across the Withy field from the east, circled Caigher and headed back towards the main Island. A **Common (Mealy) Redpoll** was trapped at the Observatory.



The steady stream of Willow Warblers continued on the 14<sup>th</sup> with another 40 present. The male Shelduck at the Puddle was joined by a female on the 15<sup>th</sup> (with a pair also at Cow Harbour) and a **Manx Shearwater** and **Whimbrel** were both new for the year. A small arrival of 20 Willow Warbler occurred on the 16<sup>th</sup>, when the Lighthouse Raven's fledged four young. Light north-easterly winds on 17<sup>th</sup> saw another 40 Willow Warbler and 10 Chiffchaff arrive with a boat trip around the island in the afternoon producing three Cormorant, 20 **Purple Sandpiper** in the cave, 44 Lesser Black-backed Gull at the Kioneny Halby colony and a single Razorbill seen ashore at Giau Yairn. Willow Warblers and Goldfinch increased to 70 on the 18<sup>th</sup> with 20 Chiffchaff, two Buzzard, a female Black Redstart, a Magpie, three Rook and 20 Chaffinch. **Grasshopper Warbler** and **Sedge Warbler** were both

new for the year on 19<sup>th</sup> with 28 Wheatear and 80 Willow Warbler whilst Snipe and two Curlews were of note on 20<sup>th</sup>. The 21<sup>st</sup> produced another 'fall' of 100 Willow Warbler along with 50 Wheatear, 15 Chiffchaff, Grasshopper Warbler and another Mealy Redpoll. The highest totals for the month of 56 Eider and 116 Razorbill were counted around the coast and a Common and 145 Grey Seals were seen during a seal survey.

Willow Warblers numbered 40 on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 35 on 23<sup>rd</sup>; the latter date also producing the first **Whitethroat** of the year, the last Merlin of the month, two Whimbrels, 36 Wheatear and two Fieldfare. The second pair of Ravens, at Amulty, fledged two young and a Pergerine nest was located at Baie n'Ooig. The strong north-westerly winds of 24<sup>th</sup> considerably slowed migration and a female Mallard with 20 ducklings on the Millpond being the only sighting of note. Near gale force northerly winds on 25<sup>th</sup> produced 75 Fulmar and 43 Gannets north



offshore but most unexpected was a male **Pheasant** that was found wandering around the on the cliff top at Caigher – the bird had clearly only just arrived but soon made its way down into the glen where it remained to the end of the month.

With the wind decreasing on 26<sup>th</sup> encouraged 55 more Willow Warbler to move through with **Tree Pipit** and **Lesser Whitethroat** being new for the year. A **Jackdaw** and a Rook flew over and the Shelduck pairs were seen at Cow Harbour and the Puddle. Willow Warblers numbered 30

on both the 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> and 25 on 29<sup>th</sup> with the moderate to strong northerly winds clearly suppressing migration over those three days. A search of the Manx Shearwater colonies along the east coast overnight on 29/30<sup>th</sup> produced around 30 birds, as well as the first and only **Common Sandpiper** of the spring, heard at around 0030hrs on 30<sup>th</sup>. A switch to strong easterly winds on 30<sup>th</sup> brought many birds from mid-morning, with birds continuing to arrive throughout the day as the wind abated slightly. Five new species were recorded for the year with **Cuckoo**, **Redstart**, a Channel-Island's ringed **Reed Warbler**, two **Garden Warbler** and **Treecreeper**. Other birds present included a Collared Dove, 42 Wheatear, three each of Sedge Warbler and Whitethroat and 60 Willow Warblers.

A total of 82 species were seen during the month.

## **May**

*Weather: A period of light to moderate north-easterly winds dominated the first third of the month switching to southerly from 13<sup>th</sup>, becoming south-westerly from 15<sup>th</sup> and then north-west from 19<sup>th</sup> backing westerly on 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>. From 22<sup>nd</sup> light-to moderate easterly winds again dominated to the end of the month. Wind strength was generally force 4 or less and the month was mostly dry with the only exceptions being on 15<sup>th</sup> when it blew a force 7-8 and rained for most of the day.*

The 1<sup>st</sup> saw another arrival of warblers with six Sedge, a Grasshopper, five Whitethroats, eight each of Blackcap and Chiffchaff and 70 Willow. The 'Jersey' Reed Warbler was re-trapped and new for the year was a **Mistle Thrush** (accompanying two Fieldfares), a female **Pied Flycatcher** and two **Tree Sparrow**. A **Whinchat** was added to the year list on 2<sup>nd</sup> and warbler numbers increased to 20 each of Sedge Warbler & Whitethroat, three each of Lesser Whitethroat & Garden Warbler and 90 Willow Warbler. A female Brambling was an unexpected find in one

of the back garden nets and remained around the Observatory until 3<sup>rd</sup>. Warbler numbers were considerably less on the 3<sup>rd</sup> but two more Garden Warblers and the presence of four Redstart and a Tree Pipit, the latter flying west, was adequate compensation. During the first 10 days of the month small numbers of Jackdaw and Rook were occurring as day visitors from the main Island and the arrival of a Grey Heron on the 4<sup>th</sup> was the start of a series of records on 13 dates during the month involving up to two birds. Other notable records on the 4<sup>th</sup> included a Garden Warbler and a Tree Sparrow. Three Cuckoos arrived on the 5<sup>th</sup> along with a female Redstart, 46 Wheatear and a Song Thrush. Warbler numbers increased again on 6<sup>th</sup> with two Grasshoppers, 12 each of Sedge & Blackcap, 20 Whitethroat, four Garden and 75 Willow. Around mid-morning a fresh arrival of birds occurred with 120 Wheatear, six Whinchats and two male Pied Flycatchers, one of which was bearing a Norwegian ring. Also new for



the year were three **Spotted Flycatchers** and a **Swift**. The 7<sup>th</sup> dawned calm and slightly misty – almost the first bird found was a stunning adult male **Red-footed Falcon** sitting on a mist net pole at the mouth of HG2. There were also large numbers of warblers present with 2

Grasshoppers, 20 Sedge, the 'Jersey' Reed Warbler was re-trapped six days after last being seen, 25 Whitethroat, 12 each of Blackcap and Chiffchaff (including a 'Scandinavian' type) and 120 Willow Warblers. A further 100 Willow Warbler were seen on the 8<sup>th</sup> along with 12 Chiffchaff, 20 Whitethroat, a Lesser Whitethroat and 15 Sedge

Warbler. Wheatear numbers had reduced to 50 although 6 Whinchat, 3 Redstart and a Tree Pipit were new arrivals.

Two **Turnstones** and a **Feral Pigeon** were new for the year whilst 120 Swallow were logged moving north and the Red-footed Falcon spent most of the afternoon hawking insects in the front field. Sedge Warblers were the main species on the 9<sup>th</sup> with 50 present whilst other warblers included 15 Whitethroat, two Garden Warbler, 12 Chiffchaff (including another 'Scandinavian' type) and 70 Willow Warbler. The Red-footed Falcon was again present for much of the day in the front field.

The 10<sup>th</sup> saw a coastline survey count of 83 Eider along with 13 Guillemot, 177 Razorbill and 7 Black Guillemot. Sedge Warbler numbers peaked again at 50 with a new Reed Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat, 30 Whitethroat, Garden Warbler, 15 Blackcap, 10 Chiffchaff (including a third 'Scandinavian' type) and 60 Willow Warbler. Passerine migration was considerably reduced on 11<sup>th</sup> and two fly-over **Ringed Plover** looked like they would be the highlight being new for the year. Just before dusk, however, three large white birds with long necks were seen flying over the back of the Observatory towards the lighthouses. An initial identification wasn't possible, as the birds were seen at distance without binoculars and only for a short time before they disappeared behind the hill. The discovery of three **Spoonbill** at Langness the following morning allowed us to realise what they were. This, not surprisingly, represents the 1<sup>st</sup> record for the Calf of this species. A small arrival of warblers on the 12<sup>th</sup> comprised 15 Sedge, 10 Whitethroat and 20 Willow, with two Whinchats, 10 Spotted Flycatcher and an immature male Pied Flycatcher also being present. The first **Puffin** of the year was seen amongst a small raft of Razorbill just west of Burroo. Two Whimbrels were at Cow Harbour and two Cuckoo and a female Goldcrest at the

Observatory were new arrivals on 13<sup>th</sup>, with the immature Pied Flycatcher remaining until 14<sup>th</sup>.

A period of stronger winds and rain over the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> quietened migration considerably but did provide an opportunity to search for Manx Shearwater during darkness with about 75 birds seen ashore between South Harbour and Kione ny Halby. A Swift flying west on the latter date was also notable as only the second record for the month. Lighter and variable winds from 17<sup>th</sup> allowed 10 Jackdaw to venture out for a day trip whilst on the 18<sup>th</sup> a seventh Lesser Whitethroat for the spring arrived along with a peak count of 16 Spotted Flycatcher. Presumably most warblers had passed through by now, as despite light winds, there were very few migrants arriving and a Whimbrel was the only notable record during the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>. There seemed to be a similar picture on 22<sup>nd</sup> until a female **Goshawk** was seen flying over the Observatory being mobbed by Herring Gulls – this was to be the start of a purple patch. During an early morning net round on the 23<sup>rd</sup> a



female **Subalpine Warbler** was trapped and the following day an adult female, Red-breasted **Flycatcher** was also caught early on. During the late afternoon the first Basking Shark of the season was seen just off South Harbour. Foggy conditions overnight clearly didn't give good conditions

for birds to move on and the Red-breasted Flycatcher was still present on 25<sup>th</sup>. However, during the daytime conditions became more favourable and a lovely calm sunny afternoon saw a fly-over Ringed Plover and two Basking Sharks were seen off Cow Harbour. An

overnight mist netting attempt for **Storm Petrels** was successful with two birds trapped.

Although bird migration appeared very minimal on 27<sup>th</sup> a count of 30 Red Admiral and 3 Painted Lady Butterflies clearly indicated that some migration was occurring. Overnight rain on 29<sup>th</sup> into the early morning gave hope of new arrivals and a Blackcap and Chiffchaff first round looked promising. Next round produced a Willow Warbler, the first for 11 days, and then a **Greenish Warbler** – the 9<sup>th</sup> Calf record. A juvenile Song Thrush, presumably bred on the main Island, was also trapped, and remained until 30<sup>th</sup>. Another Blackcap was new in on 30<sup>th</sup> but the highlight was five **Crossbill** which spent a few minutes in the Sitka spruce outside the Observatory mid-morning, with another single bird seen flying west later in the morning. During the afternoon an easterly passage of seabirds was noted off South Harbour and an hour's watch between 6-7pm recorded 25 Fulmar, 475 Manx Shearwater, 20 Gannet, 3 Black-headed Gull, 155 Kittiwake, 166 Guillemot, a Puffin, 326 Auk sp. and 31 Razorbill.

A small arrival of migrants on 31<sup>st</sup>, including a Dunnock, Robin, four Willow Warblers and three each of Whitethroat, Chiffchaff and Spotted Flycatcher rounding off an excellent month

A total of 86 species were recorded during the month.

## **June**

*Weather: The first half of the month was dominated by winds from the westerly quarter, often moderate to strong in strength. A brief swing to the east occurred during the 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> before settling back to south-westerlies until 18<sup>th</sup>. A period of light northerly winds occurred from 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> before a week of rain and strong winds brought the month to a close.*

The month kicked off with a windy and wet day, where the only ornithological highlights were a single Spotted Flycatcher and a Collared Dove. Of note for Nathan and I was a trip off the Calf to attend the Champions League Final in Cardiff, courtesy of Heineken PLC. The weather did everything possible to delay our departure, but after a very 'bumpy' crossing we left the Island for three days. Alyce Lazenbury (Masters' student) and Shaun Murphy (MNH) covered whilst we were away with Neil Morris (Manx Birdlife) carrying out some birding coverage, although little of note was seen except for three Teal which flew across the Puddle. Having arrived back late in the afternoon of the 4<sup>th</sup>, after a hectic few days, we were quite glad of a lie-in on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup>, when it dawned misty and wet with a strong SW wind. Mid-morning the wind eased and whilst making a drink in the kitchen I heard an unfamiliar song from the back garden. The bird making the song, a *Phylloscopus* warbler, made its way quickly into the Sycamores where it continued to sing. It was very mobile and made regular sorties to and from the Sycamores, back into the garden



and to a patch of willow in the back field. It was difficult to keep track of the bird except when it sang, which often was the only clue that it had moved from the area we last heard it. After some time of it giving us the run around, Alyce and I managed

to watch the bird in the back field willows and noted a prominent wing bar and we were able to identify it as a Greenish Warbler. We had already opened several of the mist nets in the back garden and shortly

after putting on a tape call of Greenish Warbler the bird obliging flew into one of the nets.

Strong WNW winds on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> produced a movement of seabirds with 122 Manx Shearwater, 112 Auks and 11 Kittiwake off South Harbour. Whilst a feeding flock of gulls in the Sound included 2 adult Black-headed Gulls and an adult **Common Gull** – the latter being new for the year. The Greenish Warbler was again heard singing from the Sycamores, but the most notable sighting of the day was a female Pheasant flushed from the track between Mill Giau and the Withy. The only Buzzard of the month was also seen. Another Teal, a male, was seen at the Withy on 7<sup>th</sup> and a Puffin seen off Kione ny Halby was the start of a series of records this month.

Moderate SW winds on 8<sup>th</sup> produced good numbers of seabirds passing west off South Harbour, with two and a half hours' of seawatching producing 129 Manx Shearwater, 37 Kittiwake, 794 Guillemot and three Puffin. Lighter winds on the 9<sup>th</sup> produced a male Robin, a female Blackcap and the first juvenile Starling of the summer. Strengthening SW winds over the next couple of days meant seawatching was again the most productive activity with 75 Fulmar, 666 Manx Shearwater, 164 Gannet, 112 Kittiwake, 676 Guillemot and three Puffin in 4 hours on 10<sup>th</sup> and 43 Fulmar, 429 Manx Shearwater, 66 Gannet, 38 Kittiwake, 212 Guillemot, Tystie and Puffin on 11<sup>th</sup>. A Basking Shark was also seen offshore for 15 minutes on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

Manx Shearwaters were still moving offshore on 12<sup>th</sup> albeit in much smaller numbers, although passerines provided the main interest with a very unseasonal Fieldfare present in the back field. Another juvenile Starling was present, and a Redpoll was trapped. A boat trip around the Calf during the morning of 13<sup>th</sup> produced 68 Fulmar at Apparently Occupied Sites (AOS) and a feeding flock of 200 Shag at Kione ny Halby. Single Puffins were seen at Kione Roauyr and off the Lighthouses,

where a Tystie was also seen. On land the male Robin was again present, and the first juvenile was trapped. It is thought that this was a 'wandering' bird bred on the main Island, as most likely was a juvenile Reed Bunting, also trapped. Single adult Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler were trapped on 14<sup>th</sup> and a male Whitethroat was singing at Kione ny Halby (also 15<sup>th</sup>). A walk along the east coast produced at least seven 'agitated' Wheatear pairs, a Grey Wagtail flushed from a ditch above Grant's Harbour and a feeding flock of 300 Shag in the Sound, as well as a Basking Shark. A male **Greenfinch** present from 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> was most noteworthy as the 1st record of the year, whilst a Mistle Thrush on 15<sup>th</sup> was only the 2<sup>nd</sup> record of the year.

By the 16<sup>th</sup> there were many juvenile Wheatears around on the Island, another Willow Warbler was trapped, and a Woodpigeon was seen. A Grey Wagtail was heard flying over Gibdale during the evening and an immature male Sparrowhawk trapped in the back field crow trap turned out to be a bird originally ringed on the 20<sup>th</sup> March this year. Calm(ish) conditions in the evening encouraged a couple of bats (probably Long-eared) to feed along the track by HG2 and us to try for Storm Petrels at South Harbour, with two being caught during the early hours of the 17<sup>th</sup>. Two Risso's Dolphin off South Harbour on the 17<sup>th</sup> were the start of a run of records from the harbour area with a pod of 10 seen the following day and 7 on 22<sup>nd</sup>. Two **Lapwing** over The Heath on 18<sup>th</sup> were new for the year and four Grey Wagtail were 'taped' during the morning. A netting session at the Withy produced a couple of juvenile Dunnock, a female Whitethroat with a brood patch and a new Chiffchaff. Calm conditions overnight again allowed 'tape luring for Storm Petrel with a further three caught during the early hours of the 19<sup>th</sup>. Later in the day, a new male Chiffchaff was trapped, seven Starling arrived, and three Siskin and a Redpoll were recorded.

The numbers of Wheatear young around continued to rise with at least



30 seen on 20<sup>th</sup>, when two Woodpigeon were seen, and a new juvenile Robin and another male Chiffchaff were trapped. An evening seawatch from South Harbour produced two adult Black-headed Gulls, two Puffins and 100 Manx Shearwater. Manx Shearwaters numbered 100 again offshore in the evening of 21<sup>st</sup>, Wheatears

increased to 40 and a singing male Willow Warbler moved along the front hedge during the afternoon before heading towards the Withy. What was probably the same male Willow Warbler was again singing from the Top Withy on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and was trapped along with a female with a brood patch and extended belly. Two male Blackcaps were trapped at the Observatory, whilst two Tystie and a Puffin were seen off the Lighthouses.

The male Willow Warbler was again singing from the Withy and was joined by a singing Whitethroat on 23<sup>rd</sup> when at least 150 Manx Shearwater were seen 'rafting' off the east coast as well as a feeding flock of 200 Shag in the Sound. The immature male Sparrowhawk was again trapped on 24<sup>th</sup> with a new juvenile Song Thrush and a female Blackcap trapped at the Observatory. Three Willow Warblers, including a singing male, were at the Withy, and the male Whitethroat was also holding territory there. The immature male Sparrowhawk was again seen on 25<sup>th</sup>, the pair of Whitethroat and the singing male Willow Warbler were recorded at the Withy, whilst a Spotted Flycatcher was

seen atop the tractor shed Sitka and a flock of 50 Starling arrived around the Observatory.

Starling numbers had decreased to 30 by 26<sup>th</sup> and both the male Whitethroat and Willow Warbler were singing at the Withy (and remained to the end of the month). Two female Willow Warblers were trapped at the Observatory, as were juvenile Chiffchaff, three Robins and, most unexpectedly, a juvenile Redstart. Two Woodpigeon flew through, whilst five Grey Wagtail were 'taped in' and three Crossbills dropped into the tractor shed Sitka for five minutes before heading off north. The 27<sup>th</sup> was notable for the 31mm of rain that fell during the day plus, four **Redshanks** at Cow Harbour were new for the year. A brief dry spell on the 28<sup>th</sup> produced a new Willow Warbler in addition to the male singing at the Withy, an adult Spotted Flycatcher, the juvenile Redstart was retrapped at the Observatory and three Swift flew north up the glen. Rain again dominated on 29<sup>th</sup> with just a single Grey Heron and three Curlews being of note. Curlew increased to six on 30<sup>th</sup> with a Lapwing also being seen in the Puddle. At least four Cormorants were seen around the coast as was a feeding flock of 140 Shag.

A total of 68 species were recorded during the month.

## July

*Weather: Light to moderate winds from the westerly quarter dominated the first 10 days of the month before a couple of days of north-easterlies during 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>. The second half of the month again saw mostly light to moderate winds from the west except easterlies on 18-19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> and light northerly winds from 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>.*

The month opened with a small group of Crossbill heard in the back garden. The juvenile Redstart remained up to the 8<sup>th</sup> and the female Mallard was again seen at the Millpond, however, the number of young accompanying her had reduced further to just one. A round-Island boat trip on the 3<sup>rd</sup> produced 62 (AOS) Fulmar, 215 Guillemot, 100+ Razorbill as well as a Puffin at Big Head. A juvenile Grey Heron was seen on the Stack, whilst three Grey Wagtail and a single Crossbill were at the Observatory. The elusive female Pheasant was seen in the Seafield on 4<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 18 adult Black-headed Gulls flew west past South Harbour. **Dunlin** was new for the year, at Cow Harbour, along with the first of a series of Common Sandpiper records involving



1-2 birds throughout the month. A juvenile Coal Tit and a Goldcrest were found in the front garden during the evening with the former remaining until 5<sup>th</sup>, when a small arrival of warblers, included a juvenile Whitethroat, three Blackcaps, a Chiffchaff and six Willow Warbler. Focus

was on the sea during the 6<sup>th</sup>, with flat calm conditions proving ideal for cetacean watching, with 3 Minke Whale, 4 Basking Shark and five Harbour Porpoise seen off Chicken Lighthouse. Large numbers of Manx

Shearwater were also seen rafting offshore with at least 1000 birds present and 200 Kittiwakes were congregating on the exposed rocks of Chicken. The sea again proved to be the place to watch on the 7<sup>th</sup> with a single Basking Shark, 10 Bottle-nosed Dolphins between the Sound and Port Erin, and a pod of 15 Risso's Dolphins watched travelling through the Sound between Thousla and the Calf.

The remains of a long dead male **Shoveler** were found on Kitterland on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 400 Shag were feeding in the Sound and a further seven Bottle-nosed Dolphin and a single Basking Shark were seen off Cow Harbour. The 9<sup>th</sup> brought the first juvenile Sedge Warbler of the autumn and the highest count of Starling (74) for the month. A **Great Skua**, new for the year, flew over South Harbour on the 10<sup>th</sup>, with single Puffin and Black-headed Gull also seen offshore there. Light north-easterly winds on the 11<sup>th</sup> produced the first juvenile Grasshopper Warbler and three Willow Warblers of the autumn, whilst offshore a count of 112 Manx Shearwater flying east was recorded in just 15 minutes off South Harbour. However, the most notable record was of a Puffin seen coming ashore at Kione ny Halby. Calm conditions on 12<sup>th</sup> produced a couple of Swift, seven Grey Wagtail and five Jackdaw, however the main action was again at sea with single Great Skua and Black-headed Gull plus a frenzy of Dolphin action with a single Bottle-nosed Dolphin and several pods of Risso's (involving up to 17 animals) seen along the east coast between Spanish Head and South Harbour for much of the afternoon. An overnight netting session, into the 13<sup>th</sup>, produced 10 Storm Petrel whilst the only **Sandwich Tern** of the year was seen off South Harbour and a pod of six Risso's Dolphins were off Gibdale Bay in the evening.

A feeding frenzy of 200 Gannet and 50 Kittiwake off South Harbour was the main event of the 14<sup>th</sup>, although a male Sparrowhawk put in an appearance over Caigher and six Puffin flew west past South

Harbour. Another four Puffin were seen the following day heading north past Culbery when several rafts of Manx Shearwater, numbering more than 1000 birds, were seen off Chicken Rock along with 130 Gannet. The pair of Kestrel, often seen near Giau Laing, was finally proven to have bred with three newly fledged young found in the gully. Four more Risso's Dolphin and two Harbour Porpoise were seen off Cow Harbour in the afternoon and seven Curlews and a Whimbrel were at the Cletts.

Several warblers were recorded on 16<sup>th</sup> with two Sedge, a retrap Chiffchaff (initially ringed on 11<sup>th</sup> May), five Willow Warbler and three Goldcrest. Other observations included 350 Shag feeding in the Puddle



and a single Sand Martin flying over the Observatory. Waders provided the main interest over the next few days with three Curlew, a Redshank and two Common Sandpiper on 17<sup>th</sup>, a Turnstone at Cow Harbour on 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>, with the latter date also producing 22 Oystercatcher, eight Curlew, two Redshank and a Dunlin.

A Great Skua was seen flying over the Cow Harbour gull colony during the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> and probably the same bird took up residence on Caigher for most of the late afternoon and remained in the

general area well into August. A drop in the wind speed during the late afternoon allowed a few nets to be opened around the Observatory and Withy producing three each of Blackcap and Willow Warbler, a Chiffchaff, two Goldcrest and a Treecreeper.

The Treecreeper was still present on the 20<sup>th</sup> when a second juvenile was also trapped, which remained until 1<sup>st</sup> August. Strong SE winds and periods of prolonged rain on the 21<sup>st</sup> made seawatching the primary activity with 165 Manx Shearwater and 204 Gannet being the main species recorded. A single Swift was seen heading south past Culbery, in front of a squall of rain whilst a flock of six **Common Scoter** flew north past Chicken Rock. A group of five Puffin passed south off Culbery and another single flew east past South Harbour. Non-avian highlights included single Common Seals at each of the harbours, single Porpoise, Risso's Dolphin and three Common Dolphins seen off the Lighthouses.

Calmer conditions on 22<sup>nd</sup> brought a few warblers with a single Sedge Warbler, two Whitethroat and seven Willow Warblers and the first Redpoll of autumn passage. Overnight Storm Petrel sessions at both Gibdale and South Harbour produced a total of 14 birds however bird of the day was a juvenile **Moorhen** that was filmed making its way along the Puddle Beach. Warblers had increased the next day with counts of 12 Sedge, two each of Blackcap and Whitethroat plus a peak count for the month of 22 Willow Warbler. Three adult Black-headed Gulls flew through the Sound and the first movement of Meadow Pipits for the autumn was noted. Numbers of warblers had decreased in general on 24<sup>th</sup>, although nine Sedge Warblers is still noteworthy as was a Garden Warbler trapped in the Withy which remained until 26<sup>th</sup>. An overnight Storm Petrel session at South Harbour on 25/26<sup>th</sup> produced just five birds. A Lapwing was present in the Seafield whilst other waders included 27 Oystercatcher and two Redshank at Cow Harbour and eight Curlews at the Cletts.

The last few days of the month produced a Black Guillemot seen regularly off Gibdale, where 200+ Manx Shearwaters were noted on 28<sup>th</sup> and three female Eiders were seen at Cow Harbour. Ten Willow

Warblers and 20 Starling were present on 29<sup>th</sup> and a Treecreeper was heard on 30<sup>th</sup>.

A total of 77 species were recorded during the month.

### **August**

*Weather: The start of the month was very windy with mostly SW winds through the first twelve days. A brief lull on 13<sup>th</sup> gave calm conditions giving way to light easterly winds before returning to the south and south-west from 14<sup>th</sup> through to 17<sup>th</sup> and then westerly until the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. The wind swung SE and remained light to moderate for next couple of days before turning SW where it remained for most of the remainder of the month.*

The month started with a Collared Dove, Blackcap, Whitethroat and four Willow Warblers recorded along with the Great Skua from July, which was mobile around the islet (perhaps even visiting other locations on the Isle of Man) and was seen intermittently through to the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month. The 2<sup>nd</sup> was a wader day with seven Dunlin, Common Sandpiper, Turnstone and seven Curlews at Cow Harbour.

Seawatching off Culbery on the 3<sup>rd</sup> produced three Common Scoters, 40 Fulmar, 100 Manx Shearwater west in 1 hour and 300 Gannet. Forty Oystercatchers were counted (35 at Cow Harbour) and a Puffin was reported



off South Harbour by the Shona crew. Overnight Storm Petrel ringing on 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> produced a total of eight birds, a light passage of Swallows saw 21 move through in small parties, 13 Hooded Crow were recorded along with three Whitethroat, a Redpoll and a Collared Dove which was frequenting South Harbour. A small arrival of warblers occurred on 6<sup>th</sup> with a Sedge Warbler, five Whitethroats and 14 Willow Warbler, whilst seawatching at South Harbour produced 129 Manx Shearwater east in 30 minutes plus 100 Gannet and two Guillemots. A Grey Heron was new on 7<sup>th</sup> with Wheatear increasing to 35 and the Linnet flock around South Harbour reaching 40 birds. Willow Warblers increased to 20 on 8<sup>th</sup> with three Sedge Warblers and two Whitethroats also seen. Another Treecreeper was heard, and a Greenshank flew over Caigher. Small numbers of warblers continued to move through with 10 Willow Warbler, three Whitethroats and a Blackcap on 9<sup>th</sup>.

Elsewhere a Lapwing was seen in the Seafield, a Common Sandpiper flew over the Twin Fields and the Linnet flock at South Harbour increased to 60. The elusive female Pheasant reappeared on 10<sup>th</sup>, this time by the quartz on Caigher. A feeding flock of 440 Shag were counted off South Harbour and 300 Herring Gull were following a fishing boat offshore. Nine adult Black-headed Gulls flew east over Burroo and during the afternoon up to 70 Swallow could be seen feeding over Caigher and Rarick.

A strong SW wind on 11<sup>th</sup> and frequent rain meant seawatching was the order of the day on 11<sup>th</sup> and a total of 23 Common Scoter flew north past Culbery along with 67 Manx Shearwater and 167 Gannet.

Calmer and clearer conditions during the late afternoon saw two ringtail Hen Harrier and the Great Skua putting on a good show over the southern end of the Island. The Great Skua was again seen on 12<sup>th</sup> when a Collared Dove appeared around the Observatory, a Snipe was flushed from the Top Withy and the Linnet flock at South Harbour

numbered 55. Calm conditions on the 13<sup>th</sup> brought an arrival of birds with a large female Sparrowhawk, Grey Heron, Woodpigeon, Sand Martin, 200 Swallow, seven House Martin, Tree Pipit, seven Robin, Sedge Warbler, four Whitethroat, a female Blackcap, 15 Willow Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher and a Starling. With moderate to strong SW winds, seawatching from South Harbour was again the main activity on 14<sup>th</sup> with 15 Fulmar, 190 Manx Shearwater, 50 Gannet, 12 Black-headed Gull and eight Kittiwake as well as two Bottle-nosed and 10 Risso's Dolphins. Waders were also evident with two Redshank flying past and a juvenile Purple Sandpiper located in the harbour, whilst a Snipe was flushed from the Top Withy.

A return to calm conditions brought a few migrant warblers with two juvenile Reed Warblers, including a "Paris" ringed bird trapped at the Withy, plus four Whitethroats and a Garden Warbler. The highest count of Shag for the year, of 550, was made from birds feeding in the Sound. The "Paris" Reed Warbler was again trapped at the Observatory on 17<sup>th</sup> when a total of nine Tree Pipits and 10 Willow Warbler were also seen. Other than 109 Gannets moving north and a Collared Dove at the Observatory, little of note was seen on 18<sup>th</sup> whilst the Great Skua that had been present on and off the Island since mid-July put in its final appearance at Kitterland on 19<sup>th</sup>. The 20<sup>th</sup> saw the first autumn arrival of Robin and Meadow Pipit with nine and 63 respectively, as well as eight Tree Pipit, six Alba Wagtail, Sedge Warbler, five Whitethroat, four Chiffchaff and 18 Willow Warbler. A further 13 Willow Warblers were seen on 21<sup>st</sup> when the bird of the month and only the 2nd Calf & Manx record, an Olive-backed Pipit, was seen in the back field and Sycamores before flying off towards the twin fields.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> produced little other than a Grey Heron in the Puddle and a Collared Dove at the Withy, however the 23<sup>rd</sup> saw fly-over Ringed

Plover and Snipe, Grey Wagtail, eight Willow Warblers and a juvenile Pied Flycatcher seen first thing in the Sitka by the tractor shed. The promise of autumn migration stepping up a gear continued with a



Grasshopper Warbler on 24<sup>th</sup> along with Tree Pipit, three Wheatear and two Spotted Flycatcher followed by another juvenile Reed Warbler trapped at the Withy on 25<sup>th</sup> when 13 Carrion Crows were seen feeding in the Seafield. A juvenile male **House Sparrow** was

bird of the day and new for the year on 26<sup>th</sup> with a small passage of hirundines producing single Sand and House Martin plus 50 Swallows. A few warblers were also in evidence with another Grasshopper Warbler, two Whitethroat, Blackcap, 10 Willow Warbler and 15 Goldcrest. An overnight wader catching session at Cow Harbour, recorded at minimum of two Turnstones on Thousla as it got dark and then at least seven Redshank during the early hours of 27<sup>th</sup>, as well as two Storm Petrels caught at 04:15hrs. Peak counts for the month of Robin (25) and Willow Warbler (35) were made during the day with four Grey Wagtail, a female Redstart, Sedge Warbler, two Whitethroats and 18 Goldcrest also being present.

Four Redstarts (two males & two females) would have been the highlight of the 29<sup>th</sup> had an **Osprey** not been seen, by crew of 'Gemini', along the east coast during mid-afternoon and what may have been the same bird near the lighthouses during the evening and subsequent morning. The first Whinchat of autumn plus two Tree Pipits, five Grey

Wagtails, four Wheatears, two Whitethroats, seven Chiffchaffs and 25 Willow Warbler were also present. A light hirundine passage was observed during the afternoon on 30<sup>th</sup>



with three Sand Martins, 33 Swallow and seven House Martins. Around the Observatory six Grey Wagtail, 10 Robin, a male Redstart, four Wheatears, a Grasshopper Warbler, four Blackcaps and 17 Goldcrest were seen. The first main movement of Meadow Pipit occurred on 31<sup>st</sup>



with 60 seen, plus two Tree Pipits and five Grey Wagtail. A Whinchat was in the glen and four Wheatears were in the lighthouse fields whilst a further change-over of warblers saw a Sedge Warbler, two each of Whitethroat & Blackcap and 18 Goldcrest around the Observatory, with an

immature Pied Flycatcher caught late afternoon rounding the month off nicely.

A total of 77 species were recorded during the month.

## September

*Weather: Light northerly winds for the first couple of days were followed by a prolonged period of westerly and often strong winds to the 15<sup>th</sup>, when northerly and lighter winds settled in until 19<sup>th</sup>. From 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> southerly or westerly gales blew and then became south-east through 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> decreasing in strength for a couple of days before increasing again over the 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>. The final day of the month saw a relatively light westerly wind.*

Meadow Pipits continued to move through on the 1<sup>st</sup> with another 70 recorded, with Buzzard, two Spotted Flycatchers, two Greenfinches and a Reed Bunting also present. Light north-east winds brought a small arrival on 2<sup>nd</sup> with two Tree Pipits, eight Grey Wagtail, 35 Robin, 30 Chiffchaff, 10 Willow Warbler and 55 Goldcrest. Little was seen over the next couple of days, as strong winds and rain made conditions less than conducive and 11 Curlew at the Cletts on the 4<sup>th</sup> was the highlight. Three Grey Heron were seen along the east coast from the supply boat on the 5<sup>th</sup> and another flew past the Observatory on the 6<sup>th</sup>, when a small passage of 10 Grey Wagtail was noted. Single adult Black-headed and Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at Cow Harbour and 300 Shag and three Guillemot were seen feeding in the Leodan.

Moderate south-west winds on 7<sup>th</sup> meant seawatching produced five Common Scoter, 36 Fulmar, 72 Manx Shearwater, 123 Gannet, 18 Lesser Black-backed Gull and three Guillemot west past Culbery. A slight drop in the wind produced an unexpected Ring Ouzel and a **Hummingbird Hawk Moth** around the Observatory, whilst a flock of 15 Redshank were taking shelter in South Harbour. Three Common Scoter flew south past Cow Harbour during the morning of 9<sup>th</sup>, but most birds were seen moving north off Culbery later in the day including 43 Manx Shearwater, 1 **Balearic Shearwater**, 250 Gannet, five Lesser Black-backed Gull and 22 Great Black-backed Gull. Over the land 45

'Alba' Wagtail, four Grey Wagtail and 200 Meadow Pipit were seen moving west and a group of 10 House Martin spent a short time feeding around the Observatory. Another small arrival on the 10<sup>th</sup> brought 40 Robin, three Blackcaps and 50 Goldcrest whilst the sea produced single Common Scoter and Razorbill past South Harbour.

The 11<sup>th</sup> saw us taking part in the Inaugural Island-based Bird Observatories Bird Race with 48 species being recorded during the day. Despite some promisingly strong NW winds seawatching didn't produce the hoped-for species that one might expect (and which were being seen everywhere south of us) but less often recorded species did include seven Golden Plover, a Purple Sandpiper, an adult Common Gull and three Lesser Black-backed Gull. An island count of 41 Rock Pipit was also noteworthy. Three more Golden Plover were seen on 12<sup>th</sup> when Robin increased to 60 and the first three Siskin of the autumn flew through. **Skylark** was the highlight of the 13<sup>th</sup> being new for the year, although an hour seawatch off Culberty produced 40 Manx Shearwater, 107 Kittiwake and 20 'Auks' south. Strong NW winds on 14<sup>th</sup> suppressed passerine migration and failed to produce any movements of seabirds. Again, very little was offshore on 15<sup>th</sup>, although four **Canada Geese** were seen flying east over Gibdale, a fly-over Golden Plover was heard, and a Common Sandpiper and two adult Common Gulls were at Cow Harbour. Calmer conditions on the 16<sup>th</sup> brought the first 'fall' of the autumn with five Skylark, 250 Meadow Pipit, 100 Robin, Sedge Warbler, five Blackcap, 75 Goldcrest, 62 Chaffinch and 65 Goldfinch. Conditions were still good on the 17<sup>th</sup> when eight Skylarks, 200 Meadow Pipit, 45 Robin, a female Redstart, Whitethroat, 55 Goldcrest and 39 Chaffinch were recorded. Single Snipe and Lapwing were seen on 18<sup>th</sup> with passerine migration slowing to 100 Meadow Pipit, six Grey Wagtail, 35 Robin, three Wheatears, 25 Goldcrest, a male Great Tit, a Starling and 50 Goldfinch. Calm conditions on 19<sup>th</sup> brought Sparrowhawk, Buzzard and Collared Dove



plus 100 Meadow Pipit, eight Grey Wagtail, 30 'Alba' Wagtail, 40 Robin, two Wheatear, nine Song Thrush, five Chiffchaff, 60 Goldcrest, Spotted Flycatcher, three **Blue Tit**, two Great Tit, 21 Raven, 20 Chaffinch and four Lesser Redpoll.

Rain for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> prevented a great deal from being seen although eight Swallows and 35 Goldcrest were noted. The male and female Pheasants were seen together in the glen for the first time on 21<sup>st</sup>, with Sparrowhawk, Buzzard, a Golden Plover flying east and six Wheatears being the only other sightings of note. Strong southerly winds on 22<sup>nd</sup> brought 50 Goldcrest plus three each of Blackcap and Chiffchaff. Goldcrest numbers had reduced to 35 on 23<sup>rd</sup> when another Golden Plover was heard flying over and four Great Tit 'dropped' into the Plantation. Strong SE winds and constant rain throughout the day on 24<sup>th</sup> meant that only a new male Blackcap was of note. In contrast calm to light easterly wind on 25<sup>th</sup> brought three Skylark, 150 Meadow Pipit, 20 Robin, six Chiffchaff, 60 Goldcrest, 70 Chaffinch, three Siskin, a Lesser Redpoll and a Reed Bunting. A Brown Long-eared Bat was caught just before dawn and other notable sightings were a flock of 12 Carrion Crow near the Withy and a Common Sandpiper heard calling at Kitterland as mist rolled in over Spanish Head for the night.

The overnight fog hadn't cleared by dawn but as it did an arrival of birds occurred and the 26<sup>th</sup> gave probably the best range of species for the month with 115 Meadow Pipit, 13 Wren, four Dunnock, 35 Robin, a



Ring Ouzel, five Song Thrush, Whitethroat, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, **Yellow-browed Warbler**, five Chiffchaff, two Willow Warbler, 70 Goldcrest, a Blue Tit, four Great Tit, 20 Chaffinch, five Lesser Redpoll and two Reed Bunting. A small passage of 130

Meadow Pipit on 27<sup>th</sup> preceded the biggest movement of the autumn with 450 heading west on 28<sup>th</sup>, a classic autumn migration day which also produced 16 Skylark, 20 'Alba' Wagtail, two Wheatear, Ring Ouzel, Garden Warbler, Blackcap, 10 Chiffchaff, two Willow Warbler, 80 Goldcrest, a male **Firecrest**, 40 Chaffinch, five Greenfinch and two Crossbill. A quieter day on the 29<sup>th</sup> saw the highest count of 16 Wren for the month, the Garden Warbler from the previous day was retrapped and the Ring Ouzel from the 26<sup>th</sup> was caught in the back garden and two more were seen at the Withy. Calmer conditions on the 30<sup>th</sup> again produced a movement of 14 Skylark, 44 Goldfinch, 21 Linnet, five Lesser Redpolls and two Reed Buntings. Meanwhile the Ring Ouzel remained around the Observatory garden and 25 Robin, 90 Goldcrest and two Chiffchaffs arrived to complete a busy end to a rather mixed month.

A total of 75 species were recorded during the month.

## October

*Weather: Southerly winds on 1<sup>st</sup> veered more to the south-west where they largely remained until mid-month. A brief spell of easterly winds on 16<sup>th</sup> were pushed away by near hurricane force southerly later in the day, continuing at storm force through to 17<sup>th</sup> as Storm Ophelia passed to the west. Light easterly winds on 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> were then followed by moderate winds mostly in the westerly quarter to the end of the month, except for a brief spell of light north-easterlies on 30<sup>th</sup>.*

Moderate to strong southerly winds and rain overnight didn't promise a great start to the month and early checks of the nets didn't produce much. However, a mist bank rolled in around 8.30am, with light drizzle and Goldcrest started appearing everywhere, with 140 estimated as present. Also arriving were six Blackcaps, nine Chiffchaffs and a female Firecrest was the last bird caught of the day. With a switch to westerly winds on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, a seawatch from Cow Harbour produced the first **Red-throated Diver** and three **Arctic Skuas** for the year. Other species also seen heading south were a Manx Shearwater, 161 Gannet, three Great Skua, five Black-headed Gull (with two off Caigher Point), 72 Great Black-backed Gull (with 99 on Caigher) and a Black Guillemot. Around the Observatory, the Ring Ouzel from late September was still present in the garden and a ringed Garden Warbler, presumably from 28<sup>th</sup> September, was seen in the Plantation. The final record of a Wheatear for the year was a bird above Cow Harbour and a Swallow was also seen. Seawatching on 3<sup>rd</sup> produced two male Eider through the Sound, plus an Arctic Skua, two Common Gull (adult & 1<sup>st</sup> Winter), 48 Great Black-backed Gull, 54 Kittiwake and 70 Auks all south past Cow Harbour. Two Merlin were present on the islet during the day whilst a night-time roost of 400+ Herring Gull was located above South Harbour. Two Merlin again put in an appearance on the 4<sup>th</sup>, four Golden Plover flew over the islet and 97 Great Black-backed Gulls were roosting on Caigher. The Ring Ouzel put in its last appearance in the

Observatory garden and three Jackdaw were seen crossing the Sound briefly before heading back to the main Island. Seawatching on the 5<sup>th</sup> again provided the highlights with **Great Northern Diver**, 64 Gannet and 36 Great Black-backed Gull south off Cow Harbour. A drake Eider was near Grant's Harbour and a Grey Heron at the Cletts, but birds of the day were five **Whooper Swans** seen flying south at sea off Baie Fine in the afternoon.

Clear skies and a light to moderate north-westerly wind on the 6<sup>th</sup> saw some good visual migration with 91 Skylark, two Swallow, 120 Meadow Pipit, two Grey Wagtail, three Jackdaw, 19 Raven, 145 Chaffinch, 40 Goldfinch, 29 Siskin, 60 Linnet and six Lesser Redpoll. Birds of prey were also very much in evidence with at least three Hen Harriers, Sparrowhawk, Buzzard and Merlin all present on the islet. Around the Observatory were 15 Dunnock, 25 Robin, 15 Song Thrush, two Mistle Thrush, 55 Goldcrest and nine House Sparrows. A quieter day on 7<sup>th</sup> saw a single Swallow pass through plus 25 Goldcrest around the Observatory with the female Firecrest from the 1<sup>st</sup> reappearing. Five Carrion and 34 Hooded Crow was also notable.

A slightly more settled period of weather from the 8<sup>th</sup> saw visual migration pick up again, with Sparrowhawk, Merlin, 12 Skylark, 120 Meadow Pipit, Grey Wagtail, three House Sparrow, 91 Chaffinch, 31 Goldfinch, 33 Siskin, 43 Linnet and eight Lesser Redpoll along with 20 Wren, 40 Robin, 80 Goldcrest and a Blue Tit at the Observatory. Two Purple Sandpipers were seen in 'their cave' below the Lighthouses by the crew of 'Gemini'. The 9<sup>th</sup> produced similar numbers and species, with Merlin, 17 Skylark, four Grey Wagtail, 30 Robin, the first Redwing of the autumn, 80 Goldcrest, a single House Sparrow, 93 Chaffinch and two Greenfinches. A slight increase in the wind on the 10<sup>th</sup> suppressed migration a little, however another Redwing was present and a late-ish Willow Warbler was trapped at the Observatory. Five Carrion Crow and 26 Hooded Crow were also seen. Inclement weather on 11<sup>th</sup> meant

very little was seen apart from a feeding flock of 40 Gannet offshore and 38 Great Black-backed Gull taking refuge, from the wind and rain, on Caigher. A slight improvement in the weather on 12<sup>th</sup> encouraged a few birds to move with Sparrowhawk and Merlin seen around the islet plus nine Skylark, a Grey Wagtail, 25 Goldcrest, 112 Starling, 26 Chaffinch, three Greenfinches, 37 Goldfinch, four Siskins and a Lesser Redpoll. Gale force south-westerlies on the 13<sup>th</sup> meant few passerines were evident and the only notable observations were a male Eider and 18 Oystercatcher at Cow Harbour, six Golden Plover in the Seafield and 66 Great Black-backed Gull sheltering on Caigher. Although the wind had eased a little on 14<sup>th</sup>, heavy rain for much of the morning meant little was present and two each of Redwing, Siskin and Lesser Redpoll were the best. Golden Plover was again seen on the 15<sup>th</sup> with two flying east over the Front Field and four in the Seafield. Passerines were few and far between, although eight Song Thrushes, a Redwing, a female Blackcap and a single Chiffchaff were seen, but most birds were keeping a low profile as the beginnings of hurricane Ophelia began to hit us. The lull before the storm brought relatively light easterly winds on the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup> with Sparrowhawk, 15 Blackbird, 10 Song Thrush, 20 Redwing, two Blackcaps and a Chiffchaff new in. However,



the wind soon increased and swung southerly increasing to violent storm force with gusts of 91mph recorded at Ronaldsway. Impressive seas pounded the south-west coast,

unfortunately causing a large number of fatalities amongst the Grey Seal pups that were in the coves and bays from Ghaw Laing down to

the Puddle. During the afternoon a flock of 50 Golden Plover flew over Burroo and two Lapwing were around the Puddle area. The southerly gale continued overnight into the early hours of 17<sup>th</sup> and then swung more to the west creating excellent seawatching conditions from Cow Harbour, with single Common Scoter, **Velvet Scoter**, five Manx Shearwater, 357 Gannet, two Turnstone, an adult **Pomarine Skua**, six Arctic Skua, 13 Great Skua, adult Common Gull, 59 Great Black-backed Gulls, 2845 Kittiwake, **Common Tern**, 10 Razorbill, five Black Guillemot and 812 Auks south. The wind had abated by the afternoon when two adult **White-fronted Geese** flew over the Observatory.

Calm conditions on the 18<sup>th</sup> saw passerine migration in full swing with visual migration bringing 41 Skylark, three Swallow, 55 Meadow Pipit, a Grey Wagtail, a Magpie, 290 Jackdaw, 50 Rook, 19 House Sparrow, two Tree Sparrow, 80 Chaffinch, two Brambling, three Greenfinch, six Lesser Redpoll and nine Reed Bunting. Around the Observatory were a Sparrowhawk, 20 Wren, 10 Dunnock, 25 Robin, 30 Blackbird, 28 Song Thrush, 15 Redwing, five Blackcap, nine Chiffchaff and 120 Goldcrest. Elsewhere on the islet, the male and female Pheasants were seen again together in the Glen and two Whooper Swans flew south between Spaghetti junction and the Lower Lighthouse. With a light easterly wind overnight, large numbers of thrushes were present on 19<sup>th</sup> with 60 Blackbird, three Ring Ouzel, 110 Song Thrush and 25 Redwing around the Observatory along with a Blackcap, two Chiffchaff, a late Willow Warbler (staying to 20<sup>th</sup>), and an even later Pied Flycatcher trapped behind the Observatory garden. Moderate north-westerly winds on 20<sup>th</sup> again produced more thrushes with 25 Blackbird, the first Fieldfare of autumn, 80 Song Thrush, 100 Redwing

The last eight Swallows of the year spent 10 minutes flying around the Observatory buildings and 42 Chaffinch, and a Brambling were recorded. Strong southerly winds and rain for much of the day on 21<sup>st</sup>

meant that passerine numbers were down on recent days, but the wind swung to the north-west later in the afternoon and this produced a few birds moving offshore, with a Shelduck through the Sound, a **Black-throated Diver**, Great Skua, adult Common Gull, 37 Great Black-backed Gull, 194 Kittiwake and 38 Auks all moving south off Cow Harbour. With the wind remaining a strong north-westerly, seawatching from Cow Harbour was again the main activity of the 22<sup>nd</sup> with two Manx Shearwater, five Great Northern Divers, a Red-throated Diver, 43 Gannet, two Great Skua, adult **Little Gull**, two adult Black-headed Gulls, adult Common Gull, 110 Great Black-backed Gull, 873 Kittiwake, an **Arctic Tern**, six Black Guillemot and 333 Auks all moving south, with a Purple Sandpiper on the rocks at Cow Harbour.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> October is known amongst bird Observatories as the day that more 'mega' rarities are found and we weren't disappointed when an Olive-backed Pipit was trapped in the back garden. Thrushes also arrived in good force with Ring Ouzel, 25 Blackbird, 35 Fieldfare, 150 Song Thrush, 120 Redwing and 23 Mistle Thrush. Visual migration produced the first Woodpigeon of the autumn, 22 Skylark, 16 Meadow Pipit and a Grey Wagtail, whilst a count of eight Cormorants was made at the Cletts. Thrush numbers had decreased a little by 24<sup>th</sup> with a male Ring Ouzel, 20 Blackbird, five Fieldfare, 40 Song Thrush, 84 Redwing and seven Mistle Thrush, whilst Sparrowhawk and Woodpigeon were also seen. Starlings moved through on 25<sup>th</sup> with 674 west, whilst other visual migration saw three Woodpigeon, six Jackdaw, 23 Hooded Crow, 51 Chaffinch and 25 Goldfinch recorded. Sparrowhawk, 20 Song Thrush, 22 Redwing and two Mistle Thrushes were around the Observatory and a female Blackcap was seen in Mill Giau.

Calm conditions on 26<sup>th</sup> had birds moving overhead again with 37 Skylark, 35 Meadow Pipit, Grey Wagtail, 233 Starling, 300+ Chaffinch,

two Bramblings, 11 each of Siskin & Lesser Redpoll and three Reed Buntings. A **Great Spotted Woodpecker** was heard calling on two occasions close to the Observatory, where 40 Song Thrush, 16 Redwing, a Mistle Thrush, two male Blackcaps, 30 Goldcrest and nine **Long-tailed Tits** were recorded. Light north-westerly winds on 27<sup>th</sup> again encouraged large numbers of diurnal passage with three Golden Plover, 253 Woodpigeon, Collared Dove, 19 Skylark, 365 Jackdaw, 21 Rook, 51 Starling, five House Sparrows, 120 Chaffinch, 27 Brambling and 41 Goldfinch mostly heading west. Around the Observatory, thrushes had arrived in force with 150 Blackbird, 10 Fieldfare, 90 Song Thrush, 25 Redwing and two Mistle Thrushes. Three Blackcap were also present, and the invasion of Long-tailed Tits continued with another 24 arriving, accompanied by a Blue Tit and six new Great Tits. Eight Cormorants were counted again at the Cletts on 28<sup>th</sup>, when 112 Great Black-backed Gulls were roosting on Caigher, two Sparrowhawk were seen and a Snipe flew over the Observatory. Thrush numbers had decreased from yesterday but there were still 40 Blackbird, 10 Fieldfare, 50 Song Thrush and 25 Redwing. Cormorant numbers at the Cletts rose to a month high of 14 on the 29<sup>th</sup>, when six Curlew, a Golden Plover and three Whooper Swans were seen. Visual migration was again good with 166 Woodpigeon, 202 Starling, 175 Chaffinch, 10 Greenfinch, 46 Goldfinch and 15 Lesser Redpolls. Good coverage of the island located monthly peak counts of 30 Wren and eight Stonechats, with 22 Robin, 30 Blackbird, 26 Fieldfare, 35 Song Thrush, 120 Redwing, two Mistle Thrushes, a Blue Tit and a male Brambling also being seen. Light north-easterlies on 30<sup>th</sup> again saw westward movements of 230 Woodpigeon, 40 Jackdaw and nine Rooks. Twelve



Cormorants and a Grey Heron were at the Cletts, whilst around the Observatory were a Ring Ouzel, 60 Blackbird, three Fieldfare, 25 Song Thrush, 20 Redwing, two Mistle Thrush, four Long-tailed Tit, six Great Tit, a male House Sparrow, 45 Chaffinch, five Brambling and four Greenfinch. The final day of the month was much quieter with the male Brambling remaining plus 25 Blackbird, 28 Fieldfare, 20 Song Thrush, 40 Redwing and single

Blackcap and Chiffchaff.

A total of 91 species were recorded during the month.

### **November**

*Weather: Winds were predominantly from the West or North-west and moderate in strength. Calmer conditions with a Northerly dominance occurred on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> and on 13<sup>th</sup> when the wind veered Easterly overnight.*

The beginning of the month was fairly quiet with highlights of the 1<sup>st</sup> being the three Mallard, that had been present around the islet since mid-October, and a Chiffchaff in Mill Giau. Light northerly winds on the 2<sup>nd</sup> brought the first **Woodcock** of the year, a Black Redstart at Cow Harbour and a good visual migration involving 91 Woodpigeon, nine Skylarks, Grey Wagtail, three Magpie, Rook, 125 Starling, two House Sparrow, 63 Chaffinch, five Brambling, three Greenfinch and 27

Goldfinch. Around the Observatory there were 26 Blackbird, nine Fieldfares, 18 Song Thrush, 40 Redwing, 15 Long-tailed Tit, two Coal Tits, three Blue Tits and four Reed Buntings. More Woodcock arrived on 4<sup>th</sup>, with three seen around the islet, whilst Blackbirds and Song Thrush increased to 80 and 30

respectively. Black Redstart and a male Blackcap were caught at the Observatory and three Bramblings were seen. Another Woodcock was seen on 4<sup>th</sup> and five



Whooper Swan flew north over the Puddle. Another five Whooper Swan flew towards the main Island on 5<sup>th</sup>, when seawatching at Cow Harbour also produced a flock of eight (5M3F) Eider flying down the west coast of the Isle of Man, two Red-throated Diver, 78 Fulmar, Black-headed Gull, two Common Gull and two Puffin. Up to five Fulmars were seen prospecting around the Lighthouse cliffs on 6<sup>th</sup>, a Woodcock was flushed from near the Triangle and an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull was amongst a flock of 180 Herring Gull at Cow Harbour. Another Woodcock was seen around the Observatory on 7<sup>th</sup> and a male Blackcap was in Mill Giau.

A **Water Rail** was heard calling from the *Juncus* in the Front Field on the 8<sup>th</sup> (and subsequently to at least 14<sup>th</sup>) whilst nine Dunnock, 25 Blackbird, 17 Redwing, 58 Chaffinch, six Bramblings, four Greenfinches, 17 Linnet and 36 Lesser Redpolls were seen around the Observatory. A Sparrowhawk was flushed from the Withy on 9<sup>th</sup>, whilst seawatching at Cow Harbour on 10<sup>th</sup> produced a southerly movement of 102 Fulmar, 26 Great Black-backed Gull, 341 Kittiwake and 35 "Auks". Light

northerly winds on 11<sup>th</sup> again produced visual migration of 15 Meadow Pipit, 656 Starling, 86 Chaffinch, four Brambling, Greenfinch, 32 Linnet and 34 Lesser Redpoll, whilst 10 Fieldfare, 16 Redwing, a male Blackcap, a Chiffchaff and three re-trap Great Tit (from October) were at the Observatory. Strong northerly winds on 12<sup>th</sup> meant that passerine migration was considerably reduced, although a Mistle Thrush arrived at the Observatory, whilst an hours' seawatching at Cow Harbour could only manage 36 Fulmar, an adult Common Gull, and 33 Kittiwake moving south. A drop in wind speed on 13<sup>th</sup>, brought a fresh arrival of 80 Blackbird and 12 each of Song Thrush & Redwing plus 239 Starling, 44 Chaffinch, 10 Brambling, five Lesser Redpoll and a **Lapland Bunting**.

A Woodcock was flushed from the Front Field at dawn on 14<sup>th</sup> and small numbers of thrushes were new in with 20 each of Blackbird and Redwing, whilst 1087 Starling headed west. The season closed on 15<sup>th</sup> with thrushes continuing to arrive in small numbers, with 33 Fieldfare and 12 Redwing present along with two Bramblings and a Siskin at the Observatory. The boat trip back to Port St Mary produced a count of 48 Fulmar on their ledges between Kione ny Halby and Big Head, where a Peregrine was also seen.

A total of 64 species were recorded during the month.

## **Systematic List**

This list covers sightings between 15<sup>th</sup> March and 15<sup>th</sup> November, during which time 136 species were recorded.

The nomenclature and taxonomic order follows that of the Ninth edition of the British List published by the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU) 2017 in *Ibis* 160: 190-240 and subsequent BOURC reports (available online at <http://www.bou.org.uk/british-list/bourc-reports-and-papers>). When the vernacular British name differs from the vernacular International English one (IOC), the international name is given in brackets. The local Manx name is given in grey when known.

Bird-days are the number of birds recorded in total. They take no account of the number of individuals. For example, five Blackbird bird-days could be five birds on one day or the same single seen on five dates

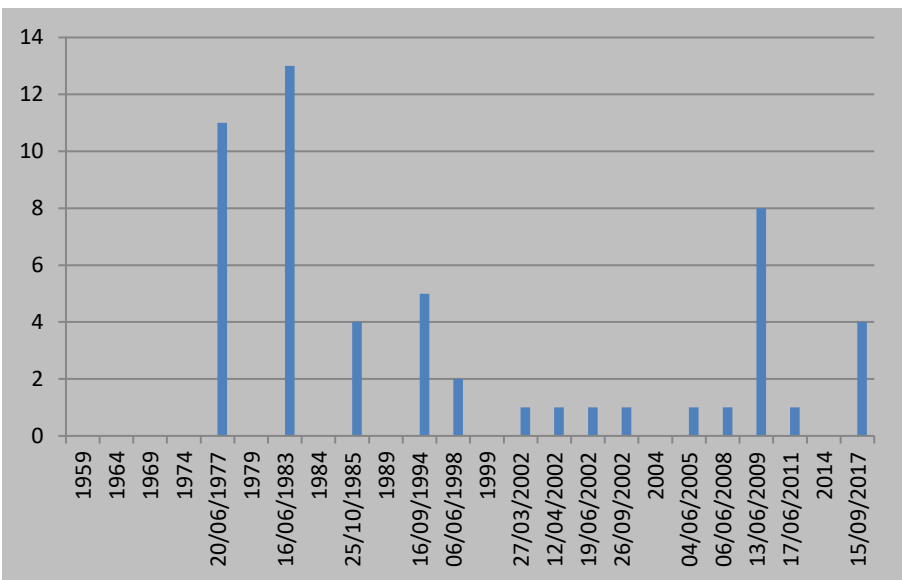
A brief statement regarding the previous status of a species is given in *italics* and the following scale is used to describe its regularity of occurrence:

|                                  |                                          |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Very rare vagrant                | < 5 records                              |
| Very rare migrant                | 5-10 records                             |
| Rare migrant                     | Less than annual                         |
| Scarce migrant                   | 1-10 records annually                    |
| Uncommon migrant / visitor       | 10-100 records annually                  |
| Common passage migrant / visitor | Occurs regularly, more than 100 annually |

**Canada Goose *Branta canadensis***

*Scarce visitor, most probably originating from feral populations on the Isle of Man; 13 previous records occurring in March (1), April (1), June (8), September (2) and October (1).*

Four flew east over Gibdale during the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> September.



**Greylag Goose *Anser anser***

*Guily Feie*

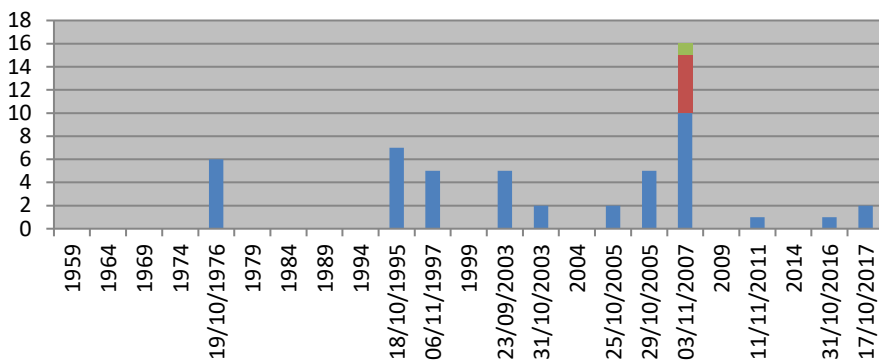
*Scarce visitor, most probably originating from feral populations on the Isle of Man*

There were two records early in the year with a group of four seen flying in from the east coast on 13<sup>th</sup> April. They circled Caigher and then flew back out to sea over Kione ny Halbey. On the 17<sup>th</sup> April a single bird landed briefly in the front field before heading off north.

### [Greater] White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

*Rare migrant; 12 previous records have all been during the autumn months, with records in September (1), October (6) and November (5).*

Two adults flew north over the Observatory during the afternoon of 17<sup>th</sup> October – the 13<sup>th</sup> Calf record and a typical date.



### Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

*Ollay Chiaullee*

*Scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor*

Five flying off the west coast on the 5<sup>th</sup> October were part of a larger influx of 'wintering' swans in to the British Isles. Further records during October involved two flying south past the Lighthouses on 18<sup>th</sup> and three flying north towards the main Island on 29<sup>th</sup>. In November a party of five were seen heading north past the Puddle and South Harbour on 4<sup>th</sup> and five heading north-west past Cow Harbour on 5<sup>th</sup>. An above average number of records, with most years normally recording 1-3 sightings, except for eight records in 1983 and four records in 2011.

**[Common] Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna***

*Thunnag y Scape*

*One or two pairs breed annually, otherwise a scarce passage migrant*

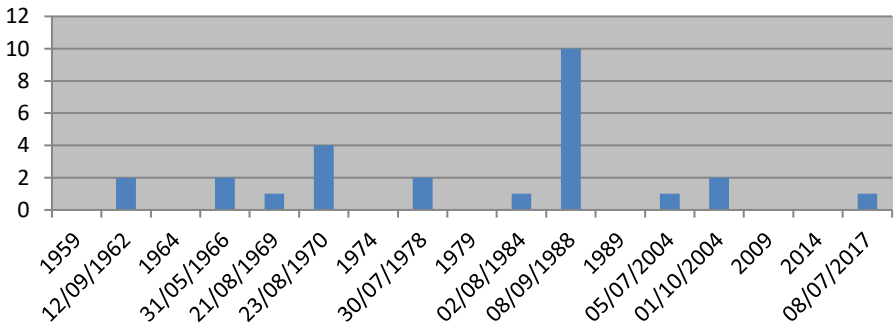
First seen on 30<sup>th</sup> March when a male arrived at Cow Harbour; by the 10<sup>th</sup> April he was joined by a female and a second male arrived in the Puddle, also joined by a female on 15<sup>th</sup> when both pairs were seen. Single birds or pairs were seen in these two areas throughout the remainder of April and up to 19<sup>th</sup> May. Behaviour would suggest that both pairs attempted to breed but no nest or chicks were located.

The only autumn record was of a single flying through the Sound on 21<sup>st</sup> October.

**[Northern] Shoveler *Anas clypeata***

*Rare passage migrant; nine previous records in May, July (2), August (3), September (2) and October.*

The long dead remains of a male was found on Kitterland on the 8<sup>th</sup> July; although it is likely the bird died there earlier in the spring, it is also possible that the remains could have been carried onto the islet by one of the many gulls that breed on Kitterland. This represents the 10<sup>th</sup> Calf record and the first since 2004.



**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

*Thunnag Feie*

*Fairly common spring & winter resident, breeds in small numbers most years*

One to three birds were seen almost daily from the start of the season and throughout the spring with maximum counts of five on 6<sup>th</sup> April and 11<sup>th</sup> May and seven on 7<sup>th</sup> April. Most records were of males, although a female was seen, often as part of a pair on the Millpond, from the end of March. On the 24<sup>th</sup> April the female appeared on the Millpond with 20 ducklings but unfortunately over the course of the following week the ducklings were predated and the last one was seen accompanying her on 2<sup>nd</sup> May. One or two birds were seen throughout May and June and the female (identified by her ring) was seen on Caigher on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. On 27<sup>th</sup> she was seen 'skulking' in the Withy and the following day was seen to have about eight young with her, however by the 1<sup>st</sup> July the ducklings had reduced to just one and this wasn't seen after that. The female remained around the Calf being seen at various locations up to the 25<sup>th</sup> July.

There were no further sightings until a male was flushed from Mill Giau on 29<sup>th</sup> September and three (MMF) took up residence, initially in the Puddle area from 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> October and 18<sup>th</sup> October - 8<sup>th</sup> November. During the latter part of their stay, the three wandered more widely also being seen at The Cletts and Cow Harbour on several occasions.

**[Eurasian] Teal** *Anas crecca*

*Thunnag Laaghag*

*Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant*

A single spring record, of a drake and two females at Cow Harbour on 30<sup>th</sup> March was followed by some unseasonal observations in June of three flying across the Puddle on 3<sup>rd</sup> (DF) and a drake flushed from the Millpond on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

**[Common] Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

*Laagh Loughlinagh*

*Formerly a rare passage migrant prior to 1992; now common breeding resident, although scarce after July*

First observed on 17<sup>th</sup>, up to nine birds were seen in March. Numbers increased quickly during April with regular counts of 20 to 30 birds and a peak of 56 on 21<sup>st</sup>. An all-Island count on 10<sup>th</sup> May revealed 83 birds in total, although this was predominantly made up of males owing to females having already started to incubate. The first young seen leaving the nest were on 20<sup>th</sup> May and after this date numbers of birds seen around the coastline began to decrease quite rapidly as males dispersed

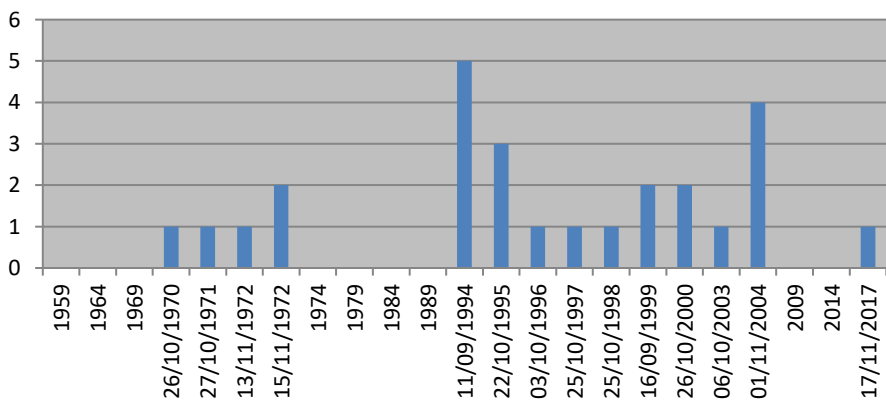


and just the incubating birds and groups of females with small young remained. Few young are thought to have survived much beyond a week old due to predation. Small numbers of females remained around both Cow and South Harbours daily up to the 8<sup>th</sup> July, with further single females seen at Cow on 15<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>.

A single record of five seen in the Sound on 16<sup>th</sup> September (MOS), before two males flew through the Sound on 3<sup>rd</sup>, a single adult male was near Grant’s Harbour on 5<sup>th</sup> and an immature male at Cow Harbour on 13<sup>th</sup> October. Eight (5M,3F) flew down the west coast of the Isle of Man and through the Sound on 5<sup>th</sup> November, when another male was seen near to Cow Harbour.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*  
*Rare autumn passage migrant; 14 previous records occurred in September (2), October (8) and November (4).*

A single flying south past Cow Harbour, on 17<sup>th</sup> October was the 15<sup>th</sup> Calf record and the first in 13 years.



**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

*Uncommon passage migrant, recorded mainly in autumn*

There were no spring records.

The first of the autumn were a group of six flying north past Chicken Rock on 21<sup>st</sup> July. During August three on 3<sup>rd</sup> and a total of 23 included a flock of 18 north past the Puddle and two singles and a group of three heading west past South Harbour on 11<sup>th</sup>. In September, five on 7<sup>th</sup> and three on 9<sup>th</sup> heading south past Cow Harbour and a single west on 10<sup>th</sup> past South Harbour. There was just one record in October of a single south past Cow Harbour on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**[Common] Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

*Scarce visitor; first recorded in 1976 there were nine records up to 2011. Records have been annual since 2015 and have involved both males and females that have been present for long periods.*

A male which was found, initially looking very “out-of-place”, on the heather moor above Culbery on 25<sup>th</sup> April. It soon found its way down into the Glen where it took up residence and held territory during spring and could be heard calling frequently through the summer until mid-July. Despite his best efforts he didn’t seem to be able to attract a mate, even though there was a very elusive female present, that was seen near to the Mill on 6<sup>th</sup> June, in the Seafield on 4<sup>th</sup> July, by the quartz on Caigher on 19<sup>th</sup> August and finally in the company of the male, in the Glen on 21<sup>st</sup> September & 18<sup>th</sup> October.

The males’ presence became less obvious during late July and the first half of August, with only the occasional sighting but his calling became more regular again from the end of August and records from the Glen area were frequent through September and to a lesser extent in October and early November.

**Red-throated Diver [Red-throated Loon] *Gavia stellata***

*Lhargey Mooar*

*Scarce passage migrant; mostly recorded in autumn*

Singles on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> October and two on 5<sup>th</sup> November, flying south off Cow harbour, were the only records of the year.

**Great Northern Diver [Common Loon] *Gavia immer***

*Arrag Vooar*

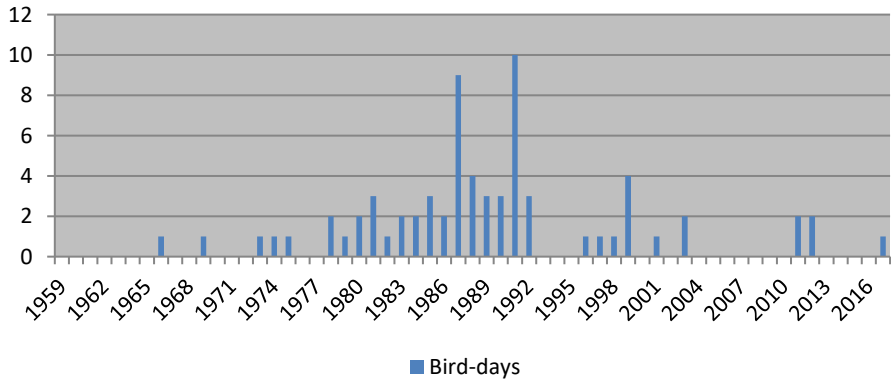
*Scarce passage migrant; mostly recorded in autumn*

A single south on 5<sup>th</sup> October, and five, south off Cow Harbour on 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Black-throated Diver [Black-throated Loon] *Gavia arctica***

*Rare passage migrant; mostly recorded in autumn*

A single south past Cow Harbour on the 21<sup>st</sup> October was the first record since 2012.



**[European] Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates pelagicus*

*Kitty Varrey*

*Regularly recorded night time visitor during summer months; breeding yet to be confirmed*

The first records of the year were of two birds trapped at South Harbour on the early date of 26<sup>th</sup> May. In June two more birds were trapped on 17<sup>th</sup> and three on 19<sup>th</sup>. Night time mist netting sessions were more frequent in July, with the majority of birds being trapped at South Harbour; eight on 6<sup>th</sup>, eight on 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>, five on 12<sup>th</sup>, 10 on 13<sup>th</sup>, six on 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup>, two on 18<sup>th</sup> at the Cletts, 14 on 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> and 5 on 24<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup>, however the last two sessions also involved catching at Gibdale.



In August nine were caught at South Harbour overnight on 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> and finally two birds were trapped at Cow Harbour, whilst mist netting for waders at 0420hrs on 27<sup>th</sup>.

The record of two trapped at the Cletts on the 18<sup>th</sup> July and

at Cow Harbour on 27<sup>th</sup> August are worthy of mention, as birds were caught in a mist net set for waders and whilst a mixed wader tape lure was playing.

## **[Northern] Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis***

*Eean Croymmagh*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

Birds were present on their breeding sites at the beginning of the season and were recorded throughout the season. Daily counts during spring rarely exceeded 50, with the exceptions being on days of notable sea passage: 75 north off Cow Harbour on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 75 east off South Harbour on 10<sup>th</sup> June, with 43 east the next day.

A breeding census count by boat on 13<sup>th</sup> June located 68 Apparently Occupied Sites (AOS) whilst on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July the count was 62 AOS. Counts of up to 25 birds were fairly regular until mid-August, where after breeding birds dispersed and records became scarce except during periods of strong winds, which produced some small scale passage between the 7<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> September with a peak of 36 on 7<sup>th</sup>. A few individuals were seen around the cliffs during the first week of November, when 78 flew south past Cow Harbour on 5<sup>th</sup> and 102 moved south on 10<sup>th</sup> November. Birds had returned to their breeding ledges by the end of the season with 48 present on the cliffs between Kione ny Halby and Big Head on the 15<sup>th</sup> November.

## **Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus***

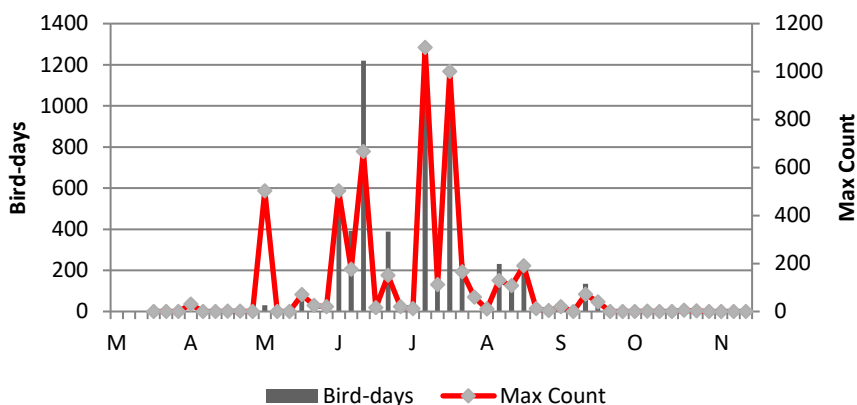
*Scraayl*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

Singles seen at sea on 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April were the first records of the year. Visits to the established colonies were not made until late April when 30 birds were seen ashore overnight on 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> April. A further visit to the Puddle, South Harbour and Kione ny Halby colonies on 15<sup>th</sup> May recorded at least 70 birds ashore. In the latter half of May we were joined by an MSc student who conducted call-back monitoring on

selected burrows throughout the three main east coast colonies and at Baie Fine.

Despite birds breeding on the Calf, daytime observations at sea were relatively few during May, so a movement of 475 west, in 1 hour, off South Harbour on 30<sup>th</sup> May was notable. During June, daytime observations at sea, off South Harbour, became more common place and included several sizeable sea passages of birds moving west; with 122 on 6<sup>th</sup>, 129 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 666 on 10<sup>th</sup> and 429 on 11<sup>th</sup>. During the latter half of June several 'rafting' flocks were also seen in the vicinity of South Harbour with 100 on 21<sup>st</sup> and 150 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Several large rafts of birds were seen out towards Chicken Rock during July, with up to 1000 birds on both the 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>.



Records remained reasonably frequent through the first half of August, with birds still being observed visiting the colonies and with some sea passage, including counts of 100 west off Chicken's Rock on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 129 east off South Harbour in half an hour on 5<sup>th</sup> and 172 west on 14<sup>th</sup>. After mid-month records became much less frequent and by September the only records were of birds observed at sea during autumn storms, between 7<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>, with a peak of 72 on 7<sup>th</sup>. The final

birds of the season were seen passing south off Cow Harbour during seawatches; with a single on 2<sup>nd</sup>, five on 17<sup>th</sup> and two on 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Balearic Shearwater** *Puffinus mauretanicus*

*Very scarce autumn passage migrant; approximately 63 previous sightings since the first record in 1968.*

A single flew north past Chicken Rock on 9<sup>th</sup> September, the first record since 2008.

**[Eurasian] Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

*Very rare vagrant; no previous records*

The first Calf record was of three birds seen flying high over the rear of the Observatory towards the Lighthouses on the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> May. The birds were subsequently seen at Langness the following morning (see rarity report, p181).

**[Northern] Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

*Gannet*

*Common passage migrant; feeding flocks present offshore during April to August.*

Recorded mostly in single figures from 17<sup>th</sup> March, and throughout spring, with most birds being seen either, near the Sound or along the west coast; during late April several feeding flocks were observed out towards Chicken Rock with 43 on 25<sup>th</sup>, 60 on 29<sup>th</sup> and 35 on 1<sup>st</sup> May. During periods of stronger winds some sea passage was recorded with 37 west on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 20 east on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 39 west on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 164 west on 10<sup>th</sup> and 66 west on 11<sup>th</sup>.

An interesting observation of one alighting on a cliff face to the north of the Upper Lighthouse on 12<sup>th</sup> May (MBL) could potentially give rise to speculation over the next species to be proven breeding on the Calf!

During July and August, between, 30 – 50 birds were feeding offshore most days, with a peak of 200 in a feeding frenzy off South Harbour on 14<sup>th</sup> July. Offshore passage also included high counts of 130 on 15<sup>th</sup> & 180 on 21<sup>st</sup> July and 235 west on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 100 east on 6<sup>th</sup>, 167 south on 11<sup>th</sup> & 109 north on 18<sup>th</sup> August.

Daily counts during autumn passage rarely exceeded 60 birds, however peaks occurred during a week of gales in early September with 244 west on 7<sup>th</sup>, 164 north on 9<sup>th</sup>, 270 south on 11<sup>th</sup> & 200 on 13<sup>th</sup> and in October 217 south on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 373 south on 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea***

*Coayr / Coayr ny Hastan / Coayr Glass*

*Fairly regular non-breeding visitor*

A single near the Dock on 30<sup>th</sup> March was the first record of the year. There were no further records until 4<sup>th</sup> May where after single birds were seen on 11 dates during the month, with two on 19<sup>th</sup>. All records involved adult birds and are presumably failed or birds that have finished breeding and are beginning to wander.

Records were scarce during the first half of June, with just a single on 3<sup>rd</sup>, then 1-2 birds were recorded on 10 dates during the remainder of the month and on 5 dates during the first half of July. Singles occurred on 5 dates in August before sightings became more regular in September with three on 5<sup>th</sup>, two on 8<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> plus singles on 11 dates followed by singles on seven dates in October.

**[European] Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis***

*Fannag / Feeagh Varrey*

*Common breeding resident*

Present from the beginning of the season, with birds already prospecting nest sites and holding territory when we arrived, with 18 active nests located in the Kione ny Halby colony on 6<sup>th</sup> April.

| <b>Location</b>                       | <b>Apparently Occupied Nest</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Big Head / Cletts                     | 3                               |
| Giau Yairn                            | 12                              |
| Kione ny Halby (main colony)          | 35                              |
| Kione ny Halby (south)                | 6                               |
| Burroo                                | 2                               |
| Lower Lighthouse Field (Cliffs below) | 1                               |
| Amulty / Baie n' Ooig                 | 15                              |
| Baie Fine                             | 15                              |
| Gibdale Bay                           | 16                              |
| Gibdale Point                         | 2                               |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>107</b>                      |

During late May and through June, large feeding flocks, up to 200 strong, were seen. These numbers were then swelled by fledged young with the highest June count being 300 in the Sound on 14<sup>th</sup>, rising to 400 on 8<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> July, 450 on the 15<sup>th</sup> July, 440 on 10<sup>th</sup> and 550 on 15<sup>th</sup> August. High counts during the first half of September were 330 on 1<sup>st</sup> and 300 on 6<sup>th</sup> before birds dispersed and counts rarely exceeded double figures from then on to the end of the season.

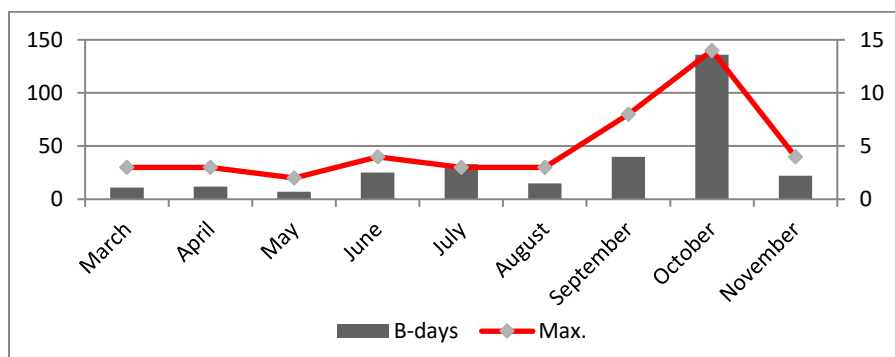
## **(Great) Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo***

### *Arragh Vooar*

*Formerly bred 1959 - 1974; fairly common resident, increasing numbers in autumn*

One to three birds were seen around the coastline of the Calf during the first half of the year and throughout the summer. Post-breeding dispersal was evident from mid-June, as the bird-day totals indicate. During late September and throughout October, a low tide roost developed at The Cletts with regular counts of up to nine birds and maximums of 14 on 29<sup>th</sup> October and 12 the following day.

|        | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| B-days | 11  | 12  | 7   | 25  | 33  | 15  | 40  | 136 | 22  |
| Max.   | 3   | 3   | 2   | 4   | 3   | 3   | 8   | 14  | 4   |



## **Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus***

### *Drean Ushtey*

*Bred 1988 to 1994; Scarce passage migrant*

A single heard calling from the *Juncus* in the Front Field on the afternoon of the 9<sup>th</sup> was also present on 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> November and was the only record of the year.

**[Common] Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***

*Kiark Ushtey*

*Formerly bred; scarce passage migrant*

A juvenile was filmed making its way along the beach in the Puddle on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. The footage was captured on a trail camera and rather surprisingly was the first record of this, previously, once common breeder, since 2008.

**[Western] Osprey *Pandion haliaetus***

*Scarce passage migrant; 47 previous records since the first in 1961*

A relatively poor showing, after the record year in 2016; a single was seen along the east coast at Kione ny Halby on 29<sup>th</sup> August (Bob Taylor, Gemini) and was later seen heading past Burroo. What was presumably the same bird was seen near the lighthouses on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup> August (CB & GB).

**[Eurasian] Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus***

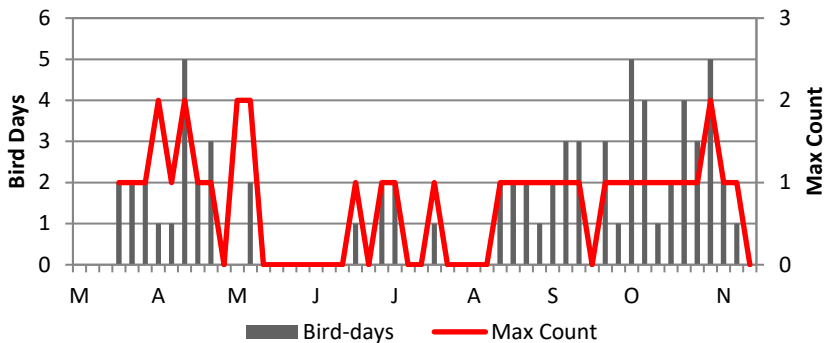
*Shawk / Shirragh / Shirragh ny Giark*

*Fairly common spring and autumn passage migrant*

One or two birds were recorded regularly during March and April (up to 23<sup>rd</sup>) with the number of bird days clearly indicating a passage through the Island at this time. Two circling high over Rarick and Caigher on 8<sup>th</sup> May was the only record for that month.

June and July records related to an immature male, initially ringed on 20<sup>th</sup> March, wandering over from the main Island.

Autumn passage was seen from 9<sup>th</sup> August involving mostly singles.

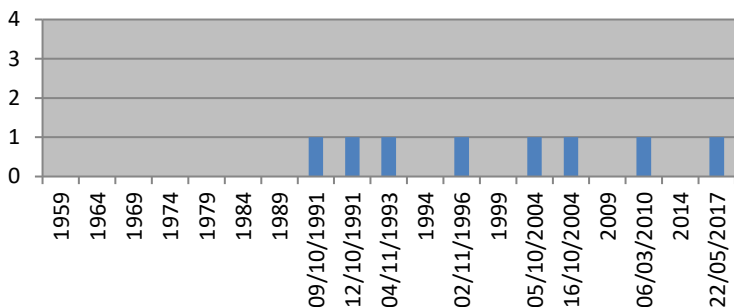


|        | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| B-days | 6   | 12  | 2   | 3   | 1   | 9   | 14  | 20  | 3   |
| Max.   | 1   | 2   | 2   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 2   | 1   |

### [Northern] Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

*Very rare passage migrant; seven previous records occurred in March, October (4) and November (2).*

The 8<sup>th</sup> Calf record, and first recorded in May, was a female seen flying low over the Observatory towards the Lighthouses. It was being mobbed by several Herring Gulls, which gave a good size comparison.

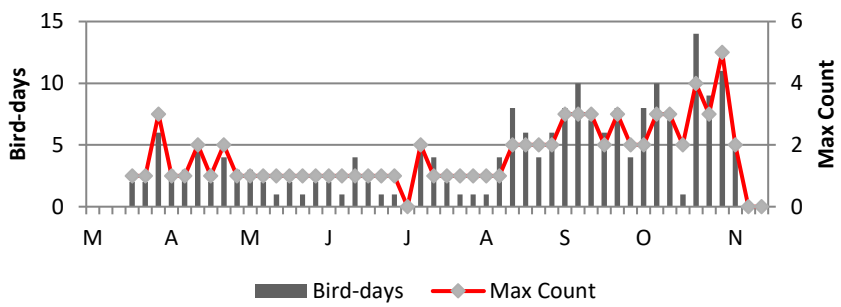


**Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus***  
*Common resident and passage migrant, that occasionally breeds*

Evidence of spring passage were three recorded on 27<sup>th</sup> March, otherwise mostly singles with two on 31<sup>st</sup> March and 11<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

A single female remained throughout the summer months often frequenting Gibdale and the area of heath above the twin fields. No evidence of breeding was found and most records to the end of July were of this individual, which remained through until its moult was completed in August.

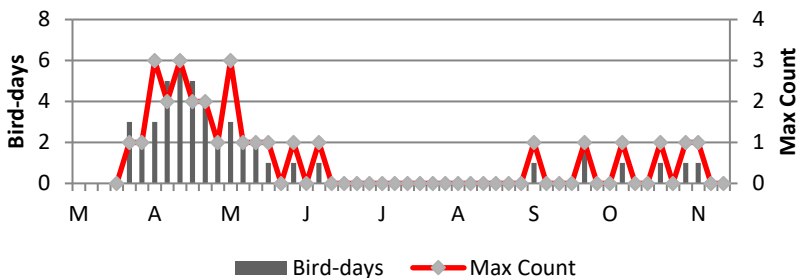
During August and September up to two different birds were regularly seen, with three being recorded on 31<sup>st</sup> August and 19<sup>th</sup> September. It was often thought that there could be more individuals on the Island, but counts reflected the maximum number seen at any one time. During October up to three birds were seen on 7 dates with four on 18<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> and five on 29<sup>th</sup>.



|        | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| B-days | 10  | 20  | 11  | 10  | 13  | 35  | 36  | 58  | 5   |
| Max.   | 3   | 2   | 1   | 1   | 2   | 3   | 3   | 5   | 2   |

*Formerly a rare passage migrant; fairly common spring and autumn visitor since 2015, most likely originating from the small breeding population now present on the Isle of Man*

Autumn records were surprisingly scarce and comprised singles on 1<sup>st</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> September and 6<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> October, and 5<sup>th</sup> November.



*Earkan*

*Formerly bred; occasional passage migrant*

Two flying over the Heath on 18<sup>th</sup> June was the first record of the year, presumably failed breeders from the main Island beginning to disperse.

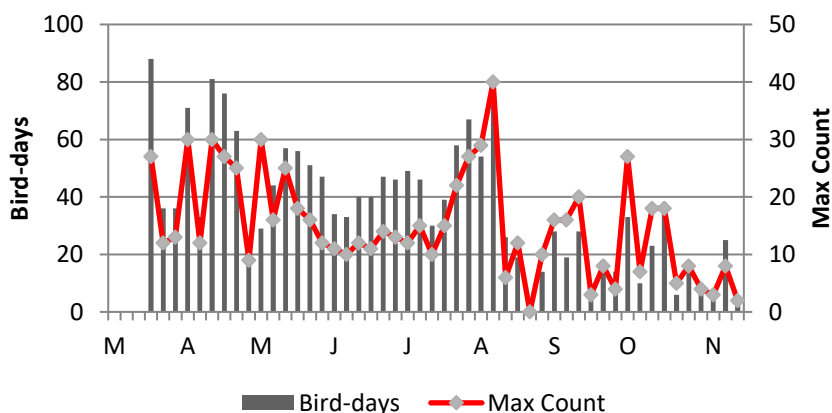
Further singles were recorded in the Puddle on 30<sup>th</sup> June, on the track by the Old Mill on the 8<sup>th</sup> and in the Seafield on 26<sup>th</sup> July and 9<sup>th</sup> August and 18<sup>th</sup> September and finally two near the Puddle on 16<sup>th</sup> October.

## [Eurasian] Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Garee Breck / Bridgeen

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

Recorded daily from the start of the season, with a small flock of wintering birds present at Cow Harbour throughout spring and into early May; with monthly peaks of 27 on 16<sup>th</sup> March & 16<sup>th</sup> April and 25 on 13<sup>th</sup> May.



Eight pairs bred around the coastline, with pairs at South Harbour, The Puddle, Rarick, Leodan, Caigher Point and two pairs at Cow Harbour.

Autumn dispersal occurred from early July with breeding birds becoming less evident and small groups, of migrating/returning birds, appearing at Cow Harbour with 15 on 16<sup>th</sup> & 22 on 19<sup>th</sup> July and 35 on 3<sup>rd</sup> August being the peak counts.

**[European] Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

*Ushag Reeast/Fedjag Reeast*

*Occasional passage migrant*

The only spring record was of a single heard flying over at dawn on 6<sup>th</sup> April.

The first birds of the autumn were seven flying over the Front Field on 11<sup>th</sup> September, followed by three in the Seafield on 12<sup>th</sup> and singles flying over the Observatory on 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> and another over Caigher on 23<sup>rd</sup>. In October singles were seen or heard flying over the island on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>, four on 4<sup>th</sup>, six on 13<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> and three on 27<sup>th</sup> plus a flock of at least 50 birds passed over the Burroo during a southerly gale on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**[Common] Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

*Feddag Ainnit*

*Occasional passage migrant*

Spring records involved fly-over birds on 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> May. On the former date a single was seen heading north during the morning and either the same or a different bird was heard heading south in the late evening.

In autumn a single flew over the Observatory on 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

### **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

*Fairly regular passage migrant, mostly in spring*

First seen at Cow Harbour on 15<sup>th</sup> April, the only other record that month involved two birds, also at Cow Harbour on 24<sup>th</sup>. During May singles were seen on 10<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> with two on 13<sup>th</sup>.

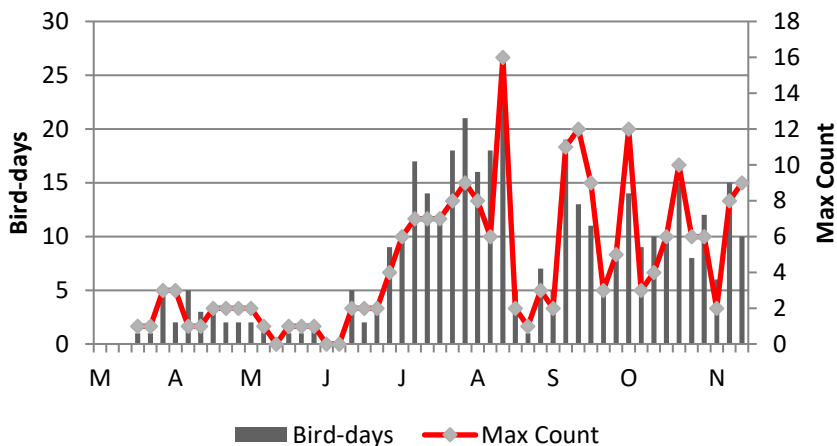
The only record of the autumn was a single bird seen with Curlew at the Cletts on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

### **[Eurasian] Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

*Crothead*

*Up to three pairs formerly bred prior to 1982; common passage migrant*

First recorded 18<sup>th</sup> March, one or two birds seen sporadically through to 27<sup>th</sup> May with a maximum count of three on 29<sup>th</sup> March. Most records were of birds in and around the Puddle / South Harbour area.



Return passage or dispersal of failed breeders began on 9<sup>th</sup> June with 1-2 birds seen almost daily until after 27<sup>th</sup> when numbers began to

increase, with six on 30<sup>th</sup>. Up to 10 birds were seen almost daily throughout July to October, with monthly maxima of nine on 28<sup>th</sup> July, 16 on 11<sup>th</sup> August and 12 on 11<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**[Ruddy] Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

*Goblaghan*

*Fairly common passage migrant and common winter visitor*

The only spring record was of two summer-plumaged birds seen in South Harbour on 8<sup>th</sup> May.

Autumn passage involved singles at Cow Harbour on 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> July and 2<sup>nd</sup> August with two on 26<sup>th</sup> August and 17<sup>th</sup> October.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

*Breck ny Traie*

*Scarce passage migrant*

Singles were seen at Cow Harbour on 4<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> July and a flock of seven there, on 2<sup>nd</sup> August.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

*Fairly common passage migrant and winter resident*

The species is known to frequent a cave under the Lighthouses that is only accessible from the sea. Even then, the birds roost high up towards the rear of the cave and can be difficult to see. A visit by boat on 17<sup>th</sup> April recorded at least 20 birds.

Records away from the cave were of a confiding juvenile in South Harbour on 14<sup>th</sup> August and singles at Cow Harbour on 11<sup>th</sup> September and 22<sup>nd</sup> October. Two were observed back in the cave on 8<sup>th</sup> October (BT).

**[Eurasian] Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

*Ushag Rennee*

*Fairly regular autumn passage and winter migrant*

Only recorded in November with five single records and three birds seen on one date; the first of the year was a single seen flying past the Observatory and diving into cover during the afternoon of 2<sup>nd</sup> November. What was probably the same bird was present in the back field on 3<sup>rd</sup>, when a single was also flushed from near the Smithy and the remains of a fresh killed bird were found in the Lighthouse fields. On the evening of the 4<sup>th</sup>, a single was seen feeding in the 'vegetable garden' below the 1968 Lighthouse and one was flushed from the Triangle on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Further singles were then seen around the Observatory on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

**[Common] Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

*Coayr Heddagh*

*Fairly regular passage migrant*

Spring records involved single birds seen on 19<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> March and 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> April, and 2<sup>nd</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> May and two on 6<sup>th</sup> April.

The first of the autumn was a single flushed from the Millpond on 7<sup>th</sup> July followed by records in August of three on 12<sup>th</sup> and singles on 14<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. There were just three further records of singles on 16<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> September and 28<sup>th</sup> October.

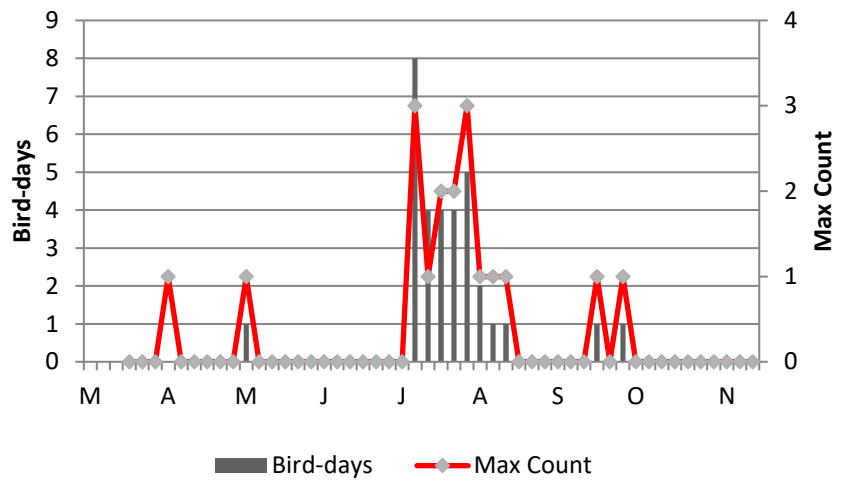
**Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos***

*Looyran*

*Uncommon spring migrant and common autumn passage migrant*

The first of the year was a bird heard calling at 00:30hrs on 30<sup>th</sup> April whilst we were surveying Manx Shearwaters at Kione ny Halby. This was the only record of the spring.

In autumn one or two birds were recorded almost daily from 4<sup>th</sup> July to 29<sup>th</sup> July, with a maximum of three on 8<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. Further singles were seen on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> August and 15<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> September.



**[Common] Redshank *Tringa totanus***

*Goblan Marrey*

*Fairly common passage migrant*

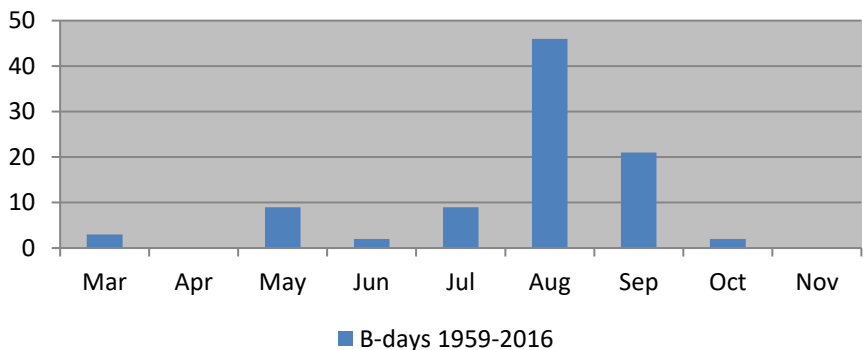
The first record of the year was of four return passage birds at Cow Harbour on 27<sup>th</sup> June. Records were more regular in July with singles on 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and two on 19<sup>th</sup> but became surprisingly scarce over the next couple of months. During August two were heard after dark on 14<sup>th</sup> and seven were trapped & ringed during the early hours of the 27<sup>th</sup>. A further single on 31<sup>st</sup> August, before others on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 15 sheltering in South Harbour on 8<sup>th</sup> September.

**[Common] Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

*Uncommon passage migrant*

A single first heard calling as it flew past the Puddle was subsequently flushed from the Millpond on 11<sup>th</sup> April – this represents the first record for that month.

In autumn a more typical record of one on Caigher on the 8<sup>th</sup> August. The graph below shows the bird-day totals by month up to the end of 2016.



**[Black-legged] Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla***

*Perragh*

*Formerly bred pre-2013; common passage migrant and summer visitor from nearby colonies.*

Twenty-two south off Culbery on 31<sup>st</sup> March was the first recorded for the year. During April and May single figure counts were made on only a very few occasions, with a maximum of five on 15<sup>th</sup> April until 155 flew east in one hour past South Harbour on 30<sup>th</sup> May. During June small numbers were regularly seen off the east coast, and occasionally in the Sound, as birds from the breeding colonies at the Chasms made feeding excursions past the Calf. Strong westerly winds during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of June produced some movement of birds with 37 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 112 on 10<sup>th</sup> and 38 on 11<sup>th</sup> all moving west. Small numbers of feeding birds continued to be seen throughout July with several larger concentrations, most notably 200 roosting on Chicken Rock during calm weather on 6<sup>th</sup> and 50 accompanying Gannets in a feeding frenzy off South Harbour on 14<sup>th</sup>. Birds were seen regularly until the end of July when dispersal from their breeding colonies started to take place, evidence of this being 120 flying through the Sound on 26<sup>th</sup> July and only small numbers, up to 15, were recorded during the first half of August.

Autumn sea passage was poor during September with counts of up to 12 on only four dates between 7<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, plus a maximum count of 107 south off Culbery on 13<sup>th</sup>. In comparison there were some remarkable movements south off Cow Harbour later in the autumn with an impressive 2,845 on 17<sup>th</sup> plus 194 on 21<sup>st</sup> and 873 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October and 341 on 10<sup>th</sup> November.

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

*Pirragh*

*Fairly common passage migrant*

The first spring record was of two birds being blown down from Port Erin Bay and through the Sound during a seawatch on 20<sup>th</sup> March, then three seen off Cow Harbour during a heavy sea passage of Kittiwake and Manx Shearwaters in the late afternoon of 30<sup>th</sup> May. Two adults were feeding in the Sound on 6<sup>th</sup> June and two more adults were seen to fly east past South Harbour on the evening of 20<sup>th</sup> June.

Post-breeding dispersal was evident with a flock of 18 adults flying west past South Harbour on 4<sup>th</sup> July, single adults off the east coast on 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, two in the Sound on 19<sup>th</sup> and nine flying over Burroo on 10<sup>th</sup> August. A single adult flew north over the Withy and up the Glen during the evening of the 31<sup>st</sup> August

Autumn sea passage was recorded when 12 flew west off South Harbour on 14<sup>th</sup> August, an adult flew south off Cow Harbour on 6<sup>th</sup> September, with five south on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, when two were also seen on the sea off Caigher and two through the Sound on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. The last record of the year was a single heading south past Cow Harbour on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

*Rare migrant*

An adult flew south off Cow Harbour on 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

The 48<sup>th</sup> record and 75<sup>th</sup> individual recorded from the Calf.

## **Common [Mew] Gull *Larus canus***

*Foillan Vane*

*Uncommon passage migrant*

An adult bird was observed feeding with other gulls in the Sound during a north-westerly near gale on 6<sup>th</sup> June.

Autumn records consisted of birds seen in and around the Sound, with an adult on the 11<sup>th</sup> and two on 15<sup>th</sup> September plus an adult and a 1st winter bird on 3<sup>rd</sup>, single adults on 17<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> October, two adults on 5<sup>th</sup> and one on 12<sup>th</sup> November.

## **Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus***

*Juan Mooar*

*Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor*

For much of the year this species is ever-present around the coast of the Calf and found scavenging around the field systems, particularly on the look-out for an unsuspecting rabbit. At the start of the season resident birds were already on their territorial sites, however several large congregations were also recorded, with 200 on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 150 on 30<sup>th</sup> March. These involved birds taking shelter on Caigher during strong westerly winds.



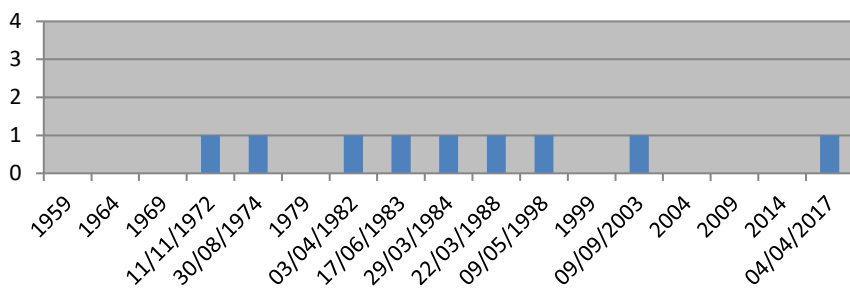
| Location                          | Apparently Occupied Nest |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Kitterland                        | 18                       |
| Gibdale to Cow Harbour            | 3                        |
| Grants Harbour & The Cletts       | 2                        |
| Seafield                          | 2                        |
| Central Heath / Upper Withy Field | 2                        |
| Burroo Neck                       | 1                        |
| Rarick                            | 1                        |
| Puddle                            | 1                        |
| Caigher                           | 8                        |
| Lower Twin Field                  | 1                        |
| Amulty                            | 2                        |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>41</b>                |

Post-breeding dispersal occurred after mid-August, when daily counts reduced to no more than 10 – 20 birds. The first storms of the autumn encouraged birds to take shelter on Caigher with 45 on 11<sup>th</sup> and 47 on 14<sup>th</sup> September followed by 99 on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, when a southerly passage of 72 was also observed off Cow Harbour. Further south-ward passage past Cow Harbour was recorded during several seawatches in October with 48 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 36 on 5<sup>th</sup>, 59 on 17<sup>th</sup>, 37 on 21<sup>st</sup> and 110 on 22<sup>nd</sup>. In addition, roosts on Caigher contained 97 on 4<sup>th</sup>, 30 on 5<sup>th</sup>, 38 on 11<sup>th</sup>, 66 on 13<sup>th</sup>, 65 on 17<sup>th</sup>, 44 on 21<sup>st</sup>, 42 on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 112 on 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides***

*Very rare migrant; eight previous records occurred in March (2), April, May, June, August, September and November.*

A 3<sup>rd</sup> summer bird was observed flying south from Port Erin Bay and landed amongst a group of Herring Gulls just offshore from Cow Harbour. It spent about half an hour in the area but was often ‘bullied’ by the other gulls. This represents the 9<sup>th</sup> Calf record and the first for 14 years.



### **(European) Herring Gull *Larus argentatus***

*Foillan*

*Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor*

During the early part of the year a few counts were made of birds at Cow Harbour, with 129 on 19<sup>th</sup> & 220 on 31<sup>st</sup> March and 325 on 2<sup>nd</sup> April. On the latter date a few nests were starting to be built.

| <b>Location</b>                       | <b>Apparently Occupied Nest</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Kitterland                            | 18                              |
| Cow Harbour                           | 121                             |
| Big Head & Giau Yairn                 | 6                               |
| Kione ny Halby                        | 9                               |
| Central Heath                         | 26                              |
| South Harbour/Burroo                  | 8                               |
| Rarick                                | 58                              |
| Kittiwake Cave                        | 11                              |
| Caigher Dubh                          | 27                              |
| Giau Laing                            | 8                               |
| Lower Lighthouse Field (Cliffs below) | 6                               |
| Amulty                                | 5                               |
| Baie Fine                             | 5                               |
| Gibdale                               | 5                               |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>313</b>                      |

As with the other large gulls, post-breeding dispersal occurred after mid-August and counts during the second half of the month rarely exceeded 30 birds. This continued through much of September, although by the end of the month numbers started to increase again, with 145 on 26<sup>th</sup> being the peak count. A large night-time roost above South Harbour was located in early October and held at least 400 birds on 3<sup>rd</sup> but daytime counts only reached three figures on five other occasions to the end of the season.

## **Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus***

*Foillan Saggyrt*

*Common breeding resident and fairly common passage migrant*

Nine on the 15<sup>th</sup> March were the first of the year and numbers quickly built up to 21 on 16<sup>th</sup> and 43 by the 18<sup>th</sup>. Birds quickly took up territory in or adjacent to their breeding colonies with most sightings being from either the Dubh/Caigher area or at the Kione ny Halby colony, where 44 birds were counted on 17<sup>th</sup> April. Peak counts of 46 on 28<sup>th</sup> April and 17<sup>th</sup> May does not represent a total figure when compared to number of pairs known to be breeding.

| <b>Location</b> | <b>Apparently Occupied Nest</b> |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Kitterland      | 1                               |
| Kione ny Halby  | 20                              |
| Kittiwake Cave  | 1                               |
| Caigher Dubh    | 6                               |
| Total           | 28                              |

Breeding birds were in evidence until mid-August, where after numbers decreased significantly as birds dispersed and only five bird-days were recorded in the second half of the month. During September a series of records were associated with a spell of strong westerly winds with up to three recorded on seven dates between 6<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> plus 18 west past South Harbour on 7<sup>th</sup> and five north past Culbery on 9<sup>th</sup>. In October there was just one record of a single on 1<sup>st</sup> and in November an adult at Cow Harbour on 6<sup>th</sup> November

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

*Uncommon passage migrant*

A single flew west past South Harbour on the 13<sup>th</sup> July was the only record of the year.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

*Gibbyn Gant*

*Scarce migrant*

A single flew south past Cow Harbour on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

*Scarce migrant*

A juvenile flew south past Cow Harbour on 22<sup>nd</sup> October

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

*Maarliagh Marrey*

*Uncommon passage migrant*

No spring records.

The first of autumn was a bird seen flying over South Harbour store being mobbed by a Herring Gull on 10<sup>th</sup> July. There followed regular sightings over the course of the next two months which are likely to have been of the same bird. On the 12<sup>th</sup> flying west past Kione ny Halby and on the 19<sup>th</sup> a single was seen around the Cow Harbour gull colony during the morning and what was probably the same bird was located on Caigher in the afternoon. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> one was filmed harassing Herring Gulls off the west coast and was for the remainder of the month seen regularly on Caigher. During August, presumably the same individual was seen regularly through to the 19<sup>th</sup>, although it

roamed more widely and is known to have also visited sites in the south of the Isle of Man and sometimes disappeared for several days at a time. A final sighting on 25<sup>th</sup> August was also thought to be of this same bird.

Autumn passage involved birds flying south off Cow Harbour, with three on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 13 on 17<sup>th</sup>, a single on 21<sup>st</sup> and two, on 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

*Rare passage migrant*

An adult flew south off Cow Harbour on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

**Arctic Skua [Parasitic Jaeger]** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

*Shirragh Varrey*

*Uncommon autumn passage migrant*

All records involved pale-phase birds seen moving south off Cow Harbour, with three on 2<sup>nd</sup>, a single on 3<sup>rd</sup> and six on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

**Common Guillemot [Common Murre]** *Uria algae*

*Stronnag / Chennell*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

A single off Cow Harbour on 31<sup>st</sup> March was the first of the year. Numbers were low throughout April with records on only three dates and a maximum of six birds seen on 3<sup>rd</sup>. From 10<sup>th</sup> May sightings became more regular and birds began to occupy nesting ledges with 71 counted at Giau Yairn on 20<sup>th</sup> and 40 were present on 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> June. On the latter date a sea-based survey also found 76 birds on ledges on Big Head, three on Burroo and six below the Lower Lighthouse. Sea passage was a regular sight past the east coast and South Harbour, with small parties of birds flying east and west,

presumably travelling between feeding grounds out at sea and their nesting ledges on the Calf and at the Chasms. As a result of windier weather there were also several more substantial sea passages observed passing South Harbour with 116 flying east on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 794 west on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 676 west on 10<sup>th</sup> and 212 west on 11<sup>th</sup>. A sea-based survey on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July produced a total of 215 birds counted ashore.

Dispersal from breeding ledges occurred around the final week of July, with records becoming scarce after 22<sup>nd</sup> and there was only one August record of two birds flying east past South Harbour on 6<sup>th</sup>. Following five in the Puddle on the 1<sup>st</sup> September, there were a few records during unsettled weather from 7<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> September, with a maxima of eight on 11<sup>th</sup> September. In October singles were identified on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> and 13 were seen on 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Razorbill *Alca torda***

#### *Coltrag*

#### *Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

Sixty-two on the sea below the Lighthouses on 2<sup>nd</sup> April were the first recorded for the year, however there were no more records until one was seen ashore at Giau Yairn on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Forty-eight were below the Lighthouses on 20<sup>th</sup> and an Island count of 116 was achieved on 21<sup>st</sup>. Seen much more frequently in May, with counts of 20-30 being quite regular with an Island count of 177 on 10<sup>th</sup> and 66 were counted in Gibdale on 31<sup>st</sup>. On 31<sup>st</sup> May a total of 31 birds were recorded in one hour flying east past South Harbour. During a sea-based census of the breeding seabirds around the Calf on 13<sup>th</sup> June a total of 72 Razorbill were counted ashore.

Records became scarce after the 15<sup>th</sup> July, once chicks had left their nests and accompanied the adults out to sea. There were no records in August and just singles on the 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> September. In October

numbers were larger and it is likely that many of the unidentified auks were in fact of this species. Records of those that came close enough to allow specific identification were 15 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10 on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>, eight on 22<sup>nd</sup> and a single on 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Unidentified large “auks” *Uria* / *Alca* spp.**

Two on the 20<sup>th</sup> March were the first record of any auks for the year. In spring larger counts were 60 on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 17<sup>th</sup> May & 27<sup>th</sup> June plus three figure counts of 326 west past South Harbour on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 112 on 6<sup>th</sup> and 120 on 9<sup>th</sup> June. The majority of these spring sightings were thought to be mostly Guillemots moving between feeding grounds to the west of the coast and breeding sites on the southern coast of the Isle of Man.

Small numbers were seen on six dates during September with a maximum of 19 on 13<sup>th</sup>. A heavier passage was recorded in October with 60 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 70 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 812 on 17<sup>th</sup>, 38 on 21<sup>st</sup> and 333 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. During the autumn passage the majority of sightings were thought to be Razorbill.

### **[Atlantic] Puffin *Fratercula arctica***

*Pibbin / Poltrag*

*Formerly bred; uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant*

The first observation of spring was of a single seen amongst a raft of Razorbill just off Burroo Neck on 12<sup>th</sup> May (MBL). Two were on the sea off Big Head on 30<sup>th</sup> May, when a further single was observed flying east past South Harbour. A series of records involving between 1-3 birds on nine dates during June were mostly birds seen flying west during seawatches, however several individuals were also observed on the sea, principally along the east coast and one record below the lighthouses. Singles were seen at Big Head on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> July, with a

second bird observed landing ashore at Kione ny Halby on the latter date. Birds seen during seawatches include a single west past South Harbour on 10<sup>th</sup>, six west on 14<sup>th</sup>, four north off Culberty on 15<sup>th</sup> and five south on 21<sup>st</sup> with a single east past South Harbour on the latter date. The final record of the summer was of a single off South Harbour on 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

The only autumn passage record was of two flying through the Sound, being chased by a Great Black-backed Gull on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Black Guillemot** *Cephus grille*

*Caillagh Ghoo*

*Fairly common breeding resident and scarce passage migrant*

Recorded sporadically from 7<sup>th</sup> April with one to three birds seen at both Kione ny Halby and near The Stack. An all-Island count on 10<sup>th</sup> May recorded seven birds. Records were scarce during June, with just singles on 11<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> and two on 21<sup>st</sup> but increased significantly during July when one to three birds were seen regularly between Gibdale and Cow Harbour with five on 13<sup>th</sup>, four on 19<sup>th</sup> and a peak count of eight on 21<sup>st</sup>. Two off Gibdale on 3<sup>rd</sup> August were the last records of the summer.

Autumn sea passage records were of birds flying south of Cow Harbour during October storms, with a single on 2<sup>nd</sup>, five on 17<sup>th</sup> and six on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

*Calmane ny Creggey*

*Uncommon visitor*

It is likely that all records refer to Racing Pigeons passing over or making brief stops on the Calf.

|        | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| B-days | 0   | 0   | 16  | 6   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Max.   | -   | -   | 9   | 4   | 1   | 1   | -   | -   | -   |

## Woodpigeon [Common Wood Pigeon] *Columba palumbus*

*Calmane Keylley*

*Formerly bred; fairly common passage migrant*

|        | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| B-days | 9   | 4   | 4   | 5   | 0   | 1   | 0   | 654 | 139 |
| Max.   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 2   | -   | 1   | -   | 253 | 91  |

Spring records involved just single birds except for two on 20<sup>th</sup> June. A single bird on 13<sup>th</sup> August was the only record during the summer months.

Autumn passage began with a single on 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> October and three on 25<sup>th</sup> before the main movement and larger flocks were recorded; with 253 on 27<sup>th</sup>, 166 on 29<sup>th</sup> & 230 on 30<sup>th</sup> October and 91 on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 40 on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

**[Common] Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus***

*Cooag*

*Uncommon summer passage migrant*

Spring passage consisted of a single on 30<sup>th</sup> April, three on 5<sup>th</sup> and two on 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> May.

There was no summer or autumn records

**Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus***

*Formerly bred pre-1980 & 2009; uncommon / rare passage migrant*

The only spring record was of an individual seen on the evening of 4<sup>th</sup> April quartering over the heath near to Jane's House.

**[Common] Swift *Apus apus***

*Gollan ny Greg*

*Irregular summer passage migrant*

In a very poor spring showing there were only three records up to the end of June: singles on 6<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> May and three flying north on 28<sup>th</sup> June.

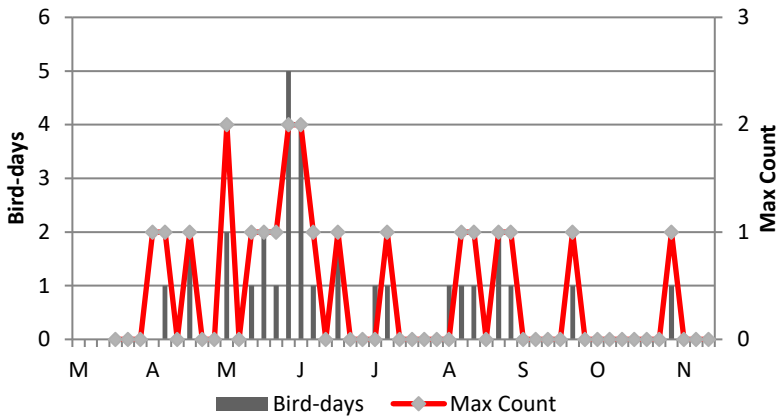
Records were a little more frequent in July with a single on 5<sup>th</sup>, five on 6<sup>th</sup>, three on 7<sup>th</sup> and two on both 12<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> and singles on 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> were the last of the year.

**[Eurasian] Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto***

*Formerly bred; uncommon passage migrant*

In spring singles were recorded on 5<sup>th</sup>, 18-19<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 17-18<sup>th</sup> May and almost daily from 23<sup>rd</sup> with two on 27<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>. Most records involve birds arriving at the farmhouse, although the bird on 17<sup>th</sup> May was first seen perching on the crane at South Harbour and

what was probably the same bird seen on Caigher the following day. During June there were singles on 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> and in July on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>.



Autumn records consisted of singles on 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> August with just single records in September on 19<sup>th</sup> and October on 27<sup>th</sup>.

## Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopus major*

### *Snoggeyder*

Very rare migrant; nine previous records occurred in April (1969), May (2004), August (1988), September (1968 [2], 2012) & October (2003, 2010, 2012)

One was heard calling near to the Observatory on two separate occasions during the morning of 26<sup>th</sup> October, although was unfortunately not located.

**[Common] Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***

*Stannair Ruy*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

First recorded on 19<sup>th</sup> March there were five further records of single birds during the month, although, some evidence of passage was recorded with three on 27<sup>th</sup> and two on 31<sup>st</sup>. The species was conspicuous by its absence during April with just seven singles seen. Records became more regular during May with 18 bird-days and included a pair that was seen around Ghaw Laing mid-month. Eighteen bird-days during June were largely involving two adult males that were present mid-month, presumably failed breeders beginning to disperse. One to two birds were seen almost daily through July with the surprise finding of three recently fledged young at Mill Giau on 15<sup>th</sup>. The 'family party' accounted for most records through to mid-August, when the young dispersed and daily counts returned to one or two birds through the remainder of the autumn and to the season end.

**Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus***

*Very rare vagrant; the only previous record was a male seen near Gibdale on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1978.*

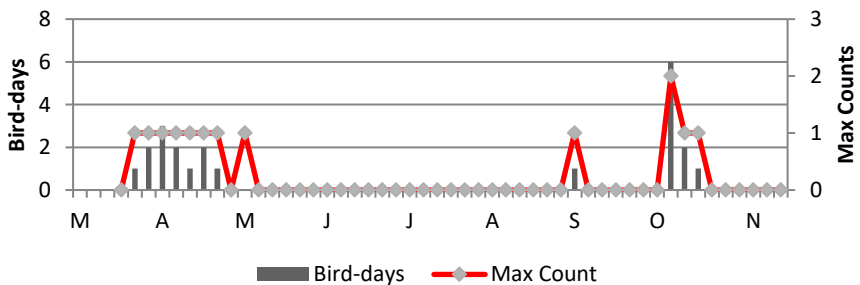
The 2<sup>nd</sup> Calf and 3<sup>rd</sup> Manx record was of a stunning adult male that was initially found perched on a mist net pole near to HG2 just after dawn on 7<sup>th</sup> May. The bird subsequently 'dropped' into the mist net and became only the 5<sup>th</sup> ever ringed for the BTO scheme. Although it disappeared for periods of time, it spent much of the next couple of days hawking insects in the Front Field, much to the delight of several Manx birdwatchers (see rarity report, p182).



### **Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

*Fairly common spring and autumn passage migrant; common winter visitor*

First seen on 23<sup>rd</sup> March further singles on three dates in March and seven in April, up to the last bird of spring seen on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Many reports probably involved the same female that was often seen around the Cow Harbour area and along the east coast to South Harbour.



A single seen on 29<sup>th</sup> August was the first of the autumn but no further records until two were seen on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> October, plus singles almost daily to the 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Peregrine [Falcon] *Falco peregrinus***

*Shirragh y Ree*

*Common breeding resident*

One to two birds were seen regularly throughout the spring and probably relate to the resident breeding pair, which bred successfully raising two young. Single 'agitated' birds were seen at Big Head on 11<sup>th</sup> April and at Ghaw Yairn on 20<sup>th</sup> May, although no evidence that they bred here could be found. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> July an agitated pair were calling from the same area although it is conceivable that they may have been birds from Spanish Head, accompanying recently fledged young.

During the autumn one to three birds were regularly recorded.

**[Eurasian] Magpie *Pica pica***

*Pieanat/ Piannad*

*Formerly bred; uncommon dispersal visitor*

During the early part of the season a single on 24<sup>th</sup> March was the only record for that month, whilst in April singles occurred on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

There were no further records until one was seen on 18<sup>th</sup> and nine were in Mill Giau on 27<sup>th</sup> October and three singles were seen at various locations around the islet on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

**[Red-billed] Chough** *Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

*Caaig*

*Common breeding resident*

Up to 20 birds were recorded daily throughout most of the season. Eight pairs were known to breed, although it is possible that a ninth pair were present along the less-easily surveyed west coast. During June and July counts of more than 40 birds feeding on Caigher were frequent with a maximum of 48 on 7<sup>th</sup> June and 45 on 7<sup>th</sup> July. During August and September counts were regularly between 20-30 birds but numbers decreased during October and November with no more than 15 birds seen.

**[Western] Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

*Caaig/ Juan Teayst*

*Uncommon dispersal visitor*

As with the next species, birds tend to make day visits to the Calf from the main Island during periods of light winds. The first record of the year was a single on 26<sup>th</sup> April followed by records on 10 dates up to the 19<sup>th</sup> May including a max count of 10 on 17<sup>th</sup>. During July, calm conditions on 12<sup>th</sup> encouraged five birds to make a short visit. Autumn passage was first recorded on 30<sup>th</sup> September when nine flew west over the Observatory. Three made a brief excursion across the Sound on 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> October and a freshly dead bird was found above Cow Harbour on 17<sup>th</sup>. The following day saw the first of the larger autumn flocks with 290 flying west high over the island, six put in a brief appearance on 25<sup>th</sup> and 365 flew west on 27<sup>th</sup>. Finally, a party of 40 headed west on 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **Rook** *Corvus ferrugineus*

*Trough*

*Uncommon dispersal visitor*

A single on 1<sup>st</sup> April was the forerunner of a spate of records during the spring, that are most likely a result of the light north or north-easterly winds that encourage birds from the main Island to make the day trip out to the Calf. One to three then seen on a further six dates during the month. Records continued almost daily through to the 12<sup>th</sup> May, with a peak count of four on 5<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn passage largely coincided with the large flocks of Jackdaws seen heading west, with 50 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 21 on 27<sup>th</sup> and 9 on 30<sup>th</sup> October plus a single on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

## **Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

*Uncommon breeding resident and autumn dispersal visitor*

During both spring and summer, counts of up to three birds were regular with a maximum count of 8 on 21<sup>st</sup> April. At least one bird bred as part of mixed pair with a Hooded Crow.

During autumn, the first influx of dispersing birds occurred in August with 13 in the Seafield on 25<sup>th</sup>, followed by one-three regularly during September with a definite increase in numbers at the end of the month, with 11 on 25<sup>th</sup>, eight on 26<sup>th</sup> and six on 29<sup>th</sup>. During October up to five birds were seen on 22 dates plus high counts of 10 on 6<sup>th</sup> and 18 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. During November singles were recorded on just three dates.

### **Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix*

*Fannag Ghlass*

*Common breeding resident and autumn dispersal visitor*

Probably under-recorded with daily counts mostly of less than ten birds, however during most months one or two counts into the mid-teens is probably more representative of the number of birds present considering that at least seven breeding pairs were present on the islet. During October several 'arrivals' occurred with 34 on 7<sup>th</sup>, 26 on 10<sup>th</sup> and 23 on 25<sup>th</sup> involving birds moving west across the islet. Additionally, a flock of 24 birds on 8<sup>th</sup> October were probably Hooded Crows but were not seen well enough to confirm subspecies.

### **Hybrid Crow** *Corvus spp.*

A single bird was seen regularly throughout the season.

### **[Northern] Raven** *Corvus corax*

*Feeagh/ Feeagh Vooar*

*Common breeding resident*

Ever present on the Calf, there were two pairs nesting when we arrived for the season. The nest site of the pair at Baie n'Ooig was located on 20<sup>th</sup> March and contained three young on 2<sup>nd</sup> April. Two young eventually fledged on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The second pair nested on the cliffs below the lighthouses and fledged four young on 16<sup>th</sup> April. Daily counts usually reflected the presence of the two resident pairs; occasionally other birds venture into their territories, usually being driven out again fairly swiftly and during the early part of the year a group of four 'intruders' took refuge near Kione ny Halby on 20<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> March.



Calm weather during the autumn often 'encourages' groups of Ravens to visit the Calf, with high counts of 12 on 26<sup>th</sup> August and 10 on 16<sup>th</sup> & 21 on 19<sup>th</sup> September and 19 on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

*Rare spring migrant and uncommon autumn migrant*

A single first heard calling from the Plantation on the 25<sup>th</sup> March was subsequently trapped on 26<sup>th</sup> and finally heard briefly on 27<sup>th</sup>.

A juvenile bird appeared in the front garden Sitka during the evening of the 4<sup>th</sup> July and was seen again briefly during the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> when it was seen to fly towards the Withy.

Two individuals trapped on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November were the only autumn records.

**(Eurasian) Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

*Drean Gorrym*

*Uncommon autumn passage migrant*

The first records for the year were of three birds that arrived on 19<sup>th</sup> September, one of which remained until 23<sup>rd</sup>. A new bird arrived on 26<sup>th</sup> and remained until 28<sup>th</sup>. In October a single on 8<sup>th</sup> was followed by five on 20<sup>th</sup> and then further singles on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>. Three arrived on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, with one remaining until the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

*Drean Mooar*

*Uncommon spring and autumn passage migrant*

A definite spring passage, involving mostly females, began on 15<sup>th</sup> March with the first two birds seen flying up into the Sycamores as we arrived at the Observatory; recorded daily from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> April with a maximum of four on 25<sup>th</sup> March. At least 13 different birds were involved with nine being females. Interestingly one of the male birds trapped on 1<sup>st</sup> April had been ringed the previous autumn (21<sup>st</sup> October) on the Calf.

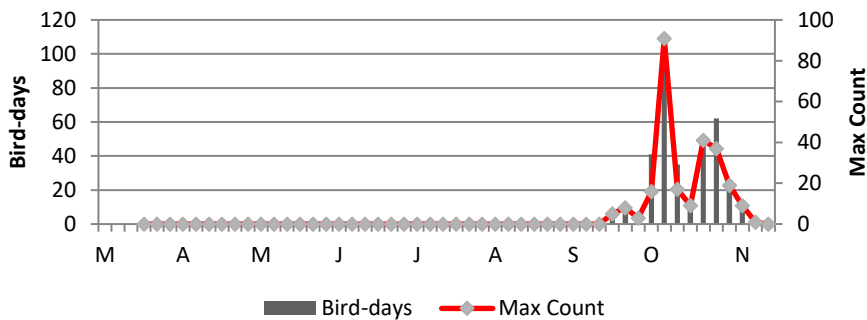
In autumn, a male arrived on the 18<sup>th</sup> September followed by a pair on 19<sup>th</sup>, the female of which was re-trapped on 21<sup>st</sup> and the male on the 26<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> and subsequently remained until at least the 11<sup>th</sup> November. Four birds were seen in the Plantation on 23<sup>rd</sup> September and two were present on both 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>. Three new birds arrived on 26<sup>th</sup>, two of which remained until 28<sup>th</sup> and one (a juvenile female) was still present on 24<sup>th</sup> October. Most October records were of the two birds that originally arrived in September, although fresh arrivals of six birds occurred on 27<sup>th</sup> and four on 30<sup>th</sup>. Up to four birds remained through November to the seasons end and involved birds ringed in September (1) and October (3).

**[Eurasian] Skylark *Alauda arvensis***

*Ushag Tappagh/ Ushag y Tappee / Usagh Happagh / Ushag Cabbagh*  
*Formerly bred; Scarce spring and reasonably common autumn migrant*

There were no spring or summer records.

Autumn passage was recorded from 13<sup>th</sup> September, with a light passage recorded on 10 dates to the end of the month with a maximum of 16 on 28<sup>th</sup>.



Passage remained infrequent and light through October with birds recorded on just 16 dates, with only six dates recording double figures. Maximum counts were 91 on 6<sup>th</sup>, 41 on 18<sup>th</sup> and 37 on 26<sup>th</sup>. Nine on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November were followed by 4 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and then singles on 6<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>.

|        | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| B-days | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 57  | 280 | 15  |
| Max.   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | 16  | 91  | 9   |

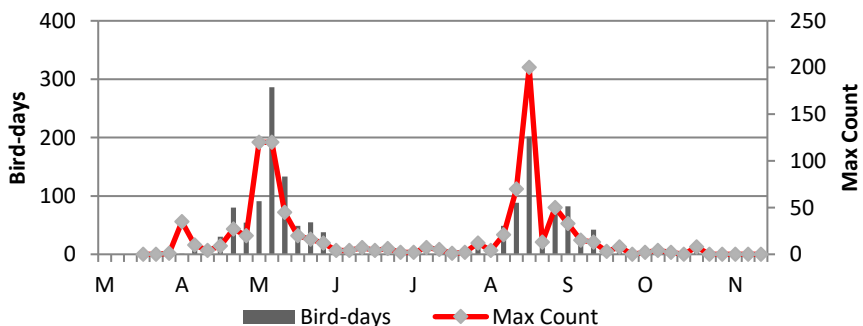
*Uncommon spring and autumn passage migrant*

First recorded on the 8<sup>th</sup> April, a very poor spring passage saw further singles on only three more dates in both April and May.

Return passage was also poor with two on 5<sup>th</sup> and a single on 16<sup>th</sup> July, further singles on 13<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> August and three on 30<sup>th</sup> being both the highest count and last record of the year.

*Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant*

First recorded on the 27<sup>th</sup> March when a single was seen near the Observatory. During April, single figure counts were made almost daily until 20<sup>th</sup>, when passage increased to a maximum of 35 on 30<sup>th</sup>. During May passage was at its strongest during the first half of the month with daily counts between 15-30, except on four dates where numbers exceeded 45 and a peak of 120 occurred on 8<sup>th</sup>. In the second half of the month daily counts achieved 10-20 birds until 27<sup>th</sup> when passage ceased and only a couple of resident pairs remained.



Two pairs attempted to breed but both were unsuccessful with their first broods; the first pair at Jane's House failed during prolonged rain at the end of June whilst the pair at the Observatory mysteriously disappeared when their young were only six days old, presumably one or both adults being predated. The pair at Jane's House did however successfully raise a second brood to fledging.

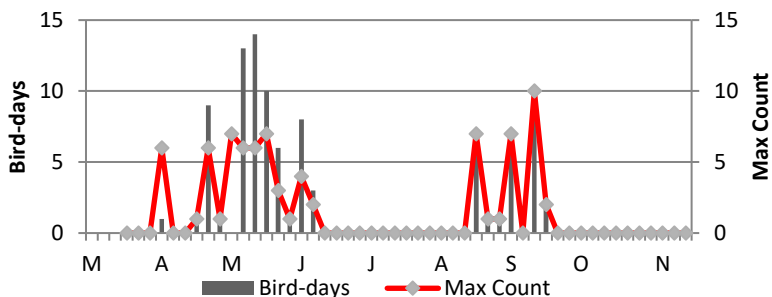
Autumn passage began during the last week of July and was evident until 20<sup>th</sup> September, but as with the other 'hirundines' was very poor and rarely exceeded counts of 20. Notable exceptions were 70 on 10<sup>th</sup>, 200 on 13<sup>th</sup> and 50 on 26<sup>th</sup> August. Several later birds were recorded with two on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 1-4 seen on seven dates up to the 10<sup>th</sup> October, with three on 18<sup>th</sup> and eight on 20<sup>th</sup> being the final records of the year.

**[Common] House Martin** *Delichon urbicum*

*Gollan Thie*

*Irregular spring & autumn passage migrant and summer visitor*

An early record of a single flying past the Upper Lighthouse on 2<sup>nd</sup> April was 17 days earlier than the mean arrival date for the past 20 years. However, this wasn't indicative of things to come and there were just five more singles recorded between 19<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, and six on the 21<sup>st</sup> April. During May one-four were seen on 14 dates from the 6<sup>th</sup>, with peak counts of six on 7<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> and seven on 17<sup>th</sup>, whilst in June four on 2<sup>nd</sup> was followed by singles on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> and two on 4<sup>th</sup>.



Autumn passage was even worse and consisted of seven on 13<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> plus singles on 20<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> August and in September 10 on 9<sup>th</sup> and two on 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalus caudatus***

*Uncommon passage migrant*

An above average showing began with the arrival of nine birds on the 26<sup>th</sup>, followed by 24 on 27<sup>th</sup> and four on 30<sup>th</sup> October. The final record of this 'influx' was a flock of 15 trapped at the Withy on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, which contained a bird previously ringed at the Dog Mills, Bride in September 2016.

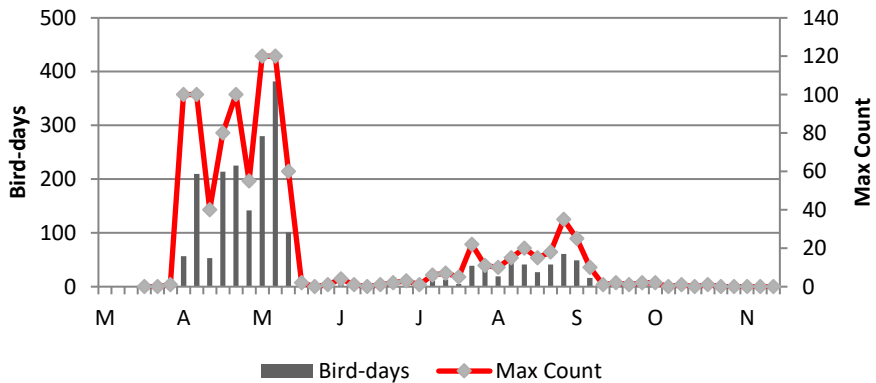
### **Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus***

*Drean Vane*

*Common spring and autumn passage migrant*

In March singles were present on 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> and 12 on 31<sup>st</sup>. Spring passage was steady and protracted, lasting from the start of April through to 14<sup>th</sup> May. During this period there were only 10 dates where counts were in single figures but 18 dates where counts were more than 40 birds. In April counts of 100 occurred on 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> and in May on the 8<sup>th</sup> with a peak of 120 on 7<sup>th</sup>. After 20 on 12<sup>th</sup> May numbers fell rapidly with a single on the 18<sup>th</sup> being the last record until a single on 29<sup>th</sup> and four on 31<sup>st</sup>.

During the first half of June, singles were recorded on four dates but from 21<sup>st</sup> up to three birds were present including a singing male holding territory at the Withy and a female with a distended brood patch trapped on 22<sup>nd</sup>. Single records of moulting adults occurred almost daily through late June and early July with the first juveniles appearing from 5<sup>th</sup> July.



Autumn passage was slow to get going and there were no large arrivals. Single figure counts were common during July with a slight peak towards the end of month with 22 on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 10 on 24<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> and 11 on 25<sup>th</sup>. Similarly, counts were low during August with a slight increase in numbers resulting in 14 dates with double figures, up to a maximum of 35 on 27<sup>th</sup>. Early September produced 5 on 1<sup>st</sup> and 10 on 2<sup>nd</sup> followed by records of 1-4 birds on 12 dates through to the last two seen in the month on the 28<sup>th</sup>. A couple of late records involved singles trapped at the Observatory on the 10<sup>th</sup> and on 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> October.

**[Common] Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita***

*Beealerey*

*Common spring and autumn migrant; occasionally breeds*

During March, one to three were recorded daily from 15<sup>th</sup> with peak counts of 20 on 16<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> and 40 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. During April one to six were recorded on 19 dates, counts of between 10 and 20 on a further 9 dates and peaks of 35 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 40 on 11<sup>th</sup>. During May passage was heaviest during the first half of the month with maximum counts of 12 on 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter one-five birds were recorded almost daily through to the end of the month, except for eight on the 17<sup>th</sup>. One to two birds were recorded throughout June, although ringing records show a small turn-over of new birds plus re-trap data confirming two individuals were present throughout the summer.

Breeding was not confirmed; however, four recently fledged young were trapped during late June and early July, and it is likely that some may have been bred on the Calf. Records during July were rather sporadic and probably relate to the same few juveniles, with 1-2 on six dates plus a maximum of three on 6<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn passage was evident from 13<sup>th</sup> August with mainly single figure counts recorded through to the end of September. Maximum counts were an impressive 30 on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10 on 28<sup>th</sup> September.

During October, nine were recorded on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>, otherwise only 1 – 2 were recorded almost daily to the months' end. There were just four records of singles during November.

**“Siberian” Chiffchaff *P.c.tristis***

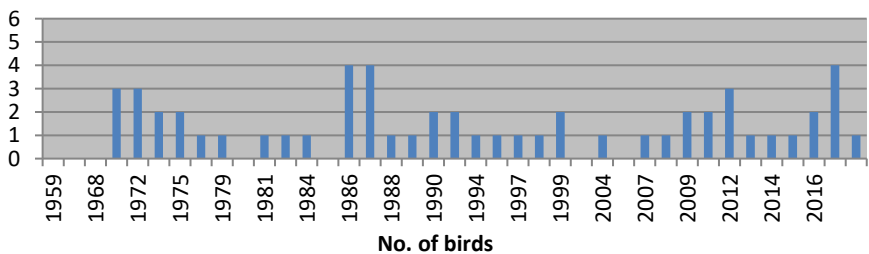
Individuals showing characteristics of this subspecies were trapped on 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May.



**Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus***

*Rare migrant*

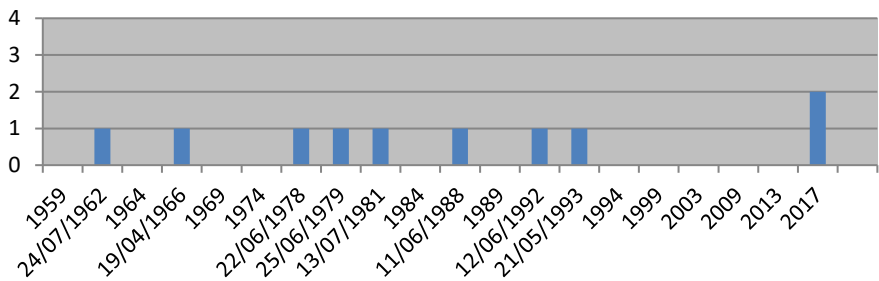
A single trapped in the Observatory garden on 26<sup>th</sup> September was the only record.



**Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

*Very rare migrant: eight previous records occurring in April, May, June (4) & July (2)*

A single trapped in the back garden during the afternoon of 29<sup>th</sup> May and a second individual, initially heard singing from the back garden, on 5<sup>th</sup> June, before subsequently being trapped and remaining until 6<sup>th</sup>.



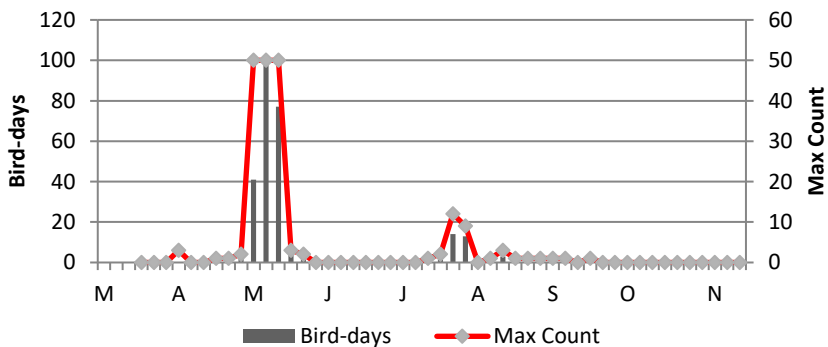
These represent the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Calf records, with the former individual being only the second recorded in May. Previous records have occurred between 19<sup>th</sup> April – 24<sup>th</sup> July, with the majority (4) having been recorded in June. Following a series of six records in 16 years (1978-1993), these are the first records for 24 years.

## **Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus***

*Common spring passage migrant and uncommon autumn passage migrant*

First recorded on 19<sup>th</sup> April, there were further records of 1-2 birds on four more dates during the month plus three on 30<sup>th</sup>. Main spring passage occurred during the first half of May with double figure counts on nine dates up to the 12<sup>th</sup>, with peaks of 50 on both 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter 1-3 were recorded on most dates up to 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The first returning juvenile was trapped on 9<sup>th</sup> July and remained until 11<sup>th</sup>. Further records during the month included two on 16<sup>th</sup>, singles on 20<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>, 12 on 23<sup>rd</sup>, nine on 24<sup>th</sup>, and four, on 25<sup>th</sup>. During August singles were recorded on six dates plus three on 8<sup>th</sup>, whilst in September singles trapped on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> were the last records of the year.



**[Eurasian] Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus***

*Scarce passage migrant; 56 previous records since the first in 1970 with records occurring in Apr (3), May (19), June (6), Aug (13), Sep (11), Oct (3) and Nov (1). Two additional records of un-streaked Acro's in 1996 & 1998 were most likely of this species.*

A single trapped in the back garden during the late afternoon of the 30<sup>th</sup> April was the joint second earliest Calf record but more amazing was that the bird was wearing a Channel Islands ring. It was subsequently re-trapped on the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> May and again on 7<sup>th</sup>, although not seen in between times. A second spring individual was trapped at the Withy on the evening of the 10<sup>th</sup> May.

During the autumn three immature birds were trapped at the Withy; two on the 15<sup>th</sup>, one of which was bearing a French ring and was subsequently re-trapped at the Observatory on the 17<sup>th</sup> and another trapped on 25<sup>th</sup> August.

These records are typical in their timing with 30 spring and 31 autumn records giving an almost even split between records by season on the Calf.

**[Common] Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia***

*Uncommon passage migrant*

During spring passage, singles were seen on 19<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> May and two on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> May.

The first returning juvenile was trapped on 11<sup>th</sup> July, followed by further immatures trapped on 24<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> August.

*Common spring and autumn passage migrant*

recorded on 9 dates between 15<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>, plus five on 18<sup>th</sup>. There were just three singles in November, on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

*Kiaulleyder garee*

*Uncommon passage migrant*

An excellent spring passage began with two birds on 30<sup>th</sup> April. In May there were three on 2<sup>nd</sup>, two on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, singles on 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> and four on 6<sup>th</sup>.

In autumn the first juvenile was present from 24<sup>th</sup>- 26<sup>th</sup> July, then one on 15<sup>th</sup> August and in September singles on the 26<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> with the latter bird remaining until 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

*Scarce passage migrant*

A record-breaking spring passage with the first bird on 28<sup>th</sup> April, three on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and further singles on 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May.

Disappointingly there were no autumn records.



**(Common) Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

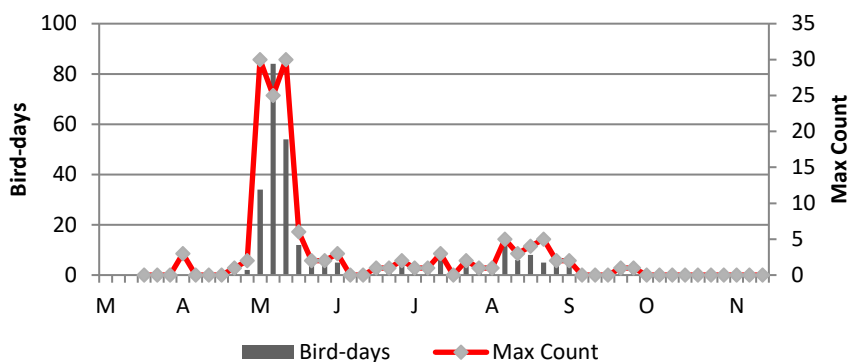
*Fynnag ny Keylley*

*Common spring and autumn passage migrant; occasionally breeds*

A single on 23<sup>rd</sup>, two on 26<sup>th</sup> and three, on 30<sup>th</sup> were the only April records. During May the main spring passage occurred during the first half of the month with high counts of 20 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 25 on 7<sup>th</sup> and 30 on 10<sup>th</sup>. After 10 on the 12<sup>th</sup>, numbers dropped to between one-three birds through to the end of the month, with the exception of six on 17<sup>th</sup>. This represents one of the best spring passages seen for many years.

A single was seen on 3<sup>rd</sup> June and then a male took up territory above Kione ny Halby and sang on both 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>. A female trapped at the Withy on 18<sup>th</sup> had a good brood patch and was re-trapped there on 25<sup>th</sup> along with a male (originally ringed on 10<sup>th</sup> May) that had been singing daily from 23<sup>rd</sup> indicating that breeding may be occurring.

During July singles were recorded daily between 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> with three on 9<sup>th</sup>, then none until two on 22<sup>nd</sup> where after 1-2 were recorded on four dates to the end of the month. During August 1-4 were recorded on 14 dates through the month plus a maximum count of 5 on 20<sup>th</sup>. The final records of the year were singles on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September.



### [Eastern or Western] Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans*

*Rare passage migrant; 21 previous records involving 23 individuals*

A female was trapped in the Observatory garden on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May. This represents the 22<sup>nd</sup> record and 24<sup>th</sup> individual recorded on the Calf.

Records by month, 1966-2016:

|     | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| No. | 0   | 1   | 12  | 5   | 0   | 0   | 3   | 0   | 0   |

### [Common] Firecrest *Regulus ingnicapilla*

*Rare migrant*

There were no spring records.

During autumn, a male was trapped on 28<sup>th</sup> September and a female was trapped on 1<sup>st</sup> October. The female was not seen again until it was re-trapped on 7<sup>th</sup> and subsequently re-sighted on 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>.

## **Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

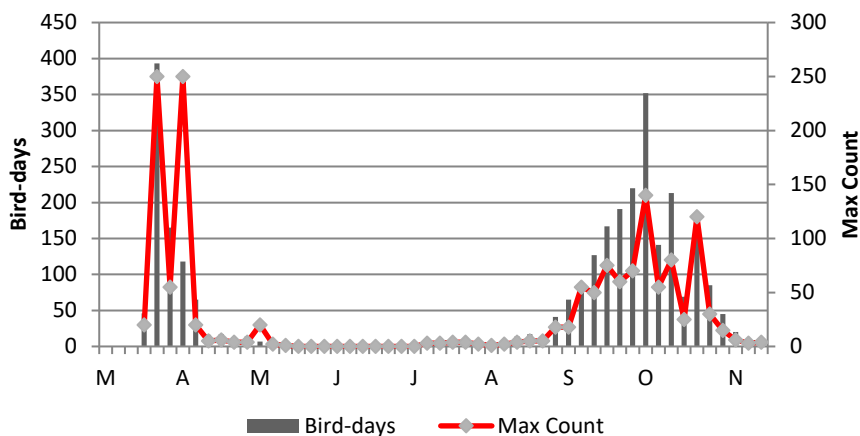
*Ushag y fuygh*

*Very common spring and autumn passage migrant*

Birds were already moving through when we arrived on the 15<sup>th</sup> March with 30 recorded during that afternoon. Further counts of between 30-55 birds occurred on 7 dates during March with a peak of 250 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. In April the peak count was 60 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, thereafter numbers decreased to between 10 -20 to 9<sup>th</sup> and single figure counts from 10<sup>th</sup> to the end of the month. During May one or two birds were recorded on 10 dates through to the last spring record on 13<sup>th</sup>.

A single juvenile appeared in the company of a Coal Tit during the evening of 4<sup>th</sup> July and then between two and four birds were present almost daily through until the 30<sup>th</sup>. Ringing records show that at least 10 birds were involved in this unprecedented influx, with birds remaining on the islet whilst they completed their post-juvenile moult. The presence of these 'young' birds makes it difficult, based purely on daily counts, to know when autumn passage started; however ringing records indicate new birds arriving from mid-August.

During the last week of August daily counts increased to double figures which continued throughout September, with counts of 50 or more on 10 dates and a maximum of 90 on 30<sup>th</sup>. Autumn passage peaked during early October with 140 on 1<sup>st</sup>, 80 on 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> and 120 on 18<sup>th</sup>, however daily counts were normally below 25 except for 35 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 55 on 6<sup>th</sup> and 30 on 26<sup>th</sup>. During the second half of October counts of up to 15 were recorded daily and numbers then declined to single figures throughout early November with just one bird present from 12<sup>th</sup> to the seasons end on 15<sup>th</sup>.



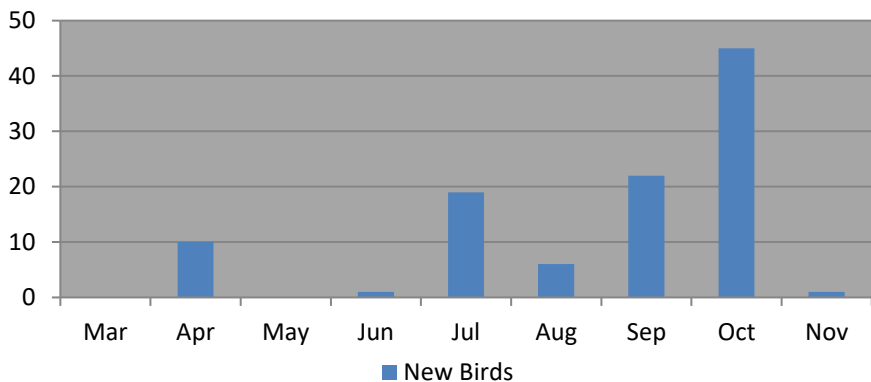
### **(Eurasian) Wren** *Troglodyte troglodytes*

#### *Drean*

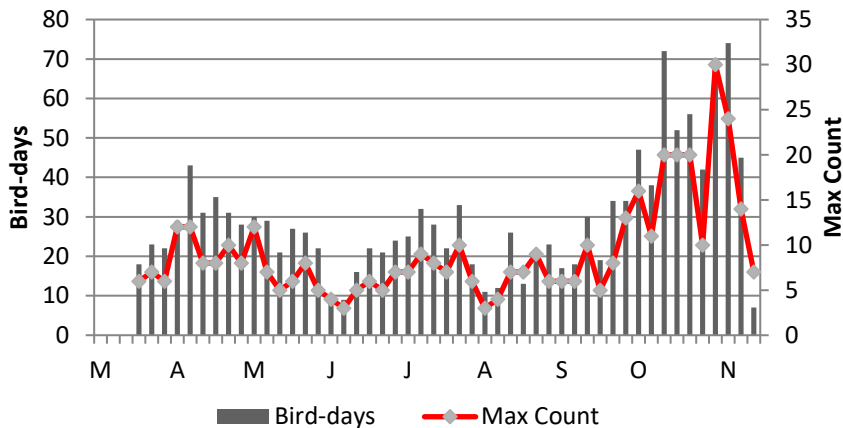
*Common breeding resident; some passage is likely to occur, although not always obvious*

Recorded almost daily throughout the season with counts of between 10 to 15 birds being commonplace in all months; the species is likely to be under-recorded as a breeding bird with only 8 territories noted.

Passage is often difficult to detect but ringing data shows distinct increases in numbers of new birds during April, July, September, and October. Whilst the July increase is due to recently fledged young being caught, it is likely that some passage is occurring in the other months, particularly in autumn. This is also indicated by the daily census data which shows a slight peak in mid-April and a marked increase in frequency of observations during late September, through October and into early November.



Daily counts during this autumn period more regularly achieved double figures, with 20 recorded on four dates in October plus peak counts of 30 on 29<sup>th</sup> October and 24 on 1<sup>st</sup> November. The high count on 29<sup>th</sup> October was partly due to extensive island coverage but probably better reflects the numbers of birds present.



**[Eurasian] Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

*Scarce dispersal visitor*

A single seen from one of the visitor bedroom windows on 30<sup>th</sup> April was the only spring record.

In autumn a single juvenile was trapped during the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> July and was re-trapped on the 20<sup>th</sup> when a second juvenile was also caught. This second bird remained around the observatory garden until 26<sup>th</sup> July.

**[Common] Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

*Trutlag*

*Irregular spring passage migrant and post-breeding dispersal visitor; common autumn passage migrant*

A single on 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> March and three on 22<sup>nd</sup> were the first records of the year; in April six on 1<sup>st</sup> and a single on 7<sup>th</sup> and in May a single present from 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>. In June an adult was in the twin fields on 5<sup>th</sup> and, preceded a small influx of wandering juveniles and adult birds that began with single juveniles on 9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> and gradually increased to eight on 20<sup>th</sup>. A flock of 50 on 25<sup>th</sup> and 30 the following day were likely to be different parties of birds, plus fifteen on 28<sup>th</sup>. Single figure counts were made on most dates during July with peak counts of 70 on 5<sup>th</sup>, 74 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 53 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

There were two records of singles during both August and September, but autumn passage proper didn't start until 12 flew south past Cow Harbour on 5<sup>th</sup> October; records were then rather sporadic with birds being seen on only five dates up to 18<sup>th</sup> with a high of 112 on 12<sup>th</sup>. From 19<sup>th</sup> birds were seen daily with peak counts of 674 on 25<sup>th</sup> and 233 on 26<sup>th</sup>. Passage was at its peak during November with three-

figure counts on seven dates including 656 west on 11<sup>th</sup> and 1087 west on 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*  
*Scarce passage migrant*

An adult female trapped on the 7<sup>th</sup> April was the only spring record.



In autumn singles were seen around the Observatory on 8<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September, the latter remaining until 4<sup>th</sup> October. Initially trapped on 29<sup>th</sup> September, the bird had increased in weight by 6gms when recaptured on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October. On the 29<sup>th</sup> September two

individuals were also seen on the Withy wall. Further records in October consisted of three on 19<sup>th</sup>, and singles on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

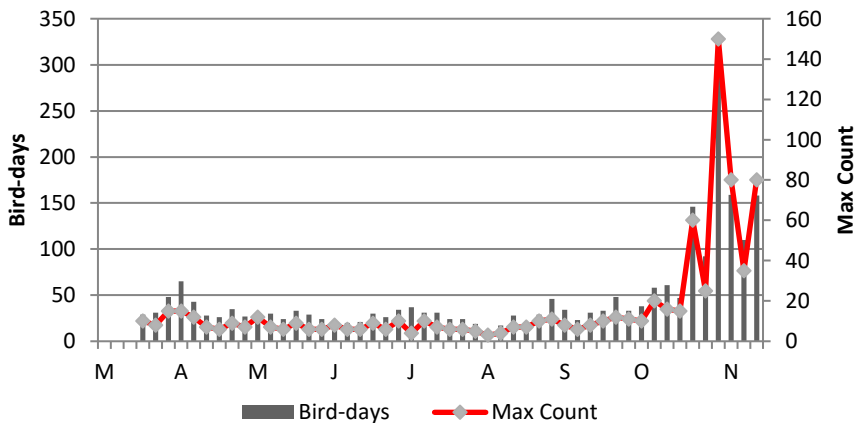
**[Common] Blackbird** *Turdus merula*  
*Lhondhoo*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

Spring passage was very light but evident during March with 10 birds present on 16<sup>th</sup>, 13 on 29<sup>th</sup> and 15 on both 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. Counts, otherwise, involved single figures throughout spring, with an estimated three pairs nesting around the Observatory and two pairs at the Withy. It is possible that there was a sixth pair at Jane's House. Productivity was high with 55 locally fledged young ringed between mid-June and

the end of August, although undoubtedly some of these will have been young dispersing from the Isle of Man.

Counts of up to 12 were regular throughout September and early October, with autumn passage proper not really starting until 30 arrived on 18<sup>th</sup> October, with 60 the following day. A large arrival of 150 occurred on 27<sup>th</sup> followed by smaller influxes of 40 on 28<sup>th</sup> and 60 on 30<sup>th</sup>. Passage continued through November with regular daily counts to 25, with peaks of 80 on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>. Migration continued well into November.



### **Fieldfare** *Turdus pilalris*

*Ushag Sniaghtey*

*Irregular winter visitor and passage migrant*

A poor spring showing with only singles present on 20<sup>th</sup>, from 28-29<sup>th</sup> March, two on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April and the final spring sighting being two on 1<sup>st</sup> May.

A very unseasonal bird was initially heard behind the back garden on 12<sup>th</sup> June. Present for a short time in the early morning, the bird

disappeared for most of the day, before reappearing in the late afternoon when it was seen sitting on the back field wall. This is the 8<sup>th</sup> June record of this species, with previous records in the 1960's (2), 1970's (3) and 2000's (2), although all previous records occurred between the 1<sup>st</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> June.

Autumn passage began with a single on 20<sup>th</sup> October and was followed by 35 on 23<sup>rd</sup> and five on 24<sup>th</sup>. From 27<sup>th</sup> up to 10 birds were seen daily up to the months' end with a maximum of 28 on 31<sup>st</sup>. Recorded on just nine dates in November with high counts of nine on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 13 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10 on 11<sup>th</sup> and 34 on 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Redwing *Turdus iliacus***

*Lhon Geayee*

*Irregular winter visitor and common passage migrant*

As with other thrushes the spring passage was very poor and occurred only over a six day period from 28<sup>th</sup> March when eight were present and finished with 2 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April. The maximum counts were 25 on 31<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April.



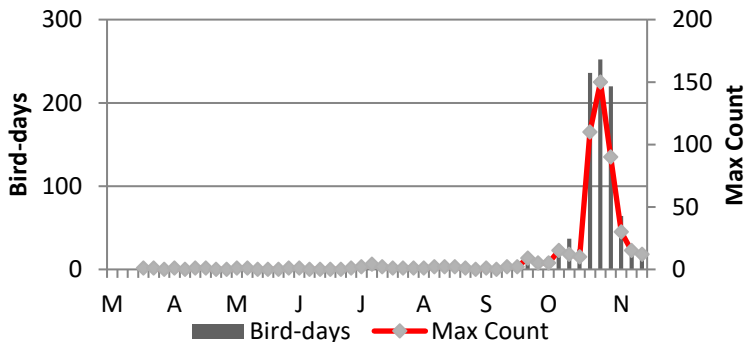
In autumn, the first birds were singles recorded on 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> October. Small numbers were recorded daily from 14<sup>th</sup> with usually less than 25 birds seen. Peak counts were 100 on 20<sup>th</sup>, 120 on 23<sup>rd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> and 84 on 24<sup>th</sup>. Small numbers continued almost daily through November to the season end, with peaks of 40 on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 20 on 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos***

*Lhon/Thresh len*

*Common passage migrant*

As with the other thrushes, spring passage was very light, with just four singles recorded in March and two singles in both April and early May. In addition, juvenile birds, presumably bred on the main Island, were present from 29-30<sup>th</sup> May and on 24<sup>th</sup> June.



Records during July and August were fairly sporadic and mostly involved only 1-2 birds, with a maximum of 4 on 7<sup>th</sup> July.

From 9<sup>th</sup> September frequency of records increased, along with a slight rise in numbers of birds recorded, with a maximum of nine on 19<sup>th</sup>. The first signs of larger than normal numbers arriving were 15 on 6<sup>th</sup> October followed by 28 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 110 on 19<sup>th</sup> with 80 the next day; this was eclipsed by 150 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Daily counts during the last week of

October were all more than 20 birds with maxima of 90 on 27<sup>th</sup> and 50 on 28<sup>th</sup>. Numbers decreased significantly through early November with daily counts of up to five being recorded on most dates, with higher counts of 12 on 4<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>, 18 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 30 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 15 on 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

*Lhon Keylley*

*Uncommon passage migrant mostly in autumn*

The only spring record was of a single on 1<sup>st</sup> May, accompanying two Fieldfares.

A summer wanderer was seen on 15<sup>th</sup> June but there were no other records until two arrived on 6<sup>th</sup> October. Three on 20<sup>th</sup> were the forerunners of an impressive 23 that arrived on 23<sup>rd</sup> with seven the following day. Thereafter one or two were seen on five dates up to the 30<sup>th</sup> October and singles in November on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>.

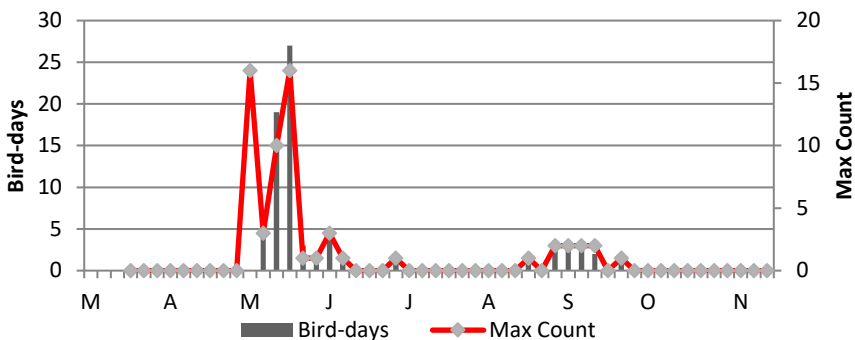
**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

*Skybbyltagh Breck*

*Common spring passage migrant and uncommon autumn passage migrant*

Three on the 6<sup>th</sup> May were the first records of what was to be a relatively poor spring passage for this species. One-three were recorded on a further 14 dates during the month, with the main passage occurring between 11<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> with maximum counts of 10 on 12<sup>th</sup> and 16 on 18<sup>th</sup>. The last spring birds were singles on 1<sup>st</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> June.

There was then a gap in records before two more singles were recorded on 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June, presumably wandering failed breeders rather than the start of return passage.



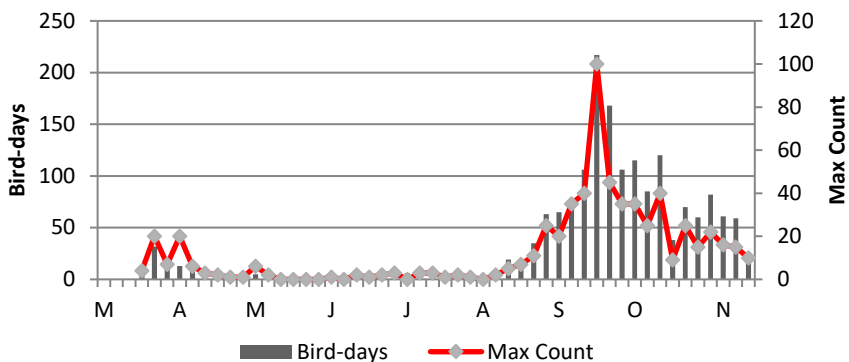
The first juvenile of autumn was trapped on 13<sup>th</sup> August, but main passage involved just 1-2 birds on seven dates between 24<sup>th</sup> August and 9<sup>th</sup> September, with a further single recorded on 19<sup>th</sup> September.

**[European] Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

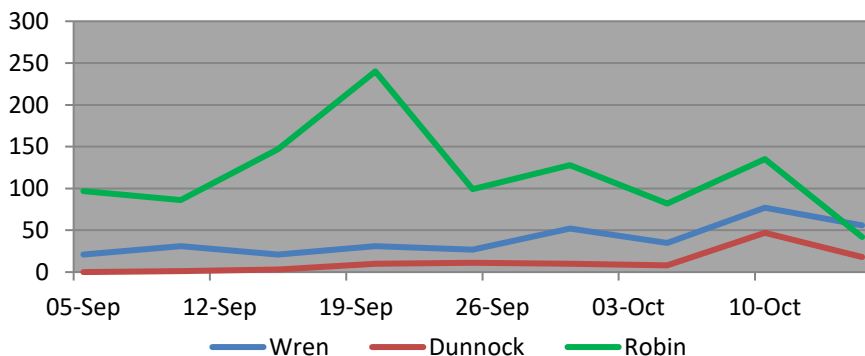
*Cleean Jiarq/ Spittaq*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

Spring passage was at its peak during the second half of March with up to eight birds recorded on most dates during the month and a peak count of 20 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. During April, one to three birds were seen daily up to the 18<sup>th</sup>, with a peak of six on the 8<sup>th</sup>, then, just singles were recorded to the end of the month. Ringing records show a small influx of females during the first week of May with up to three birds seen up to 6<sup>th</sup> and then none until another female was trapped on 31<sup>st</sup>. During June a 'new' male arrived on 9<sup>th</sup> remaining until 13<sup>th</sup> when the first dispersing juvenile was trapped. New juveniles arrived on 20<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, when three birds were present. During the first half of July up to three birds were present on most dates with one or two seen for the remainder of the month.



Autumn passage proper began from 5<sup>th</sup> August with up to seven birds seen daily up to 20<sup>th</sup>, when nine birds were present. Numbers continued to gradually increase towards 20 at the end of the month with a peak of 25 on 27<sup>th</sup>. Up to 15 were recorded daily during the first week of September with 35 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, then counts of 25 or more were made on 12 dates from the 10<sup>th</sup> with 40 on 10<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>, 45 on 17<sup>th</sup>, 60 on 12<sup>th</sup> and 100 on 16<sup>th</sup>. Daily counts during October were generally between 10-20 birds with a peak of 40 on 8<sup>th</sup> and 30 on 9<sup>th</sup> and counts of up to 16 birds continued through into November.



*Graph illustrating main periods of passage for three species.*

**[European] Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

*Increasingly rare spring migrant and uncommon autumn passage migrant*

During May singles were present on 1<sup>st</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> with two on 6<sup>th</sup>, one of which was bearing a Norwegian ring. An excellent series of records given that there have only been three other spring records during the past decade, all single birds (23<sup>rd</sup> April & 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008 & 5<sup>th</sup> May 2013).

In autumn, a single was seen briefly in the Sitka alongside the tractor shed during the morning of 23<sup>rd</sup> and another trapped at the Front Hedge on 31<sup>st</sup> August, were followed by a relatively late individual trapped behind the back garden on 19<sup>th</sup> October.

**Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva*

*Rare migrant; 25 previous records since the first in 1960, with records occurring in Apr (1), May (5), Jun (4), Sep (5), Oct (9) and Nov (1)*

An adult female was trapped behind the back garden on the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> May and remained until 25<sup>th</sup>. This represents the 26<sup>th</sup> Calf record but only the 6<sup>th</sup> recorded in May.



**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

*Scarce passage migrant*

An immature male was trapped on 16<sup>th</sup> March but then not seen again until it was re-trapped on 24<sup>th</sup>. During April different females were trapped on 1<sup>st</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn records involved a bird at Cow Harbour store on 2<sup>nd</sup>, and possibly the same bird, trapped at the Observatory on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

**[Common] Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

*Uncommon passage migrant*

A male on the 30<sup>th</sup> April was the forerunner of an above average spring with a further 14 bird-days, from eight dates, between the 1<sup>st</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> May, with a maximum of four on 3<sup>rd</sup>.

A very juvenile bird trapped in HG2 on 26<sup>th</sup> June, and which remained until the 8<sup>th</sup> July, was most likely a dispersing bird from a breeding site on the main Island. The bird had clearly only left the nest within the last week and was unlikely to have travelled very far. This suggests breeding took place on the Isle of Man for the first time since 1971.



Autumn passage occurred during the last week of August and consisted of singles on 27<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> and four on 29<sup>th</sup>. The final record of a good year for the species was of a female trapped at the Observatory on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

*Formerly common passage migrant; scarce passage migrant*

Spring passage occurred on just four dates, with a single on 2<sup>nd</sup>, six on both the 6<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> and finally two on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

In autumn a single was trapped in the Withy on 29<sup>th</sup> August, with possibly the same bird being seen in the Glen on the 31<sup>st</sup>. A further single was seen near the Top Withy on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

**[European] Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

*Boid y Chonne / Kione Dhoo y Eeigyn*

*Regular breeder, occasional migrant*

Counts of up to seven birds were made daily from the start of the season through to mid-June, when locally bred young began to appear and swell the Island's population. At least 5 pairs bred, with pairs at the Observatory, the Smithy, Mill Giau, Kione ny Halby and above Grant's Harbour/Jane's House.

During July and August birds were seen daily with counts of up to 12 on several occasions and a maximum of 15 on 7<sup>th</sup> August. Records became more sporadic during September and October with up to six recorded frequently and maximum counts of 10 on 8<sup>th</sup> September and eight on 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> September and 29<sup>th</sup> October.

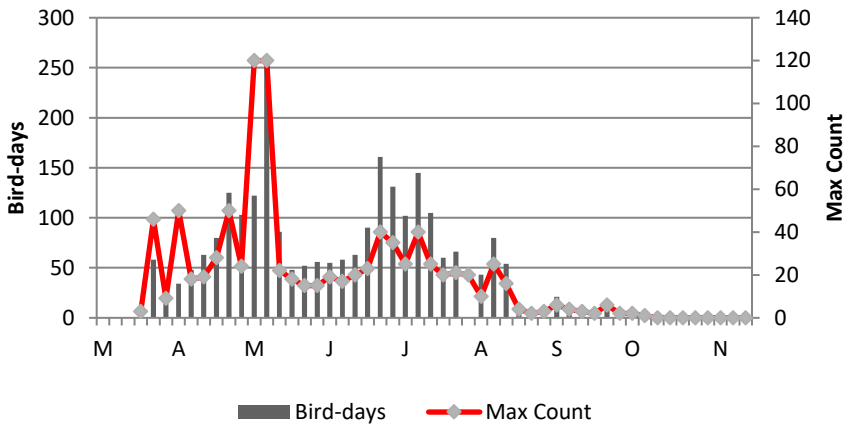
**[Northern] Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

*Claggan Cloaie*

*Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant*

Three on the 16<sup>th</sup> March were the first birds of the season, followed by an arrival of 46 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Thereafter single figure counts were made each day to the end of the month. During April and May spring passage

was constant with regular counts in excess of 20 birds with peaks of 50 on 21<sup>st</sup> April & 8<sup>th</sup> May and 120 on 6<sup>th</sup> May. After mid-May it is likely that most records were involving resident breeding birds.



The breeding numbers on the Calf during 2017 were estimated at between 35 - 40 pairs, with the first juveniles being seen from 16<sup>th</sup> June: their presence swelling the numbers of birds seen daily, with counts during the second half of June and through July often being between 25- 40 individuals. Up to 25 birds were seen during the first half of August but from the 13<sup>th</sup> numbers decreased quite dramatically with no more than four birds seen through to the end of the month.

There were no large movements recorded during autumn passage with usually 1-3 birds seen almost daily during September, with four on 5<sup>th</sup> and six on 1<sup>st</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> being the highest counts. The last two records were of singles on 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

*Jallyn*

*Uncommon passage migrant*

There were no spring records.

In autumn there were a series of records in October with nine arriving on 6<sup>th</sup>, three on 8<sup>th</sup> and a single on 9<sup>th</sup>. These were followed by 19 on 18<sup>th</sup>, five on 27<sup>th</sup> and finally a male on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**[Eurasian] Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

*Scarce visitor*

Spring records consisted of two on 1<sup>st</sup> and a single on 4<sup>th</sup> May.

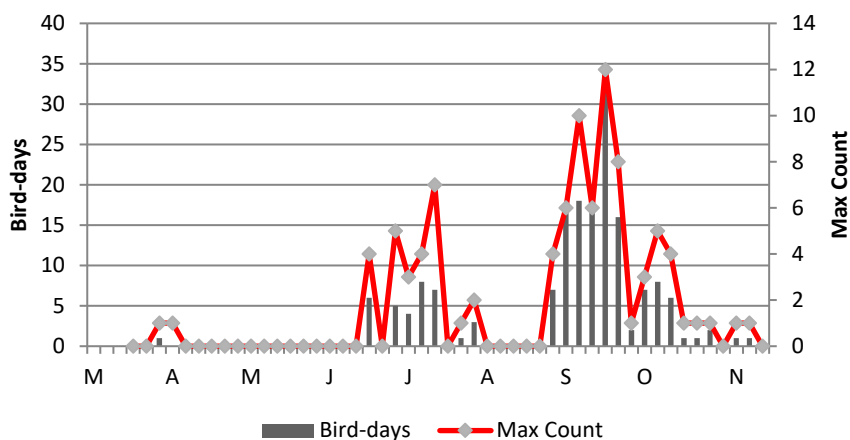
In autumn the only record was of two seen in Sycamores behind the Observatory on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

*Drean Mollagh /Bogh Keeir*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

One or two birds were recorded on 9 dates in March, 13 dates in April and 10 dates in May, plus a maximum of four recorded on 1<sup>st</sup> April. Ringing records indicate a clear passage of birds during late March and the first week of April, with other records largely being from single males that were present and often singing in the Withy and Front Field. The capture of two juvenile birds of different ages, at the Withy, on 18<sup>th</sup> June confirmed breeding had taken place. One of the birds could potentially have come from the main Island but the other was only just fledged.



During autumn there were records of singles on seven dates in July and three dates in August plus three on the 10<sup>th</sup> July. The presence of passage birds was evident from mid-September with up to four birds seen daily from 16<sup>th</sup>. After 15 on 6<sup>th</sup> October, daily counts regularly recorded up to nine birds with further double figure counts of 10 on 8<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> and 12 on 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

*Ushag Ghlass*

*Scarce spring passage migrant and common autumn passage migrant*

The only early spring record was of a single fly-over bird on 27<sup>th</sup> March.

Return passage birds began early with singles on 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> June, then four birds 'taped' on 18<sup>th</sup> and five on 26<sup>th</sup>. During July, one to four on six dates in the first half of the month plus 7 on 12<sup>th</sup> and then singles on 20<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> and two on 25<sup>th</sup>. There were no records during the first part of August, but autumn passage proper seemed to get underway from 23<sup>rd</sup> with up to six birds seen almost daily to the end of the month.

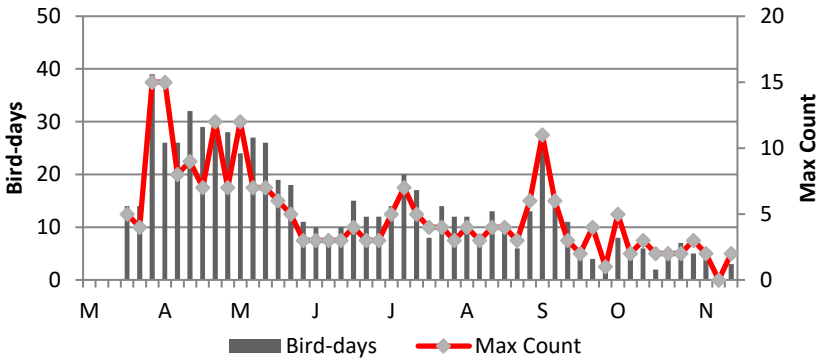
Passage was at its strongest during the first half of September with counts of up to 10 birds almost daily to the 19<sup>th</sup> and a peak of 12 on 14<sup>th</sup>. Towards the end of the month a second ‘weaker’ band of records occurred, with up to three birds recorded almost daily from 25<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> September. This continued through to 12<sup>th</sup> October and then just singles were recorded on 18<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> October, and 2<sup>nd</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> November.

**Pied / White Wagtail *Motacilla albaalba* / *yarrellii***

*Ushag Vreck/ Ushag Voltee*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

Pied Wagtails were rarely recorded in more than single figures throughout much of the season; however, spring passage is evident, see Fig.1, and maximum counts of 15 on 27<sup>th</sup> March and 12 on 21<sup>st</sup> April were recorded. Only three pairs bred, a 50% decrease on breeding numbers compared to 2016.



*Figure 1. Pied Wagtail M.a.yarrelli*

Autumn passage was recorded from mid-August with most sightings only being assigned as ‘Alba’ Wagtails. Passage was at its peak during September with peak counts of 45 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 27 on 11<sup>th</sup>.

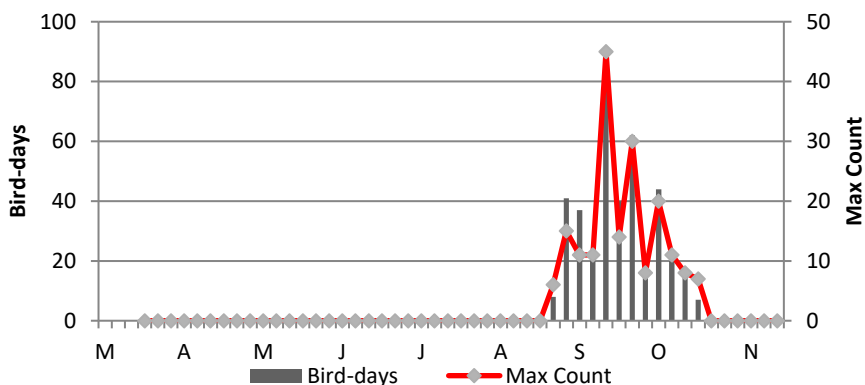


Figure 2. 'Alba' Wagtail

In spring an early record of a fine adult male White Wagtail on 25<sup>th</sup> March and another individual on 20<sup>th</sup> April were the only confirmed records of the spring

Autumn passage was evident during the second half of August with one or two definite individuals recorded on four dates from 19<sup>th</sup>. Most birds seen were recorded as “alba” wagtails, either because they were flying over and/or insufficient views were obtained to confirm subspecies. Although many birds exhibited characteristics of *M.a.alba*, of the few birds caught at this time, in-hand examination showed dark feathering on the rump and upper tail coverts suggesting *M.a.yarrelli*.

Although it is known that a large percentage of the Icelandic populations of *M.a.alba* migrate down through the west coast of Britain during autumn and therefore many of the birds seen are likely to be White Wagtails further study including DNA sampling would be useful to determine the true origin of these birds.

**Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis***

*Tweet/Cheet/Ushag y Veet*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

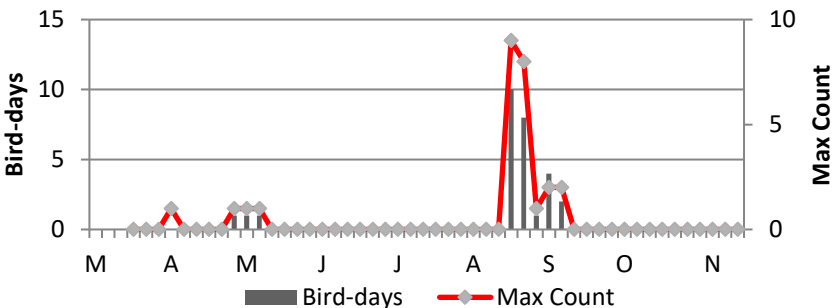
Passage was recorded early in the season with 100 on 20<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> and 150 on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. The species is widespread as a breeding bird on the Calf, but densities are low and the breeding population was estimated at between 30 – 40 pairs.

Autumn migration was first noted on 31<sup>st</sup> August when 60 were recorded, with 70 on 1<sup>st</sup> September. Counts of 100 or more were recorded on 9 dates during the month with two distinct passages between 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>. Peak counts were 200 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, 250 on 16<sup>th</sup> and 450 on 28<sup>th</sup> September. A light passage continued through to mid-October, with maximum counts of 120 on 6<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> and 55 on 18<sup>th</sup> thereafter single figure counts were more regular to the season's end, except for 11 on 8<sup>th</sup> and 15 on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis***

*Scarce spring passage migrant and uncommon autumn passage migrant*

Spring passage consisted of a single trapped on 26<sup>th</sup> April, a fly-over bird on 3<sup>rd</sup> and an individual flushed from the front field on 8<sup>th</sup> May.



Autumn passage began with a single on 13<sup>th</sup> August followed by nine on 17<sup>th</sup>, eight on 20<sup>th</sup>, a single on 24<sup>th</sup> and two, on both 29<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> August, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*

*Very rare vagrant; the only previous Manx and Calf record was a single at South Harbour on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2002.*

Undoubtedly one of the most unexpected events of this year was the occurrence of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Manx & Calf records (see rarity report).



A bird was flushed from grass behind the Observatory garden on 21<sup>st</sup> August. It flew into the stand of Sycamores at the rear of the garden where it remained for about five minutes before flying off towards the Upper Twin Field.

Remarkably, a second individual was trapped in the back garden on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October (see rarity report, p 184).

**[Eurasian] Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

*Fushag Varrey*

*Common breeding resident*

Despite the species being a common feature around much of the Calf coast, particularly at South, Cow and Grant's Harbours, it is, perhaps, often over-looked. Daily counts rarely reached double figures although the breeding population was estimated at around 30 pairs. The highest

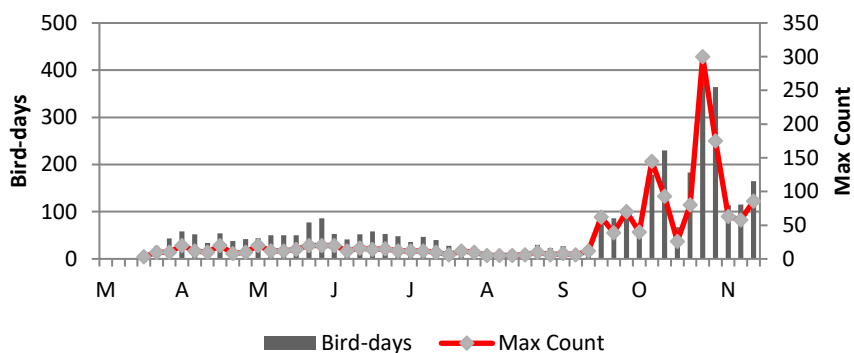
count of the year was 41 on 11<sup>th</sup> September and reflects greater coverage of the areas that the species frequent rather than any increase in numbers.

**[Common] Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

*Ushag y Choan /Ushag veg Vreck*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

During the first part of the season up to 12 birds were regularly recorded, with no real evidence of any spring migration. From the end of May numbers increased as recently fledged young began to appear around the farmhouse; although 4-5 pairs were resident, breeding success would appear to have been very low with only four locally-bred young captured.



Autumn passage was evident from mid-September with 62 on 16<sup>th</sup> and 70 on 25<sup>th</sup>, whilst in October counts of over 30 on 12 dates including peaks of 145 on 6<sup>th</sup>, 300 on 26<sup>th</sup>, 120 on 27<sup>th</sup> and 175 on 29<sup>th</sup>. Passage continued, although somewhat decreased, during November with daily counts over 20 on six dates and high counts of 63 on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 86 on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

*Scarce spring passage migrant and uncommon autumn passage migrant*

A bird heard flying over on the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> April was probably the same immature male that was trapped later that morning. A female was unexpectedly found in one of the back garden mist nets on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and remained around the Observatory until 3<sup>rd</sup>.

In autumn the first records were of two on 18<sup>th</sup> and a single on 20<sup>th</sup> October. Two more on 26<sup>th</sup> preceded an impressive movement of 27 on 27<sup>th</sup>; a single juvenile male trapped on 29<sup>th</sup> remained until at least the 4<sup>th</sup> November and was part of five seen on 30<sup>th</sup> October & 2<sup>nd</sup> November and three on 3<sup>rd</sup>. During November further singles were recorded from 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, six were present on 8<sup>th</sup>, then four on 11<sup>th</sup>, 10 on 13<sup>th</sup> and finally, two on 15<sup>th</sup>. Undoubtedly further passage during November is missed by the season ending in mid-November.

**[European] Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

*Corkan Keylley Glass*

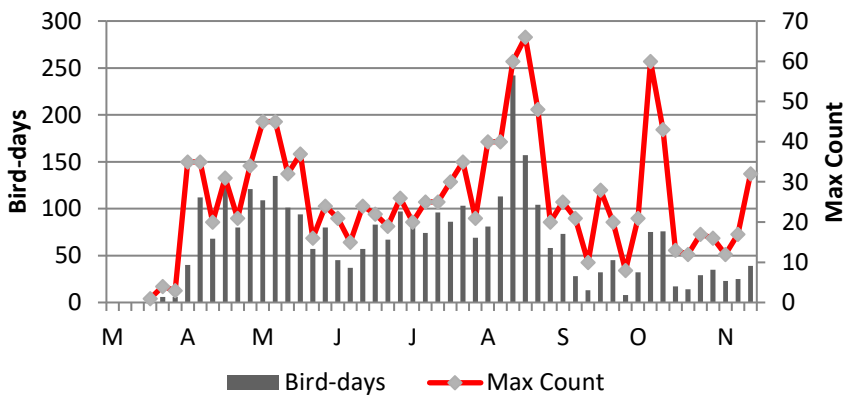
*Formerly bred; common passage migrant*

A single male present from the 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> June was the first record of the year, followed by a single on 7<sup>th</sup> July.

Two on the 1<sup>st</sup> and five on 28<sup>th</sup> September could hardly be recognised as the start of autumn passage. Records were more frequent in October with up to four recorded on eight days from 6<sup>th</sup> plus peak counts of six on 26<sup>th</sup> and 10 on 29<sup>th</sup>. In November there were four on 2<sup>nd</sup>, three on 8<sup>th</sup> and a single on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**[Common] Linnet *Linaria cannabina***  
*Fillip ny Kempey / Ushag y Lien*  
*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

Up to four birds were recorded on eight dates in March, as breeding birds began to arrive back on the island, with numbers increasing through April and counts of up to 35 birds being regular through to the end of July. This reflected the breeding population which was estimated at between 15 – 20 pairs. A peak in numbers occurred during August as locally-bred young joined adults in a flock that frequented the South Harbour area, with counts of 40 or more on nine dates in the month including a high count of 66 on 13<sup>th</sup>. Records became more sporadic during September with single figure counts on 13 dates and double figure counts on just eight dates with a maximum of 28 on 12<sup>th</sup>. This trend continued through October and November, although occasional peaks in passage occurred with 60 on 6<sup>th</sup> & 43 on 8<sup>th</sup> October and 32 on 11<sup>th</sup> November.



|        | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| B-days | 3   | 69  | 72  | 3   | 2   | 1   | 23  | 67  | 80  |
| Max.   | 2   | 6   | 15  | 1   | 1   | 1   | 5   | 15  | 36  |

## **Common [Mealy] Redpoll** *Acanthis flammea*

*Rare passage migrant*

Single birds showing characteristics of this subspecies were caught on 13<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> April.

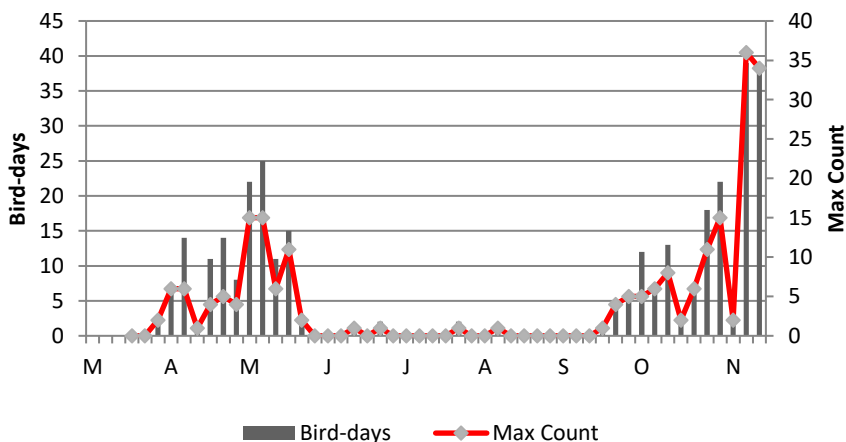
## **Lesser [Common] Redpoll** *Acanthis cabaret*

*Bytermyn Dhone/Lossan Ruy*

*Common spring and autumn passage migrant*

Two on the 26<sup>th</sup> March were the first recorded for the year, followed by a single on 31<sup>st</sup>. Spring passage was fairly consistent with up to six birds seen on 25 dates in April and on 16 dates in May up to the 22<sup>nd</sup>, with peaks of 15 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 11 on 18<sup>th</sup> May.

Occasional singles were recorded during the summer months with records on three dates in June, two in July and one in August.



Autumn passage commenced with a single on 16<sup>th</sup> September followed by up to five birds on six dates to the end of the month.

Records continued sporadically during the first part of October with up to six birds on just four dates, plus eight on 8<sup>th</sup>. From the 23<sup>rd</sup> records became more frequent with up to five birds seen almost daily and peaks of 11 on 26<sup>th</sup> and 15 on 29<sup>th</sup>. November recorded the highest numbers with 36 on 8<sup>th</sup> and 34 on 11<sup>th</sup>, with five on the 13<sup>th</sup> being the last record of the season.

**[Red] Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

*Irregular spring and autumn dispersal visitor / passage migrant*

An above average series of records with six in spring and a single in autumn.

A group of five birds alighted in the Sitka outside the Observatory during the early morning of 30<sup>th</sup> May for about 5 minutes before heading off west. Another single was seen and heard flying west about an hour later. The following morning a single 'green' bird was present for a couple of minutes in the Sitka before also heading off west.

A party of three 'green' birds dropped into the tractor shed Sitka for a couple of minutes before heading off north on 26<sup>th</sup> June. A small party were heard only on 1<sup>st</sup> July and a single landed in the front garden Sitka on 3<sup>rd</sup>.

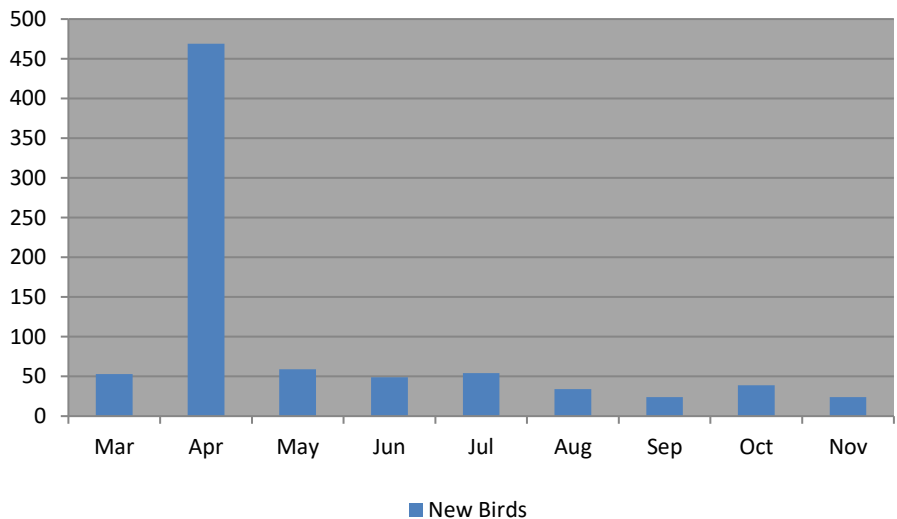
In autumn, a pair including a red male, dropped out of the sky and into the tractor shed Sitka at around 8.30am on 28<sup>th</sup> September. They spent about five minutes feeding in the tops of the tree before moving on.

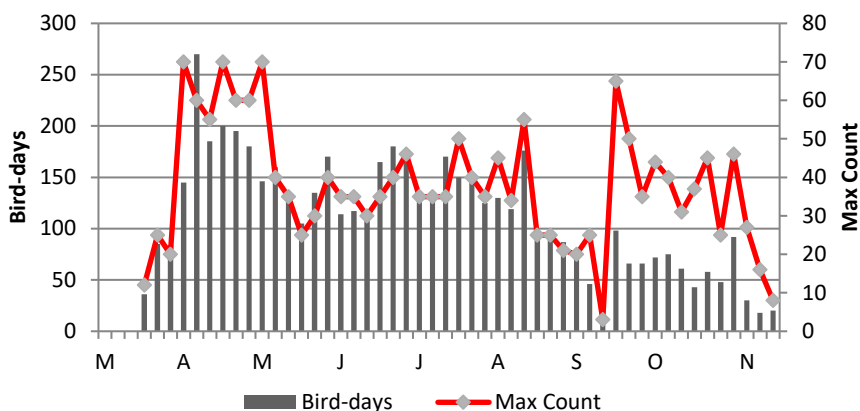
**[European] Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

*Lossey ny Keylley / Kiark my Leydee*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant*

Resident breeding birds were present from the beginning of the season and by the end of March up to 25 birds were around the farmhouse. The presence of these birds made it difficult to detect spring passage, but ringing data confirmed a considerable and steady passage throughout April with daily counts between 30 – 60 on all but three days, with a peak of 70 on 18<sup>th</sup>. Although a small amount of passage continued during May daily counts were mostly between 30 – 40 birds and reflected the 18 – 20 pairs considered to be breeding. With the presence of these breeding birds, daily counts during June and July continued to regularly be between 30 – 40 birds.





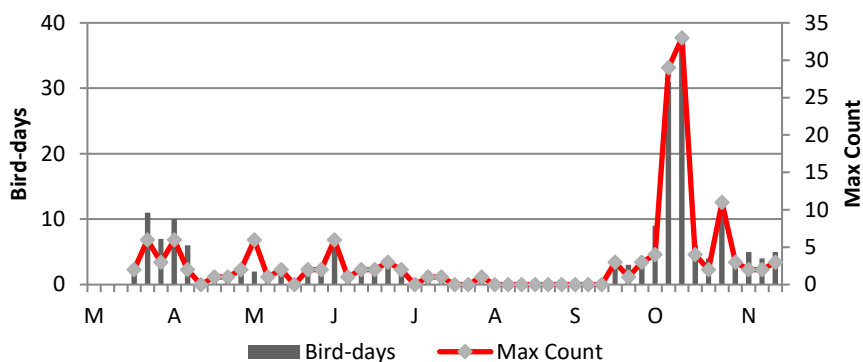
From August dispersal of breeding birds began and daily counts slowly began to decrease. During September records became more sporadic with single figure counts on 16 dates, six counts of up to 25 plus 65 on 16<sup>th</sup>, 50 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 35 on 24<sup>th</sup> and 44 on 30<sup>th</sup>. Records during October continued in a similar vein with single figure counts on a further 16 dates, six counts of between 15 – 40, plus 45 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 41 on 27<sup>th</sup> and 46 on 29<sup>th</sup>. By November single figure counts occurred on just eight dates plus 27 on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16 on 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **[Eurasian] Siskin *Spinus spinus***

*Fairly common spring and autumn passage migrant*

One or two birds were recorded sporadically from the start of the season through to 25<sup>th</sup> July, although no pattern of occurrence is discernible. Occasionally slightly higher counts were made with six on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> May being the peak counts.

Autumn passage began on 12<sup>th</sup> September with up to four birds being recorded on 8 dates in the month, 12 in October and nine in November. Additionally peak counts occurred in October, with 29 on 6<sup>th</sup>, 33 on 8<sup>th</sup> and 11 on 26<sup>th</sup>.



|        | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| B-days | 22  | 21  | 18  | 12  | 5   | 0   | 16  | 97  | 14  |
| Max.   | 6   | 5   | 6   | 3   | 1   | -   | 4   | 33  | 3   |

### [Common] Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

*Pompee ny Guirtlagh*

*Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant*

The species was scarce during the early part of the year with two on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and singles on 27<sup>th</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> April being the only spring records.

A juvenile bird trapped on 13<sup>th</sup> June was most likely to have been bred on the main Island, as was another juvenile trapped on 6<sup>th</sup> July. Autumn migration began with singles on 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> September, then 1-2 birds recorded on 4 dates during the last week of the month. Single birds were recorded on 12 dates in October, in addition to nine on 18<sup>th</sup> and three on 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>. In November, four were seen on 2<sup>nd</sup> and singles on 8<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Lapland Bunting [Longspur] *Calcarius lapponicus***  
*Rare migrant;*

A single flew west on the 13<sup>th</sup> November.

The first record since singles were recorded in March & October 2012

## **2017 Ringing Report**

The grand total of 7946 birds of 82 species ringed during 2017 was a return to the form of the late eighties and early 90's. The total eclipsed recent years and was the 2nd highest total ever in the Observatories 59-year history. This was largely achievable due to an increase in the help provided by a number of visiting ringers and volunteers, and we are particularly grateful to Belinda Leach, Stuart Cowper, Mike Haigh & Olivia Pargeter for all their efforts and help during the season. I was also particularly helped by Nathan Wilkie, who regularly assisted with running the Withy nets in the mornings and then went on to complete his main role, as Estate Warden, during the remainder of the day. Two new species were added to the Calf ringing list; a Red-footed Falcon in May and Olive-backed Pipit in October.

The season started well with good numbers of Goldcrest moving



through during the second half of March, including 193 caught on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Goldfinch passage began in late March and continued in force throughout April resulting in record numbers being ringed during the season. Chiffchaff passage was strong from late March

and continued steadily through both April and May. Willow Warbler passage was very consistent with both April and May producing excellent arrivals that ultimately achieved over 1000 ringed. Warbler passage during late April and through May was excellent resulting in

higher-than-average numbers of Sedge Warbler, Blackcap and Whitethroat. Garden Warbler were caught in better numbers than for several springs and a record seven Lesser Whitethroat were trapped. Four Pied Flycatchers including a Norwegian control were trapped in May, the first spring captures of this species since 2008.

Foreign controls were a feature of the spring and included French & Spanish Chiffchaffs, a Brussels Willow Warbler, no less than five French Sedge Warblers and a Channel Islands Reed Warbler. With so many birds being caught it was unsurprising that several rarities should be trapped with a fine adult male Red-footed Falcon being the pick of



the bunch. This was a new species ringed for the Calf and only the 5<sup>th</sup> ever ringed under the BTO scheme. Other notable scarcities included the Calf's 20<sup>th</sup> Subalpine Warbler, the 17<sup>th</sup> Red-breasted Flycatcher and the 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>

Greenish Warblers. Eider ducks were caught in record numbers with 11 new females trapped at nest plus four re-traps.

Numbers of seabirds ringed were again low, with inclement weather during June and July causing high mortality in young, particularly affecting the large gulls. A great deal of effort was put into catching and colour-ringing Rock Pipits over the summer and one of these trips

resulted in a by-catch of a Common Sandpiper, only the 5<sup>th</sup> ringed on the Calf.

Prolonged periods of windy weather coupled with frequent heavy rain were a feature of the early autumn and migration was very much stop and start and never really seemed to get going properly. Numbers and variety of warblers were unsurprisingly low with, perhaps, the



exception of the three Reed Warblers trapped in August, one of which was bearing a French ring. Seven Redshanks caught in one night's mist netting at Cow Harbour at the end of August was quite an achievement,

given that there had previously only ever been 21 ringed on the Calf. Unfortunately, several further attempts at catching more waders during the autumn were thwarted by the weather.

September saw the continuation of bad weather conditions, often for days at a time, and migration was at times non-existent. On the few occasions that calm weather prevailed, or the wind moved away from the northerly sector, there were plenty of birds to ring and seven 100+ days made the months' total look half respectable. Passage of Robins was however strong, good numbers of Meadow Pipits were tape-lured during the month and Goldcrest passage accounted for 39% of the

birds ringed. A Yellow-browed Warbler trapped at the end of the month was the 39<sup>th</sup> ringed on the Calf.

October continued where September left off, with regular and prolonged periods of windy weather which limited migration of some



species. Good numbers of Goldcrest moved through during the first half of the month, whilst in the latter half several large arrivals of thrushes ensured the best annual totals were achieved for both Song Thrush and Redwing, whilst 12 Mistle Thrush is equal to the number of birds ringed in the past nine years. An Olive-backed Pipit trapped in the back garden on 23<sup>rd</sup> October was a new species to be ringed on the Calf. The start

of a Long-tailed Tit invasion at the end of the month and into early November brought 51 new birds and a control and achieved the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest year total ever.

Species and/or numbers of note ringed during 2017. Species in **bold** denote a record annual total:

| Species                   | No.        | Ranking                                                               |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mallard                   | 1          | 1 <sup>st</sup> for 23 years                                          |
| Eider                     | 11         | Record annual total beating nine in 2015                              |
| <b>Redshank</b>           | <b>7</b>   | record annual total and 1 <sup>st</sup> ringed for 22 years           |
| Common Sandpiper          | 1          | 5 <sup>th</sup> ever and 1 <sup>st</sup> ringed for 22 years          |
| Cuckoo                    | 2          | 1 <sup>st</sup> since 2012                                            |
| Tree Pipit                | 4          | 1 <sup>st</sup> since 2014                                            |
| Rock Pipit                | 13         | 4 <sup>th</sup> highest annual total                                  |
| Robin                     | 368        | 2 <sup>nd</sup> highest annual total                                  |
| Redstart                  | 21         | highest annual total since 2012                                       |
| Whinchat                  | 10         | highest annual total since 2002                                       |
| Ring Ouzel                | 4          | highest annual total since 2006                                       |
| <b>Song Thrush</b>        | <b>334</b> | record annual total beating 295 in 1989                               |
| <b>Redwing</b>            | <b>136</b> | record annual total beating 94 in 1985                                |
| Mistle Thrush             | 12         | highest annual total for 21 years                                     |
| Grasshopper Warbler       | 10         | highest annual total since 2011                                       |
| Sedge Warbler             | 209        | 4 <sup>th</sup> highest annual total and best year total for 47 years |
| Reed Warbler              | 3          | joint 2 <sup>nd</sup> highest annual total                            |
| Blackcap                  | 211        | 2 <sup>nd</sup> highest annual total                                  |
| <b>Lesser Whitethroat</b> | <b>7</b>   | record annual total beating six in 1998                               |
| Whitethroat               | 187        | 7 <sup>th</sup> highest annual and best year total for 47 years       |
| <b>Greenish Warbler</b>   | <b>2</b>   | record annual total                                                   |
| <b>Chiffchaff</b>         | <b>425</b> | record annual total beating 400 on 1988                               |
| Willow Warbler            | 1366       | highest annual total for 28 years                                     |
| Goldcrest                 | 1516       | highest annual total for 27 years                                     |
| Pied Flycatcher           | 5          | highest annual total since 2004                                       |
| Long-tailed Tit           | 51         | 3 <sup>rd</sup> highest annual total                                  |
| Chaffinch                 | 378        | 5 <sup>th</sup> highest annual total                                  |
| <b>Brambling</b>          | <b>4</b>   | joint record annual total with 2012                                   |
| <b>Goldfinch</b>          | <b>805</b> | record annual total beating 581 in 2011                               |
| Siskin                    | 29         | highest annual total for 20 years                                     |

# Seasons Centuries:

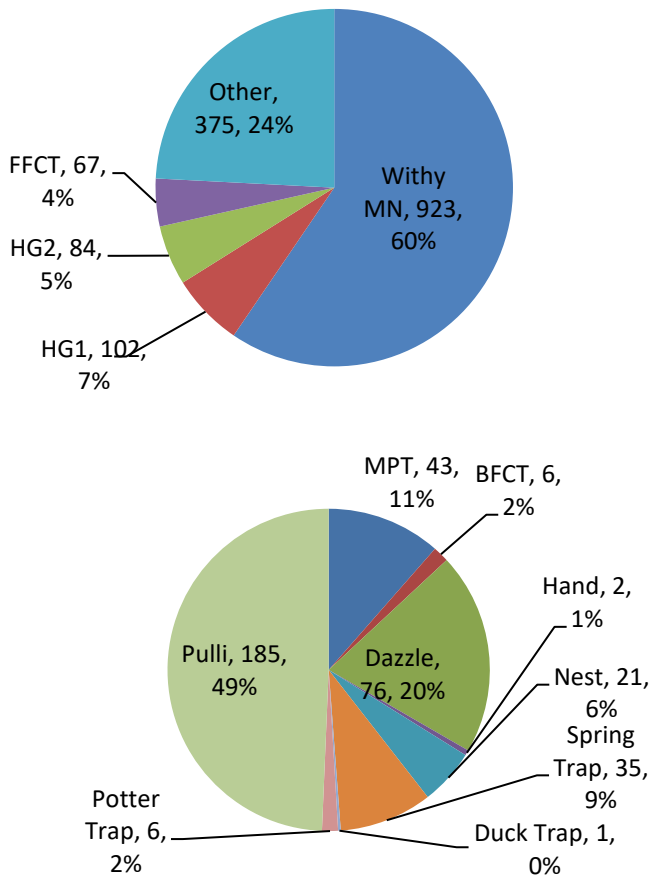
| Date                       | No. | Main species                           |
|----------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------|
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> March     | 256 | Goldcrest 193                          |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> April      | 120 | Goldcrest 46                           |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> April      | 137 | Willow Warbler 73                      |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> April      | 114 | Willow Warbler 45                      |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> April     | 106 | Willow Warbler 43                      |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> April     | 101 | Willow Warbler 71                      |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> May        | 100 | Willow Warbler 50                      |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> May        | 131 | Willow Warbler 61                      |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> May        | 116 | Willow Warbler 56                      |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> May        | 149 | Willow Warbler 84                      |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> May        | 115 | Willow Warbler 61                      |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> May        | 127 | Sedge Warbler 41,<br>Willow Warbler 41 |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> May       | 141 | Sedge Warbler 43                       |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> September | 199 | Robin 62                               |

| Date                       | No. | Main species                     |
|----------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|
| 17 <sup>th</sup> September | 118 | Meadow Pipit 39,<br>Goldcrest 39 |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> September | 112 | Goldcrest 45                     |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> September | 116 | Goldcrest 37                     |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> September | 108 | Goldcrest 47                     |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> September | 129 | Goldcrest 44,<br>Meadow Pipit 43 |
| 30 <sup>th</sup> September | 106 | Goldcrest 61                     |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> October    | 119 | Goldcrest 101                    |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> October    | 102 | Goldcrest 30,<br>Chaffinch 30    |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> October    | 127 | Goldcrest 49                     |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> October    | 108 | Goldcrest 50                     |
| 18 <sup>TH</sup> October   | 195 | Goldcrest 86                     |
| 26 <sup>TH</sup> October   | 157 | Chaffinch 61                     |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> October   | 151 | Blackbird 45                     |

## Trapping Methods:

Most birds were trapped using conventional methods, with mist nets accounting for 60% of birds trapped. Other main methods used were Heligoland Traps (1 & 2) and the Front Field Crow Trap.

Other methods accounted for 24% of birds trapped of which 49% were nestlings (pulli) and 11% were caught in the Meadow Pipit Trap



The table below shows re-traps from previous years, the final column shows older re-traps caught in 2017:

|                 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | Previous |
|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----------|
| Manx Shearwater | 15   | 2    | 2    | 3    |      |      | 2    | 1    |      |      |          |
| Shag            |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 1    |          |
| Eider           |      | 1    | 1    | 1    |      |      |      | 1    |      |      |          |
| Herring Gull    |      | 1    | 4    | 4    | 7    | 5    |      | 3    |      | 2    | 2003     |
| Great B-b Gull  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 2001     |
| Meadow Pipit    | 2    | 1    | 2    | 3    |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Pied Wagtail    | 1    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Wren            | 6    | 2    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Dunnock         | 1    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Robin           | 1    | 1    |      | 1    |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Stonechat       | 3    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Wheatear        | 7    | 3    |      | 1    |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Blackbird       | 9    | 7    |      | 1    |      |      | 1    |      |      |      |          |
| Song Thrush     |      |      |      | 1    |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Willow Warbler  |      | 1    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Great Tit       | 1    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Chough          |      | 1    |      | 1    |      |      | 1    |      |      |      |          |
| Chaffinch       | 4    |      | 2    |      | 1    |      |      |      |      |      |          |
| Goldfinch       | 28   | 4    | 5    | 3    |      |      |      |      |      |      |          |

# Ringling Totals - 2017

## Monthly ringing totals:

The table below shows a comparison of this year's monthly totals compared with the five- and ten-year averages.

|             | 2017        | 5 year average | 10 year average |
|-------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Mar         | 602         | 270            | 243             |
| Apr         | 1520        | 799            | 762             |
| May         | 1296        | 514            | 478             |
| Jun         | 222         | 287            | 279             |
| Jul         | 500         | 303            | 305             |
| Aug         | 540         | 341            | 296             |
| Sep         | 1402        | 832            | 726             |
| Oct         | 1533        | 847            | 872             |
| Nov         | 331         | 139            | 178             |
| <b>Year</b> | <b>7946</b> | <b>4332</b>    | <b>4119</b>     |

## Top Ten Species:

|   |                |      |
|---|----------------|------|
| 1 | Goldcrest      | 1516 |
| 2 | Willow Warbler | 1366 |
| 3 | Goldfinch      | 805  |
| 4 | Meadow Pipit   | 442  |
| 5 | Chiffchaff     | 425  |

|    |             |     |
|----|-------------|-----|
| 6  | Chaffinch   | 378 |
| 7  | Robin       | 368 |
| 8  | Song Thrush | 334 |
| 9  | Blackbird   | 313 |
| 10 | Blackcap    | 212 |

## Year Totals:

|                          | Full<br>grown | Pulli | Total |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| Mallard                  | 1             | 0     | 1     |
| Eider                    | 11            | 0     | 11    |
| Fulmar                   | 4             | 0     | 4     |
| Manx Shearwater          | 64            | 0     | 64    |
| Storm Petrel             | 71            | 0     | 71    |
| Shag                     | 5             | 46    | 51    |
| Hen Harrier              | 0             | 0     | 0     |
| Sparrowhawk              | 8             | 0     | 8     |
| Red-footed Falcon*       | 1             | 0     | 1     |
| Oystercatcher            | 5             | 1     | 6     |
| Redshank                 | 7             | 0     | 7     |
| Common Sandpiper         | 1             | 0     | 1     |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | 1             | 5     | 6     |
| Herring Gull             | 7             | 90    | 97    |
| Great Black-backed Gull  | 1             | 13    | 14    |
| Razorbill                | 2             | 6     | 8     |
| Woodpigeon               | 3             | 0     | 3     |
| Collared Dove            | 1             | 0     | 1     |
| Cuckoo                   | 2             | 0     | 2     |
| Swallow                  | 22            | 2     | 24    |
| Olive-backed Pipit*      | 1             | 0     | 1     |
| Tree Pipit               | 4             | 0     | 4     |
| Meadow Pipit             | 442           | 0     | 442   |
| Rock Pipit               | 13            | 0     | 13    |
| Grey Wagtail             | 8             | 0     | 8     |
| Pied/White Wagtail       | 26            | 0     | 26    |
| Wren                     | 105           | 1     | 106   |
| Dunnock                  | 64            | 0     | 64    |
| Robin                    | 368           | 0     | 368   |

|                         | <b>Full<br/>grown</b> | <b>Pulli</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Black Redstart          | 4                     | 0            | 4            |
| Redstart                | 21                    | 0            | 21           |
| Whinchat                | 10                    | 0            | 10           |
| Stonechat               | 52                    | 0            | 52           |
| Wheatear                | 102                   | 0            | 102          |
| Ring Ouzel              | 4                     | 0            | 4            |
| Blackbird               | 310                   | 3            | 313          |
| Fieldfare               | 3                     | 0            | 3            |
| Song Thrush             | 334                   | 0            | 334          |
| Redwing                 | 136                   | 0            | 136          |
| Mistle Thrush           | 12                    | 0            | 12           |
| Grasshopper Warbler     | 10                    | 0            | 10           |
| Sedge Warbler           | 209                   | 0            | 209          |
| Reed Warbler            | 3                     | 0            | 3            |
| Blackcap                | 212                   | 0            | 212          |
| Garden Warbler          | 18                    | 0            | 18           |
| Lesser Whitethroat      | 7                     | 0            | 7            |
| Whitethroat             | 187                   | 0            | 187          |
| Subalpine Warbler       | 1                     | 0            | 1            |
| Greenish Warbler        | 2                     | 0            | 2            |
| Yellow-browed Warbler   | 1                     | 0            | 1            |
| Chiffchaff              | 425                   | 0            | 425          |
| Willow Warbler          | 1366                  | 0            | 1366         |
| Goldcrest               | 1516                  | 0            | 1516         |
| Firecrest               | 2                     | 0            | 2            |
| Spotted Flycatcher      | 48                    | 0            | 48           |
| Pied Flycatcher         | 5                     | 0            | 5            |
| Red-breasted Flycatcher | 1                     | 0            | 1            |
| Long-tailed Tit         | 51                    | 0            | 51           |
| Coal Tit                | 4                     | 0            | 4            |

|                | <b>Full<br/>grown</b> | <b>Pulli</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Blue Tit       | 14                    | 0            | 14           |
| Great Tit      | 25                    | 0            | 25           |
| Treecreeper    | 2                     | 0            | 2            |
| Chough         | 3                     | 7            | 10           |
| Starling       | 26                    | 0            | 26           |
| House Sparrow  | 7                     | 0            | 7            |
| Tree Sparrow   | 2                     | 0            | 2            |
| Chaffinch      | 378                   | 0            | 378          |
| Brambling      | 4                     | 0            | 4            |
| Greenfinch     | 10                    | 0            | 10           |
| Goldfinch      | 795                   | 10           | 805          |
| Siskin         | 29                    | 0            | 29           |
| Linnet         | 53                    | 1            | 54           |
| Lesser Redpoll | 89                    | 0            | 89           |
| Reed Bunting   | 20                    | 0            | 20           |
| <b>Total:</b>  | <b>7761</b>           | <b>185</b>   | <b>7946</b>  |

## **2017 Recoveries**

The co-ordinates of the Calf of Man are: 54°3'N 4°49'W

Recoveries are of birds, which have been ringed on the Calf and have been subsequently found elsewhere. A total of 70 recoveries were received.

Capture type:

- V - Alive and released, not by a ringer
- R – Recaptured and released by a ringer
- X – Found dead
- xL – Found long dead; over a week
- xF – Found freshly dead; less than a week
- S – Rings read in the field, not by a ringer
- SS – Rings read in the field by a ringer

| <b>Ring<br/>Number</b> | <b>Age<br/>/Sex</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Location details</b> |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------|

### **Shag**

|         |   |    |                                                |
|---------|---|----|------------------------------------------------|
| 1406071 | 8 | N  | 30/04/07 Calf of Man                           |
|         |   | XF | 03/12/17 Scarlett, Isle of Man                 |
|         |   |    | 3870 days 9 km 91deg (E)                       |
| 1468881 | 1 | N  | 10/06/15 Calf of Man                           |
|         |   | XL | 02/06/17 Holy Island, North Ayrshire, Scotland |
|         |   |    | 723 days 162 km 355deg (N)                     |

## Storm Petrel

|         |    |   |          |                                        |
|---------|----|---|----------|----------------------------------------|
| 2591961 | 4  | N | 26/05/17 | Calf of Man                            |
|         | 4  | R | 07/07/17 | Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, Wales         |
|         |    |   |          | 42 days 143 km 180deg (S)              |
| 2633250 | 4  | N | 13/08/16 | Calf of Man                            |
|         | 4  | R | 05/07/17 | Ballyreagh, Co. Londonderry,           |
|         |    |   |          | N. Ireland 326 days 176 km 317deg (NW) |
| 2633256 | 4N |   | 14/08/16 | Calf of Man                            |
|         | 4R |   | 15/08/17 | Ballyreagh, Co. Londonderry,           |
|         |    |   |          | N. Ireland 366 days 176 km 317deg (NW) |
| 2633257 | 4N |   | 14/08/16 | Calf of Man                            |
|         | 4R |   | 27/06/17 | Hartland Point, Devon                  |
|         |    |   |          | 317 days 338 km 177deg (S)             |
| 2633281 | 4N |   | 13/07/17 | Calf of Man                            |
|         | 4R |   | 10/08/17 | Skokholm Island, Pembrokeshire, Wales  |
|         |    |   |          | 28 days 264 km 188deg (S)              |
| 2633322 | 4N |   | 13/08/15 | Calf of Man                            |
|         | 6R |   | 15/07/16 | Inner Farne, Farne Islands,            |
|         |    |   |          | Northumberland                         |
|         |    |   |          | 337 days 265 km 50deg (NE)             |

## Manx Shearwater

FC91740 4 N 10/06/99 Calf of Man  
FB35188 4 R 23/04/11 Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, Wales  
(re-ringed) 4335 days 147 km 180deg (S)

## Herring Gull

GA39125 1 N 28/06/02 Calf of Man  
10 S 02/06/17 Ardglass Harbour, Co. Down. N. Ireland  
5453 days 57 km 294deg (WNW)

GR64649 1 N 09/07/12 Calf of Man  
**T7UN** 8 S 25/10/16 Dungarvon, Co. Waterford, Eire  
1569 days 287 km 221deg (SW)

GR64929 1 N 23/06/14 Calf of Man  
**T9YF** 7 S 14/08/16 Sandyford Industrial Estate, Co. Dublin,  
Eire 783 days 127 km 227deg (SW)

GR64972 1 N 28/06/14 Calf of Man  
**T1YL** 9 S 10/02/17 Rosslare, Co. Wexford, Eire  
958 days 225 km 207deg (SSW)

GR94866 1 N 20/06/15 Calf of Man  
**R09:M** 5 S 12/04/16 Sean Walsh Park, Co. Dublin, Eire  
297 days 135 km 230deg (SW)

|         |   |   |          |                                                                                       |
|---------|---|---|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GR94898 | 1 | N | 20/06/15 | Calf of Man                                                                           |
| R63:M   | 5 | S | 15/08/16 | Millquarter Bay, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland 422 days 57 km 302deg (WNW)                  |
|         |   |   |          |                                                                                       |
| GR98845 | 1 | N | 22/06/15 | Calf of Man                                                                           |
| R24:M   | 7 | S | 19/02/17 | Strandhall, Isle of Man<br>608 days 9 km 65deg (ENE)                                  |
|         |   |   |          |                                                                                       |
| GR98853 | 1 | N | 22/06/15 | Calf of Man                                                                           |
| R43:M   | 5 | S | 13/08/16 | Millquarter Bay, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland 418 days 57 km 302deg (WNW)                  |
|         |   |   |          |                                                                                       |
| GR98863 | 1 | N | 23/06/15 | Calf of Man                                                                           |
| R19:M   | 7 | S | 28/02/17 | Bishop Burn, Loch Ryan,<br>Dumfries & Galloway, Scotland<br>616 days 96 km 353deg (N) |
|         | 7 | S | 22/03/17 | Bishop Burn, Loch Ryan,<br>Dumfries & Galloway, Scotland 638 days                     |
|         |   |   |          |                                                                                       |
| GR98884 | 1 | N | 23/06/15 | Calf of Man                                                                           |
| R17:M   | 7 | S | 16/11/17 | Ardglass Harbour, Co. Down, N. Ireland<br>877 days 57 km 294deg (WNW)                 |

|              |   |   |          |                                                                      |
|--------------|---|---|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GR98885      | 1 | N | 23/06/15 | Calf of Man                                                          |
| <b>R61:M</b> | 5 | S | 29/04/16 | Bray Harbour, Co. Wicklow, Eire<br>311 days 129 km 222deg (SW)       |
|              | 5 | S | 23/07/16 | Bray Harbour, Co. Wicklow, Eire 396 days                             |
|              | 5 | S | 10/09/16 | Bray Harbour, Co. Wicklow, Eire 445 days                             |
|              | 5 | S | 11/09/16 | Bray Harbour, Co. Wicklow, Eire 446 days                             |
|              | 7 | S | 31/12/17 | Newlyn Harbour, Cornwall<br>922 days 436 km (S)                      |
|              |   |   |          |                                                                      |
| GR98899      | 1 | N | 23/06/15 | Calf of Man                                                          |
| <b>R13:M</b> | 7 | S | 11/03/17 | Aberaeron, Ceredigion, Wales<br>627 days 207 km 171deg (S)           |
|              | 7 | S | 25/04/17 | Peel, Isle of Man<br>672 days 19 km 25deg (NNE)                      |
|              | 7 | S | 04/08/17 | Millquarter Bay, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland 773 days 57 km 302deg (WNW) |
|              |   |   |          |                                                                      |
| GV61741      | 1 | N | 05/07/17 | Calf of Man                                                          |
| <b>L79:M</b> | 3 | S | 11/10/17 | Peel Bay, Isle of Man<br>98 days 19 km 25deg (NNE)                   |
|              |   |   |          |                                                                      |
| GV61747      | 1 | N | 05/07/17 | Calf of Man                                                          |
| <b>L84:M</b> | 3 | S | 11/09/17 | Millquarter Bay, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland 68 days 57 km 302deg (WNW)  |

### Lesser Black-backed Gull

GR98917 1 N 24/06/15 Calf of Man  
**T60:M** 3 S 23/10/15 Tavira Salt Lakes, Faro, PORTUGAL  
121 days 1894 km 187deg (S)  
7 S 10/05/17 Nevern Estuary, Newport,  
Pembrokeshire, Wales  
686 days 228 km 181deg (S)

### Great Black-backed Gull

HT95147 1 N 03/07/13 Calf of Man  
**T0ZL** 10 S 10/09/17 Millquarter Bay, Co. Down,  
N. Ireland  
1525 days 57 km 302deg (WNW)

HT95148 1 N 05/07/13 Calf of Man  
**T1ZR** 10 S 03/02/17 Camel Estuary, Cornwall  
1309 days 391 km 181deg (S)

HT95157 1 N 22/07/13 Calf of Man  
**T4ZV** 10 S 07/10/17 Gann Estuary, Dale,  
Pembrokeshire, Wales  
1538 days 201 km (S)

HT95158 1 N 22/07/13 Calf of Man  
**T5ZV** 7 S 06/07/16 Hoylake, Merseyside  
1080 days 129 km 126deg (SE)

|              |   |   |          |                                           |
|--------------|---|---|----------|-------------------------------------------|
| HT95187      | 1 | N | 24/06/14 | Calf of Man                               |
| <b>T4YK</b>  | 7 | S | 22/07/16 | Hoylelake, Merseyside                     |
|              |   |   |          | 759 days 129 km 126deg (SE)               |
|              | 7 | S | 23/07/16 | Hoylelake, Merseyside 760 days            |
| HT95227      | 1 | N | 22/06/15 | Calf of Man                               |
| <b>S03:M</b> | 5 | S | 25/09/16 | Slade, Hook Peninsular, Co. Wexford, Eire |
|              |   |   |          | 461 days 255 km 214deg (SW)               |
| HT95230      | 1 | N | 22/06/15 | Calf of Man                               |
| <b>S24:M</b> | 7 | S | 29/04/17 | Clogher Head, Port Oriel, Co. Louth, Eire |
|              |   |   |          | 677 days 96 km (WSW)                      |
| HT95255      | 1 | N | 01/07/15 | Calf of Man                               |
| <b>S01:M</b> | 5 | S | 05/12/16 | Rosslare, Co. Wexford, Eire               |
|              |   |   |          | 523 days 227 km 208deg (SSW)              |
|              | 7 | S | 28/06/17 | Clogher Head, Port Oriel, Co. Louth, Eire |
|              |   |   |          | 728 days 96 km (WSW)                      |
|              | 7 | S | 24/10/17 | Clogher Head, Port Oriel, Co. Louth, Eire |
|              |   |   |          | 846 days                                  |
| HT95280      | 1 | N | 26/06/17 | Calf of Man                               |
| <b>S43:M</b> | 3 | S | 14/10/17 | Nevern Estuary, Newport, Wales            |
|              |   |   |          | 110 days 228 km (S)                       |
| HT95281      | 1 | N | 06/07/17 | Calf of Man                               |
| <b>S21:M</b> | 3 | S | 19/11/17 | Clogher Head, Port Oriel, Co. Louth, Eire |
|              |   |   |          | 136 days 96 km (WSW)                      |

## Wheatear

Z076053 3J N 29/07/15 Calf of Man

**AYL** 5M S 06/04/16 Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, Wales  
252 days 147 km 180deg (S)

Z611455 3J N 21/07/16 Calf of Man

**AZI** 3F R 08/08/16 Point of Ayre, Isle of Man  
18 days 49 km 37deg (NE)

5M R 09/05/17 Calf of Man 292 days

5M R 17/06/17 Calf of Man 331 days

Two recoveries of birds that are likely to have been bred on the Calf. Z076053 shows a typical northerly spring movement, presumably having wintered in North Africa. Z611455 shows a less typical northerly movement, at a time when birds will be preparing to head south for the winter.

## Great Tit

Z610052 3F N 10/10/16 Calf of Man

5F R 10/01/17 Ballagawne, Isle of Man  
92 days 7 km 56deg (ENE)

Z610116 3M N 20/10/16 Calf of Man

5M R 18/04/17 The Ayres, near Rue Point, Isle of Man  
180 days 46 km 36deg (NE)

Z671756    4M N 27/10/17 Calf of Man  
              4M R 27/10/17 Ballagawne, Isle of Man  
                                         0 days 7 km 56deg (ENE)

Typical re-orientation of autumn birds moving back to the Isle of Man after making their dispersal sorties to the Calf. Z671756 was ringed on the Calf at 10am and re-caught back on the Isle of Man three hours later.

### **Goldcrest**

HXL596    4M N 13/03/16 Calf of Man  
                                         XF 10/04/17 Moymore North, Lahinch, Co. Clare, Eire  
                                         393 days 324 km 249deg (WSW)

HYP786    2M N 28/09/16 Calf of Man  
              3M R 09/10/16 Leighton Moss, near Silverdale,  
                                         Lancashire 11 days 133 km 86deg (E)

### **Firecrest**

KEY063    3M N 28/09/17 Calf of Man  
              3M R 08/11/17 Ince Blundell, Merseyside  
                                         41 days 132 km 117deg (ESE)

### **Willow Warbler**

HYP825    3    N 05/08/16 Calf of Man  
              4    R 05/03/17 Kartong, THE GAMBIA  
                                         212 days 4675 km 194deg (SSW)

## Chaffinch

|         |    |   |          |                                 |
|---------|----|---|----------|---------------------------------|
| Z075070 | 3  | N | 12/10/14 | Calf of Man                     |
|         | 6M | R | 28/03/17 | Ballagawne, Isle of Man         |
|         |    |   |          | 898 days 7 km 56deg (ENE)       |
| Z076180 | 3F | N | 26/09/15 | Calf of Man                     |
|         | 3F | R | 20/12/16 | Ballagawne, Isle of Man         |
|         |    |   |          | 451 days 7 km 56deg (ENE)       |
| Z076395 | 3F | N | 14/10/15 | Calf of Man                     |
|         | 6F | R | 01/05/17 | Cnoc, Argyll and Bute, Scotland |
|         |    |   |          | 565 days 239 km 2deg (N)        |
| Z076403 | 3M | N | 15/10/15 | Calf of Man                     |
|         | 4M | R | 05/09/17 | Ballagawne, Isle of Man         |
|         |    |   |          | 691 days 7 km 56deg (ENE)       |
| Z611861 | 3F | N | 17/09/16 | Calf of Man                     |
|         | 3F | R | 20/09/16 | Ballagawne, Isle of Man         |
|         |    |   |          | 3 days 7 km 56deg (ENE)         |
| Z671639 | 4F | N | 20/10/17 | Calf of Man                     |
|         | 4F | R | 24/10/17 | Ballagawne, Isle of Man         |
|         |    |   |          | 4 days 7 km 56deg (ENE)         |

## Goldfinch

- Z076466    3M N 19/03/16 Calf of Man  
              6M R 26/03/17 Drumla, North Ayrshire, Scotland  
                                  372 days 155 km 354deg (N)  
              6M R 28/03/17 Porta Buidhe, North Ayrshire, Scotland  
                                  374 days 154 km 353deg (N)
- Z610458    5F N 06/04/17 Calf of Man  
              5F R 18/04/17 Leswalt, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland  
                                  12 days 99 km 350deg (N)
- Z610740    5M N 17/04/17 Calf of Man  
              5F R 19/04/17 Ballagawne, Isle of Man  
                                  2 days 7 km 56deg (ENE)
- Z610852    6M N 21/04/17 Calf of Man  
                  XF 29/04/17 Lhergydhoo, Peel, Isle of Man  
                                  8 days 20 km 31deg (NNE)
- Z611359    5M N 19/05/16 Calf of Man  
              4M R 13/11/16 Ballagawne, Isle of Man  
                                  178 days 7 km 56deg (ENE)
- Z611886    3JMN 20/09/16 Calf of Man  
              5M R 09/04/17 South Walney, Barrow-in-Furness,  
                                  Cumbria 201 days 106 km 92deg (E)

Z671704 4F N 26/10/17 Calf of Man  
3 R 08/12/17 Manor Farm Museum, Hampshire  
43 days 424 km 146deg (SE)

### **Lesser Redpoll**

L215359 5 N 23/04/11 Calf of Man  
6M R 28/02/17 The Barracks, Little Livermere, Suffolk  
2138 days 417 km 118deg (ESE)

Z075685 3 N 27/09/15 Calf of Man  
X 07/02/17 Kilcoo, Newry, Co. Down, N.Ireland  
499 days 78 km 283deg (WNW)

Z075706 3 N 27/09/15 Calf of Man  
4M R 10/02/17 Rowney Wood, Essex  
502 days 413 km 125deg (SE)  
4M R 14/02/17 Rowney Wood, Essex 506 days  
4M R 27/02/17 Rowney Wood, Essex 519 days

Z671583 3 N 18/10/17 Calf of Man  
3 R 02/11/17 Middleton Nature Reserve, Lancashire  
15 days 125 km 92deg (E)

### **Siskin**

Z610347 6M N 28/03/17 Calf of Man  
6M R 30/03/17 Leswalt, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland  
2 days 99 km 350deg (N)

## **2017 Controls**

Controls notified during 2017 are listed below, controls are birds ringed elsewhere and caught on the Calf. Details of 46 Controls were received.

| <b>Ring number</b>     | <b>Age/<br/>Sex</b> | <b>Condition</b> | <b>Date</b>                                        | <b>Details</b>               |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Manx Shearwater</b> |                     |                  |                                                    |                              |
| EG62304                | 1J N                | 24/08/01         | Copeland Bird Observatory, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland |                              |
|                        | 4 R                 | 06/07/17         | Calf of Man                                        | 5795 days 87 km 147deg (SSE) |
| EL91368                | 1 N                 | 12/09/06         | Copeland Bird Observatory, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland |                              |
|                        | 4 R                 | 16/05/17         | Calf of Man                                        | 3899 days 87 km 147deg (SSE) |
| ET03190                | 3 N                 | 27/08/99         | Copeland Bird Observatory, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland |                              |
|                        | 4 R                 | 30/04/17         | Calf of Man                                        | 6456 days 87 km 147deg (SSE) |

A series of records indicating the likely source of breeding birds that have recolonised the Calf.

## Storm Petrel

|         |   |   |          |                                                    |
|---------|---|---|----------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 2619161 | 4 | N | 08/08/14 | Copeland Bird Observatory, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland |
|---------|---|---|----------|----------------------------------------------------|

4 R 23/07/17 Calf of Man  
1080 days 87 km 147deg (SSE)

2647720 4 N 04/08/16 Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, Wales

4 R 17/07/17 Calf of Man 347 days 143 km 0deg (N)

2647765 4 N 24/08/16 Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, Wales

4 R 07/07/17 Calf of Man 317 days 143 km 0deg (N)

## Hen Harrier

FB04489 1 N 24/06/17 near Slieu Maggle, Isle of Man

3 R 30/10/17 Calf of Man 128 days 25 km 222deg (SW)

## Lesser Black-backed Gull

GR70162 1 N 26/07/12 Point of Ayre, Isle of Man

10 S 07/07/17 Calf of Man

1807 days 49 km 216deg (SW)

## Herring Gull

GR97473 6 N 08/07/15 Peel, Isle of Man

10 S 16/07/17 Calf of Man 739 days 21 km 203deg (SSW)

## Sedge Warbler

FRP

7051031    3    N   30/08/12 Reserve du Migron, Frossay,  
Loire-Atlantique, FRANCE  
4    R   28/04/17 Calf of Man  
1702 days 781 km 345deg (NNW)

FRP

7541822    3    N   10/08/15 Reserve du Massereau, Frossay,  
Loire-Atlantique, FRANCE  
4    R   08/05/17 Calf of Man  
637 days 786 km 346deg (NNW)

FRP

7875310    3    N   25/08/16 Trunvel, Treogat, Finistère, FRANCE  
4    R   07/05/17 Calf of Man 255 days 688 km 358deg (N)

FRP

7904181    3    N   19/09/16 Tour aux Moutons, Donges,  
Loire-Atlantique, FRANCE  
4    R   12/05/17 Calf of Man  
235 days 773 km 346deg (NNW)

FRP

7931321    3    N   17/08/16 PK 20, Saint-Vigor-D'Ymonville,  
Seine-Maritime, FRANCE  
4    R   12/05/17 Calf of Man  
268 days 623 km 326deg (NNW)

S294725    4    N   26/08/16 Litlington, East Sussex  
4    R   09/05/17 Calf of Man  
256 days 495 km 318deg (NW)

Y912053    3    N   05/08/12 Icklesham, Sussex, East Sussex  
               4    R   06/05/17 Calf of Man  
                                          1735 days 510 km 314deg (NW)

Z893747    3    N   18/07/16 Icklesham, Sussex, East Sussex  
               4    R   30/04/17 Calf of Man  
                                          286 days 510 km 314deg (NW)

A superb series of recoveries, with five French and three UK birds occurring within a 15-day period in spring 2017. This clearly indicates that birds moving through the Calf in spring, presumably heading further north to breeding grounds, pass through Sussex and south through France during autumn passage.

### **Reed Warbler**

FRP

7272807    3    N   10/08/17 Reserve de Briere Sud, Saint-Joachim,  
                                          Loire-Atlantique, FRANCE  
               3    R   15/08/17 Calf of Man 5 days 765 km 347deg (NNW)  
               3    R   17/08/17 Calf of Man 7 days 765 km 347deg (NNW)

On the face of it a rather bizzare movement of a young bird heading north prior to presumably moving south for winter. However, it is known that post-natal dispersal can often involve bird's recceing potential future breeding locations.

## Chiffchaff

FRP

|        |   |   |          |                                             |
|--------|---|---|----------|---------------------------------------------|
| 2S5290 | 2 | N | 22/09/16 | Saint-Froult, Charente-Maritime, FRANCE     |
|        | 4 | R | 05/04/17 | Calf of Man<br>195 days 943 km 344deg (NNW) |
|        | 4 | R | 07/04/17 | Calf of Man 197 days                        |
| HCB717 | 4 | N | 23/01/16 | Colyton, Devon                              |
|        | 2 | R | 09/10/16 | Calf of Man<br>260 days 390 km 343deg (NNW) |
| HXD394 | 2 | N | 28/09/15 | Chew Valley Lake, Bath, Somerset            |
|        | 4 | R | 14/05/17 | Calf of Man<br>594 days 338 km 335deg (NNW) |

## Willow Warbler

|        |   |   |          |                                                    |
|--------|---|---|----------|----------------------------------------------------|
| DAP158 | 3 | N | 18/08/16 | Letchworth, Hertfordshire                          |
|        | 4 | R | 02/05/17 | Calf of Man<br>257 days 382 km 307deg (NW)         |
| DLC845 | 5 | N | 07/05/17 | Copeland Bird Observatory, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland |
|        | 4 | R | 08/05/17 | Calf of Man 1 days 85 km 147deg (SSE)              |
| JJC754 | 3 | N | 23/08/16 | Kitley Marsh, Devon                                |
|        | 4 | R | 09/05/17 | Calf of Man 259 days 417 km 353deg (N)             |



### **Long-tailed Tit**

BRE242     2     N   24/09/16 Currag Beg, near Dog Mills, Isle of Man  
              2     R   02/11/17 Calf of Man 404 days 43 km 222deg (SW)

### **Chough**

EW81972   1     N   19/05/16 Site Confidential, Isle of Man  
                      XL 31/03/17 Calf of Man 316 days

### **Chaffinch**

S213538     3F   N   30/09/16 Ballagawne, Isle of Man  
              3F   R   10/10/16 Calf of Man 10 days 7 km 236deg (WSW)

S996218     3J   N   12/07/17 Ballagawne, Isle of Man  
              3F   R   09/10/17 Calf of Man 89 days 7 km 236deg (WSW)

### **Goldfinch**

S072650     4F   N   26/10/16 West Kirby, Merseyside  
              5M   R   07/04/17 Calf of Man  
                                     163 days 133 km 305deg (NW)

S212449     3J   N   07/09/16 Point of Ayre, Isle of Man  
              5F   R   22/04/17 Calf of Man 227 days 49 km 216deg (SW)

S212574     4F   N   10/09/16 Dhoon, Isle of Man  
              6M   R   01/04/17 Calf of Man 203 days 35 km 235deg (SW)

S263752 3M N 19/11/16 Great Warford (RS), Cheshire  
5M R 04/04/17 Calf of Man  
136 days 187 km 298deg (WNW)

S263882 3F N 11/12/16 Great Warford (RS), Cheshire  
5M R 04/04/17 Calf of Man  
114 days 187 km 298deg (WNW)

S552424 3F N 27/12/16 near Orrell, Greater Manchester  
5F R 18/03/17 Calf of Man  
81 days 151 km 294deg (WNW)

Z414499    4M N 21/10/16 Woodvale Airfield, near Formby,  
Merseyside  
5M R 04/04/17 Calf of Man  
165 days 127 km 296deg (WNW)

## Lesser Redpoll

S517797 3 N 22/10/16 Crabtree Hill, Gloucestershire  
4 R 05/05/17 Calf of Man  
195 days 293 km 329deg (NNW)

|         |   |   |          |                                             |
|---------|---|---|----------|---------------------------------------------|
| S698660 | 3 | N | 23/10/16 | Crabtree Hill, Gloucestershire              |
|         | 4 | R | 09/05/17 | Calf of Man<br>198 days 293 km 329deg (NNW) |

|         |    |   |          |                                                    |
|---------|----|---|----------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Y090032 | 5  | N | 22/01/17 | Feltwell, Norfolk                                  |
|         | 4  | R | 09/05/17 | Calf of Man                                        |
|         |    |   |          | 107 days 396 km 297deg (WNW)                       |
| Y516453 | 3  | N | 09/10/16 | Copeland Bird Observatory, Co. Down,<br>N. Ireland |
|         | 4  | R | 30/04/17 | Calf of Man 203 days 85 km 146deg (SE)             |
| Z720669 | 4M | N | 11/12/15 | Fir Farm, Boxford, Suffolk                         |
|         | 4M | R | 06/04/17 | Calf of Man                                        |
|         |    |   |          | 482 days 440 km 302deg (WNW)                       |
|         | 4M | R | 07/04/17 | Calf of Man 483 days                               |

## Spoonbill – a new species for the Calf

On the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017, I stepped out into the Observatory courtyard, at about 9pm. As I walked out of the front door, I heard a House Martin call - we had recorded a few earlier in the day and I looked up, towards the Sycamore trees to the rear of the Observatory buildings. However, what I saw were 3 large white birds flying west towards the Lighthouses. My initial impression was that they could be swans but their flight, particular the wing beat, wasn't right and although they were now flying away from me, I could make out their 'trailing' feet. I was losing the birds from view and called to Nathan Wilkie to bring a pair of binoculars. I jumped up onto a stone bench to give me more height, and a little more time to watch them. Unfortunately, Nathan arrived just as the birds flew behind the hill. We ran along the track from the Observatory but never saw the birds again.

Overnight, I thought about the flight and the trailing feet of the birds and decided that as they weren't swans, then the only other large white species we could expect on the Isle of Man would be Little Egret. However, something didn't sit quite right about the size and shape of the birds – these had long necks (hence the initial impression of swans) and Little Egrets generally fly with a hunched appearance, with a U or S-shaped neck. They also seemed a bit too large for Little Egret at the distance I was viewing them from.

Several days later, I learnt from Kevin Scott that there had been three Spoonbills seen at Langness on 12<sup>th</sup> May. It suddenly all made sense – the long neck and bill would have given the birds the 'swan' appearance. The size was right, and the species exhibits the trailing legs I saw. I am in no doubt that the three birds that I saw on that evening were the three Spoonbill that were subsequently seen at Langness.

## **Red-footed Falcon – the 2<sup>nd</sup> Calf and 3<sup>rd</sup> Manx record**

The first week of May 2017 had been dominated by a light to moderate north-easterly winds, which had brought a good selection and numbers of common migrants. During the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> May, a group from the Manx Ornithological Society (MOS) arrived for a one night stay at the Observatory.

The morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> dawned calm, with a slight mist in the air. I opened the nets around the Observatory at 4.30am. Shortly after I arrived back at the Observatory, Andrew Johnson came into the courtyard to say he had seen a Cuckoo-sized bird sitting on the end mist net pole. A small group of us made our way cautiously along the track at the front of the Observatory so as not to disturb the bird. Andrew guided us to the part of the fuchsia hedge that you could see through; in the half-light we could see that the bird was still present. I lifted my binoculars and could see a small grey falcon with red feathering around its feet looking straight back at me. My exclamation isn't publishable here but quickly we got everyone at the Observatory to see the bird. Nathan Wilkie grabbed my camera from the ringing room, and I was able to take several record shots. The bird seemed settled on its perch and so I moved a little further along towards the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Heligoland trap, to see if we could get some better photos. Whilst looking through the camera viewer, I noticed the falcon look down to its right, it hesitated, then dropped down towards the ground. I expected to see it fly back up to its perch shortly afterwards, with a prey item, but it didn't. I slowly made my way around the end of the Heligoland trap and saw that the bird was lying in the mist net. The bird was taken back to the ringing room, where it was ringed, measured, photographed and then released. On release, the bird flew a short distance down the front field and then took up residence near

to the crow trap. The bird was watched flying down to the ground, from the nearby dry-stone walls, to catch small insects, particularly beetles. It remained in the same area until 1030am when it disappeared.



We assumed that the bird had departed, however at 1030am on the 8<sup>th</sup> I observed the bird flying in from the east coast of the Calf. Initially the bird was quite high but quickly dropped down over the front field, causing utter panic in the Pied Wagtails and Meadow Pipits, and flew directly to its favoured corner of the field, where it began hunting for prey items. The bird remained in this area for the remainder of the day and most of the 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Description:** the overall slate-grey (blue) upperparts indicate that this was an adult male (2cy+). The upper wing (primaries and coverts) were a metallic silvery blue whilst the underwing was a darker, charcoal grey colour which distinguishes the bird from Amur Falcon. The thigh regions, vent and undertail coverts were a rich red-brown colour.

**Bareparts:** Eye was dark with a distinct orangey-red eye ring. The bill / cere and feet were a similar colour to the eye ring.

# **Olive-backed Pipit – the 2<sup>nd</sup> Calf and 3<sup>rd</sup> Manx record**

21<sup>st</sup> August 2017

Whilst undertaking a routine net round I made my way from the Plantation into the Back Field and walked along the rear of the garden wall towards a small copse of Willow situated in the south-west corner of the Back Field. I was about a third of the way along the rear wall, when I flushed a 'pipit' from the grass. The bird flushed up from about 10 metres in front of me and flew directly away from me, towards the Willow copse – its pipit-like flight and the presence of white outer tail feathers identified its family group, although the bird failed to call and I watched it through my binoculars as it flew away from me. I had a mist net open just behind the Willow copse and hoped that it might drop down in front of the net, however it headed slightly more to the left and headed up into the outer branches of the large stand of Sycamores at the western end of the garden. This was not typical behaviour for a Meadow Pipit and my interest in the bird increased – viewing from about 25 metres I watched as the bird landed in the Sycamores and then 'scurried' along several branches in a rather warbler-like way before it settled on an outer branch and allowed a proper view of its plumage features.

I was able to confirm my initial impression that the bird was a pipit and I was immediately struck by its broad whitish supercilium, which was obvious even at some distance. The bird seemed quite settled and I slowly moved forward watching the bird all the time. Viewing

conditions were good with the sun behind me, allowing the birds' salient features to be seen and from about 20-25m I was able to note the following:

Upperparts: pale grey-green upperparts, with mostly un-streaked mantle and back with distinct median covert stripe. Upper breast having well-marked dark spotting contrasting with paler (plain) lower belly. Head appeared similar colour to mantle with broad whitish supercillium extending from above eye towards ear coverts with a pale ear covert spot and dark loreal patch being quite obvious.

Having seen several Olive-backed Pipits in the UK and abroad, I am reasonably familiar with the species and was able to identify the bird from the views obtained. I am very familiar with Tree Pipit, as a potential confusion species, but was confident in ruling out this species due to the bolder supercillium, difference in head pattern and more blotched streaking present on the upper breast.

Having watched the bird for about a minute, it suddenly took flight and headed west towards the lighthouses and out of view. Being aware of its rarity status on the Calf, I finished my net round and returned to the Observatory to inform others as to my recent observation. A subsequent search of the fields and heathland between the Observatory and the Lighthouses failed to re-find the bird.

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017

At about 11am, Olivia Pargeter and I were conducting a net round; we approached the last net in the Observatory garden, which had 4 birds in it. I began extracting a Song Thrush at one end of the net whilst

Olivia moved further down the net to deal with the other birds. Having extracted the Song Thrush, I moved further down the net to extract a Blackcap, when Olivia commented “this is a very strange looking Meadow Pipit”. I glanced down to look at the bird she was extracting and was immediately struck by the dark breast markings and pale white belly. “That’s either an Olive-backed Pipit or a very late Tree Pipit” I replied. Olivia finished extracting the bird and we returned to the Observatory to process the birds we had caught. Nathan Wilkie joined us in the ringing room and whilst they processed the other birds, I consulted Svensson and Demongin to confirm the identification. Using a combination of wing formulae (5<sup>th</sup> PP being emarginated and long in length compared to wing point), short hind claw and plumage characteristics I confirmed that the bird indeed was an Olive-backed Pipit.

Upperparts: broad white supercillium (less obvious and more buff-coloured on right hand side) from above the eye and extending backwards towards ear coverts, with small white patch at ear coverts and larger black spot below. Short dark loreal stripe from in front of eye and extending towards buff forehead. Crown olive-green with dark streaks becoming less streaked along nape and on back. Pure white underbelly, light streaking on flanks with more prominent dark blotches and streaking on upper breast. Lower throat buff coloured becoming whiteish and un-streaked below bill and bordered by indistinct dark malar stripe. Wing coverts uniform olive-green with dark centres with primaries and secondaries being dark with olive-green edges. Central tail feathers were slightly more brownish than olive-green, TF2, 3 & 4 were dark with olive-green edges with TF4

having a small white tip.  
TF5 dark with white tip on  
inner web extending  
slightly less than a 3<sup>rd</sup> up  
the feather and TF6 being  
almost entirely white on  
inner web with brownish  
outer web extending  
beyond  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the length of  
the feather.



Bare parts: lower mandible pink at base extending almost to tip. Upper  
mandible and tip of lower dark horn coloured. Legs pink with hind claw  
measurement of 7mm.

Wing length – 81mm

Weight – 23.3

Fat – 3

The bird was un-aged due  
to insufficient knowledge of  
criteria.



# **Storm Petrel Catch Analysis, Calf of Man BO, 1996 - 2017**

## **Summary**

*During the period 1996-2017 at the Calf of Man, the average catch size of Storm Petrel has declined by 60%. In addition, there has been a reduction in the geographic range of re-encountered birds.*

## **Background**

During summer months, European Storm Petrel visit the Calf of Man in small numbers; they probably breed on the island, although this has never been confirmed. Some (or all) of the Calf of Man birds are likely visitors from colonies elsewhere in the Irish Sea (Storm Petrel can travel >100km in search of food between nest visits).

The objective of catching and ringing a sample of birds annually on the Calf of Man is to improve our knowledge of the species population.

## **Catching Method**

Storm Petrel approach land to forage and visit nest sites. They do so at night to avoid predation by gulls and raptors.

The catching method for Storm Petrel has been consistent throughout 1996-2017. Birds are attracted to amplified sound of their calls and trapped in mist nets. They are then fitted with uniquely numbered metal rings and biometric data is taken.

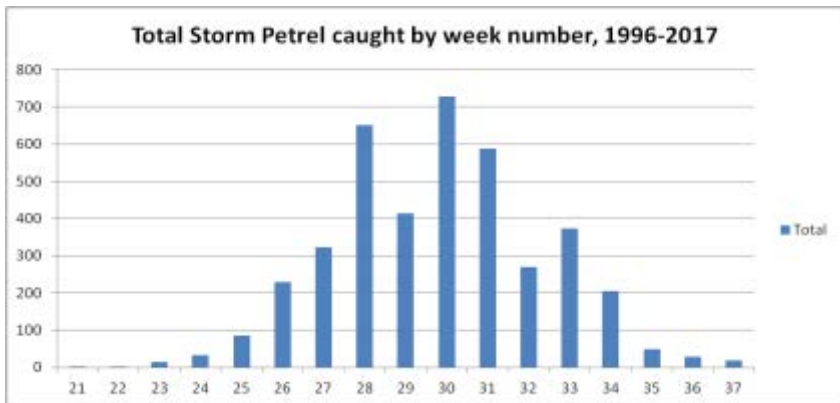
## **Declining Catch**

CoM Storm Petrel data has been computerised since 1996. Of the 4,013 Storm Petrel caught 1996-2017, at least two-thirds were trapped at South Harbour (the location being a convenient, easy access place from where to catch birds). 97% of all Storm Petrel have probably been trapped at South Harbour (data for 1999-2000 is not allocated to a specific site but is almost certainly from here).



Storm Petrel

The earliest Storm Petrel caught during 1996-2017 was on 25th May with the latest caught on 11th September. No catching attempts are made during the winter months, but Storm Petrel will almost certainly be absent from the Calf at this time, having relocated to wintering areas (mainly the Atlantic Ocean, off the west coast of Africa). The chart below illustrates that the peak time for catching Storm Petrel is between week 28 (2nd week of July) to week 31 (end of July).



Catching effort has reduced since 2006 (possibly because of declining return for the effort expended) but the pattern/timing of catches is broadly similar over the years with 38% attempts 2007-2017 made during the peak catch period of weeks 28-31 compared to 48% in 1996-2006.

It is clear from the table below that the average number of Storm Petrel caught per catching attempt has dropped significantly since 2006. The average catch between 1996-2006 was 20 birds compared to 8 birds between 2007-2017 (a reduction of 60%).

| YEAR | Average week number in which catch attempt made | Total birds caught | Catch attempts made | Average birds caught |
|------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1996 | 29                                              | 526                | 24                  | 22                   |
| 1997 | 29                                              | 174                | 14                  | 12                   |
| 1998 | 31                                              | 247                | 12                  | 21                   |
| 1999 | 29                                              | 374                | 19                  | 20                   |
| 2000 | 30                                              | 297                | 12                  | 25                   |
| 2001 | 30                                              | 361                | 11                  | 33                   |
| 2002 | 29                                              | 345                | 15                  | 23                   |
| 2003 | 30                                              | 404                | 23                  | 18                   |
| 2004 | 30                                              | 105                | 11                  | 10                   |
| 2005 | 30                                              | 407                | 24                  | 17                   |
| 2006 | 34                                              | 93                 | 4                   | 23                   |
| 2007 | 29                                              | 61                 | 10                  | 6                    |
| 2008 | 32                                              | 53                 | 5                   | 11                   |
| 2009 | 27                                              | 42                 | 5                   | 8                    |
| 2010 | 32                                              | 10                 | 3                   | 3                    |
| 2011 | 30                                              | 44                 | 7                   | 6                    |
| 2012 | 30                                              | 48                 | 8                   | 6                    |
| 2013 | 32                                              | 37                 | 5                   | 7                    |
| 2014 | 27                                              | 25                 | 4                   | 6                    |
| 2015 | 29                                              | 108                | 8                   | 14                   |
| 2016 | 31                                              | 170                | 14                  | 12                   |
| 2017 | 28                                              | 75                 | 13                  | 6                    |

Whilst reduced effort might explain some of the catch size decline (perhaps being 'unlucky' on the chosen catch nights) it is surely not the full answer. Indeed, catch nights are selectively chosen to maximise best catching conditions (calm and dark).

Given also that factors affecting catch size (such as weather conditions) will likely average out over 20 years, perhaps the most logical explanation for declining catches is that there are now less Storm Petrel visiting the Calf of Man than in the 1990's.

### **Storm Petrel Movements**

Movements of Storm Petrel (birds ringed on the Calf then found elsewhere, and birds found with rings from elsewhere) are plotted above. The maps show a reduction in geographic range of Storm Petrel in the past 10 years.

Fewer dots on the 2007-2016 map are to be expected as less birds were caught overall in this period. However, dots are notably absent from northern Scotland, north-east England, and western Ireland.



*Storm Petrel movement, Calf of Man, 1996-2006 (left) & 2007-2016 (right)* <sup>1</sup>

# **2017 Non-Avian Report**

## **Mammals**

### **Pygmy Shrew** *Sorex minutus*

64 records, predominantly in the farmhouse but occasionally anywhere else on the island. There was also lots of evidence of Pygmy Shrew from the non-toxic wax blocks used to detect Long-tail presence. The first record was on the 5<sup>th</sup> May and last on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, with a peak count of two on multiple dates.

### **Brown Long-eared Bat** *Plecotus auritus*

Five records, between 16<sup>th</sup> June and 25<sup>th</sup> September, with a peak count of two on the 16<sup>th</sup> June and 24<sup>th</sup> August.

### **Bat species**

Unidentified species of Bat were recorded on the 6<sup>th</sup> September and another the following day.

### **Rabbit** *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Rabbits are widespread and very abundant on the Calf, due to the lack of terrestrial predators. It is estimated that the abundance of rabbits on the Calf is often in the low thousands, however it was thought that there was an approximately 75% decrease in the rabbit population during this season, due to myxomatosis and potentially viral haemorrhaging disease (VHD). The population is expected to bounce back. It was interesting to see the abundance of wildflowers in the fields, the rabbits, in addition to the Loaghtan Sheep are important for

creating short-grassland habitat for Chough, but they do cause a reduction in wildflowers.

### **Common Seal** *Phoca vitulina*

15 Common Seals were recorded in 2017, this species was recorded on only 10 days, predominantly due to the lack of available time to monitor Cow Harbour in particular and at low tide. The first Common Seal was recorded on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April and the last on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October, with a peak count of three on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June and 5<sup>th</sup> of July.

### **Grey Seal** *Halichoerus gryphus*

2,658 Grey Seals were recorded in 2017, similarly to Common Seal this is an often under recorded species on the Calf due to the inability to monitor even just the main haul out sites regularly, this however is something that should be achievable in the near future with extra volunteers. Grey seals are ever-present on the Calf with the first recorded on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March and the last on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November, with a peak count of 145 on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April.

66 pups were born at 11 of the 12 known sites, with 49 returning mothers and 17 appearing to be new. However, two weather fronts, Ophelia and Brian, caused some fatalities. 48 survived whilst 17 pups were either dead or missing. 2017 was the worst storm year since surveys began.

Pup distribution follows patterns similar to previous years with high densities at both Grants and Cow Harbours on the north and Puddle in the south. 58% of pups at these 3 sites alone.

## **Cetaceans and Sharks**

Comparisons, in this section of the report, have been completed using data from 2006 to 2017, although records of Cetaceans and Sharks on the Calf predate this, some of the data is not currently available or usable.

It is important to note that effort, i.e. the amount of time spent surveying for Cetaceans and Sharks, is not the same for every year. Additionally, the amount of time spent surveying has not been recorded and therefore a correction factor cannot be applied. However, it is known, anecdotally, that a lot of effort was put into seawatching in 2016 and this is supported by the annual totals, as shown by Figure 1. It is recommended that surveying method are standardised with weekly or daily Cetacean watches for a set amount of time, during the same time of day, at the same location, in as similar as possible weather conditions, etc. Additional sightings, outside of the survey, should also be recorded but the data should be kept separate. Cetacean surveys should be more achievable from 2018 onwards due to the predicted increase in number of volunteers. Robust data on Cetaceans and Sharks could be utilised to provide evidence that the waters around the Calf should have greater legislative protection.

Figure 1:

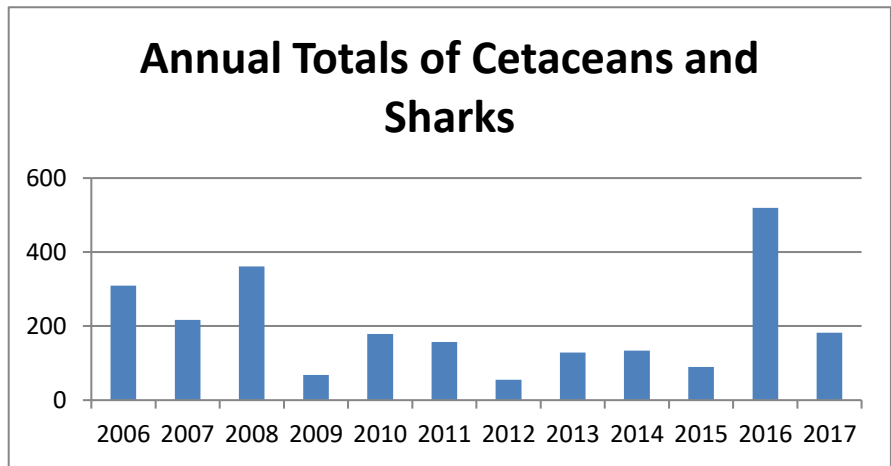


Figure 1 also shows a decrease in the abundance of Cetaceans and Sharks since 2008, except for 2016. The three years of higher abundance between 2006 and 2008, is a small sample size, highlighting the importance of the data prior to 2006.

Figure 2:

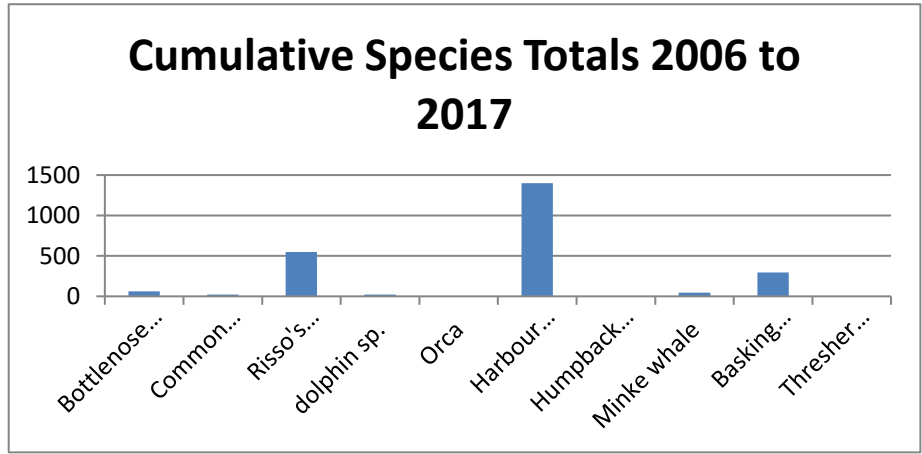
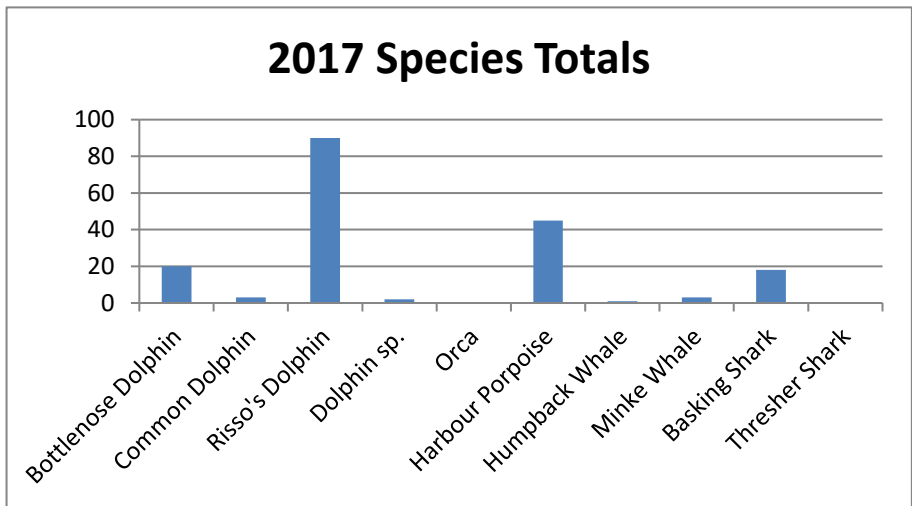


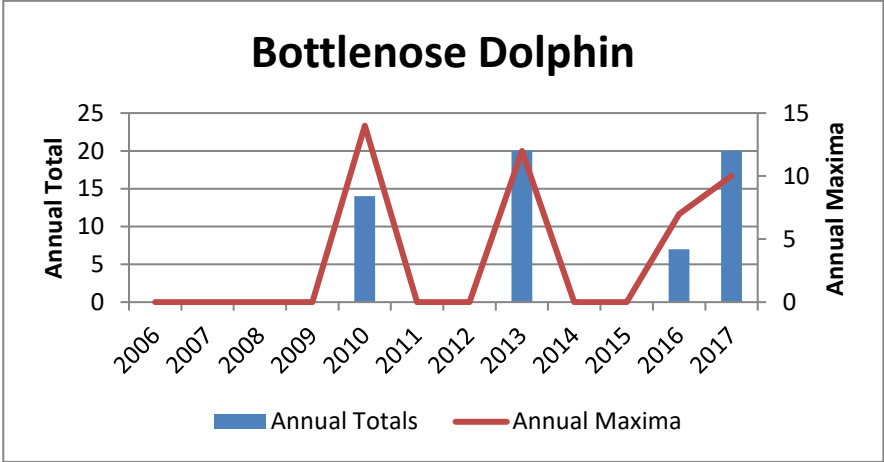
Figure 2 shows that Harbour Porpoise is the most commonly seen species from the Calf since 2006. Interestingly this was not the case in 2017, as shown by Figure 3, when Risso’s Dolphin was the most abundant species, with exactly double the amount of Harbour Porpoise recorded.

Figure 3:



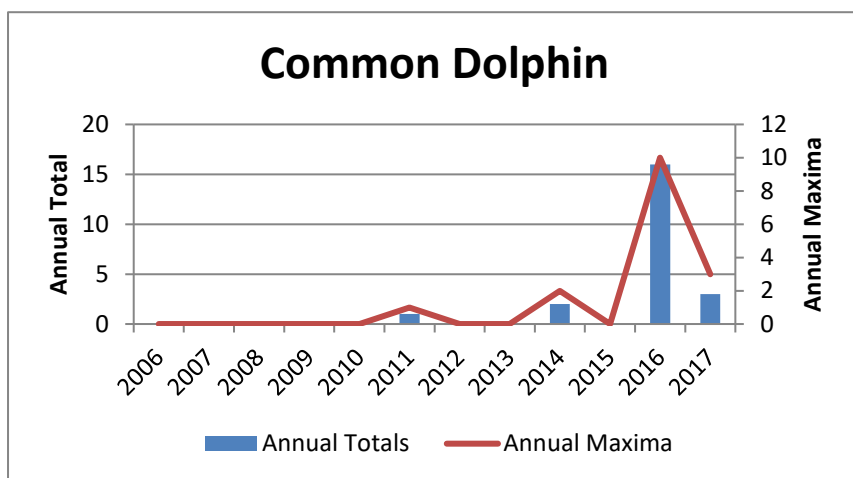
# Bottlenose Dolphin

Bottlenose Dolphins have been recorded in four years since 2006. Figure 4 highlights that in 2010 and 2016 there was only one pod of Bottlenose Dolphins seen on one day, whereas, in 2013 and 2017 sightings were recorded on multiple days.



## Common Dolphin

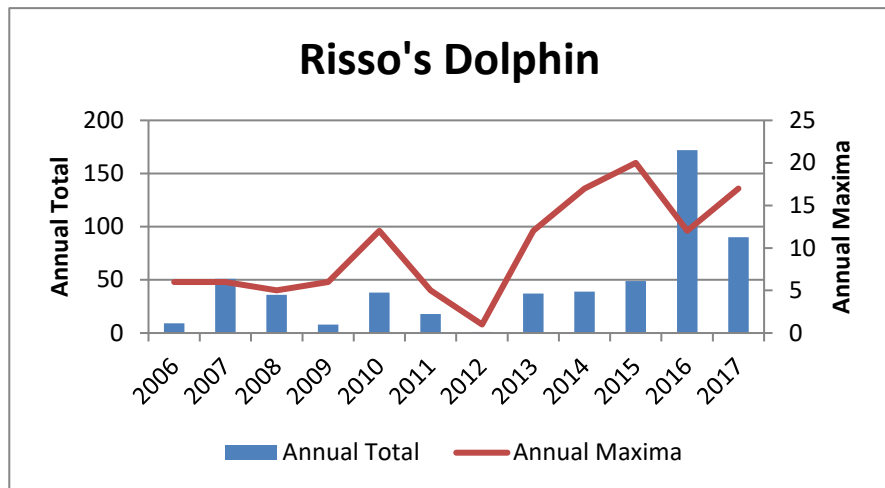
Common Dolphins have been recorded in four years since 2006, with 2016 clearly recording the most sightings, as shown by Figure 5. The Common Dolphins recorded in 2011, 2014 and 2017 were only seen on one day, whereas, in 2016 this species was seen on multiple days, although predominantly on one day, with 10 of the year's total of 16 being seen on one day.



## Risso's Dolphin

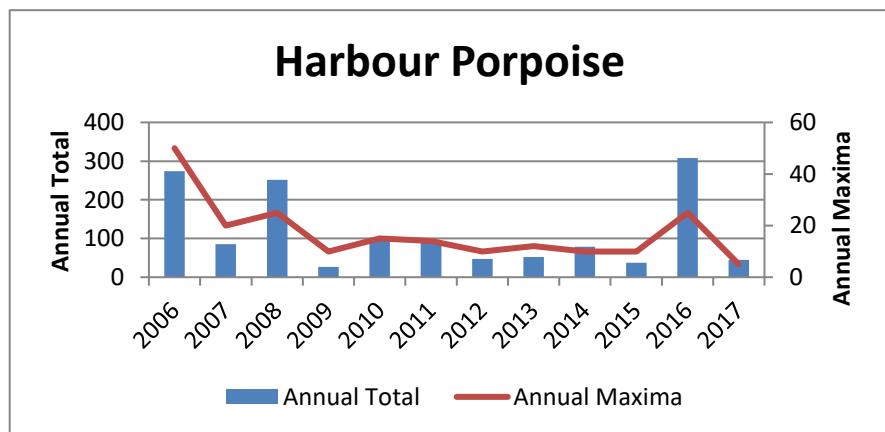
Risso's Dolphins have been recorded every year since 2006, with 2017 recording the second highest number of sightings. Risso's Dolphins were sighted on 14 days, with the 2 recorded on 17<sup>th</sup> May being the first and the 10 individuals on 14<sup>th</sup> August being the last. This species gave numerous excellent views in 2017, particularly from South Harbour. Interestingly, the annual maxima for 2017 of 17, recorded on

12<sup>th</sup> June, was higher than that of 2016 even though the annual total was approximately half that of 2016.



## Harbour Porpoise

The most numerous species since 2006, experienced a poor year in 2017, with the third lowest annual total since 2006.

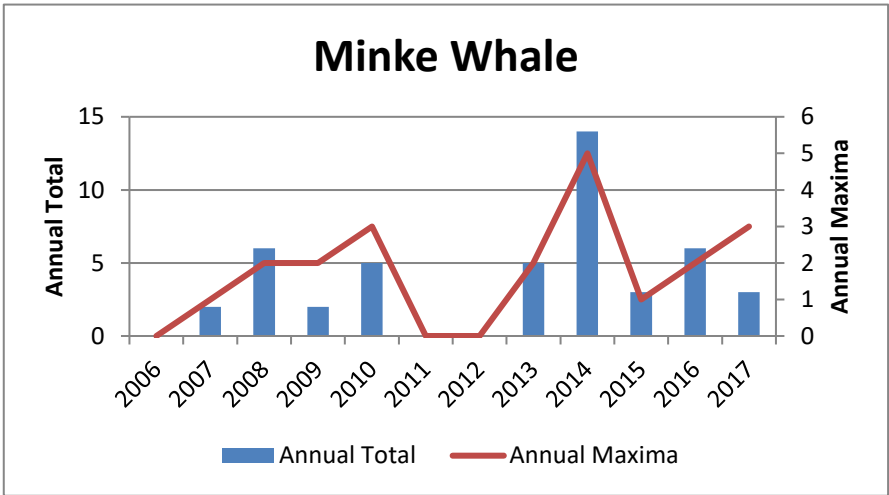


# Humpback Whale

The first Humpback Whale to be recorded off the Calf was sighted and photographed on the 4<sup>th</sup> August, in the Sound. Unfortunately, we did not see this amazing sighting for ourselves, but it was reported to the Manx Whale and Dolphin Watch.

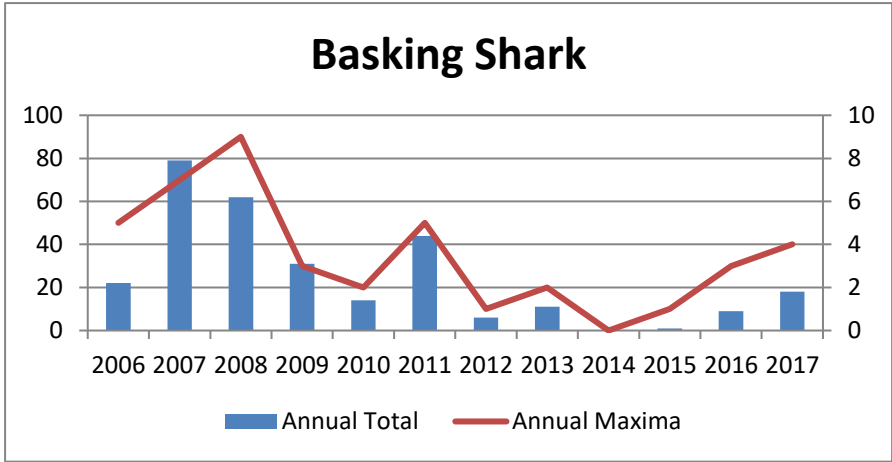
# Minke Whale

Three Minke Whales were seen on the 6<sup>th</sup> July, this represents an average year for the Calf. As Figure 8 shows 2014 was an exceptional year for Minke Whale with 14 records.



# Basking Shark

The Calf is an excellent place to see Basking Sharks and 2017 was no exception with 18 sightings and 4 individuals seen on July 6<sup>th</sup>. Figure 9 highlights that the abundance of Basking Sharks in Calf waters has decreased drastically since 79 sightings in 2007. This decline may be associated with the species’ global decline, however this decline is more severe, it will be interesting to analyse the Calf data from before



2006. The primary cause of Basking Shark declines is believed to be due to sea temperature rises, due to climate change, and its negative impacts on Plankton.

## **Reptiles**

### **Common Lizard** *Lacerta vivipara*

37 Common Lizards were recorded on the Calf in 2017 between the 26<sup>th</sup> of March and the 30<sup>th</sup> of September, with a peak count of five seen on the last day they were recorded, surprisingly. These five Lizards were seen in a clump of rush near to HG2.

## **Odonata**

### **Blue-tailed Damselfly** *Ischnura elegans*

72 records between the 30<sup>th</sup> of May and 31<sup>st</sup> of August, with a peak count of 12 on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of June. This species is mainly seen around the Mill Pond but is also occasionally seen by a brackish pool near South Harbour.

### **Hawker species**

3 unidentified Hawker Dragonflies were recorded in 2017.

### **Common Darter** *Sympetrum striolatum*

29 records between the 13<sup>th</sup> August and 26<sup>th</sup> September, with a peak count of three on 21<sup>st</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September.

## **Fish**

### **Eel** *Anguilla Anguilla*

An Eel was seen while digging a drainage ditch in the Top Withy. It is fantastic that the Calf provides suitable habitat for this critically endangered species (<http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/60344/0>) during their immature, “yellow eel” stage.

## **Beetles**

The Calf is a fantastic location for beetles; more thorough research should be undertaken in the future via pitfall traps for example. The Calf has particularly abundant populations of Minotaur Beetle *Typhaeus typhoeus*, a Dung Beetle that probably thrives due to the abundance of rabbits on the Calf, Violet Ground Beetle *Carabus violaceus*, an active predator of invertebrates, particularly slugs, which are also abundant on the Calf and Green Tiger Beetle *Cicindela campestris* which thrives on the Calf, in part, due to the abundance of one of its key prey, Ants. Other abundant species include: Sexton Beetle *Nicrophorus investigator*, Black Sexton Beetle *Nicrophorus humator*, *Carabus granulatus* and *Pterostichus nigritya*.

## **2017 Butterfly Report**

This year, as with many other years, it was not possible to undertake the weekly transects, mostly due to other tasks with a higher priority, and poor weather. The changeable and often unsuitable nature of weather on the Calf and the length of the transect also impacted our ability to survey. Hopefully, next year with additional long-term volunteers and a shortened transect, it will be achievable and therefore effort levels will be the same every year.

2017 was a poor year for Butterflies in the British Isles, with the lowest average number of individuals recorded in the Big Butterfly Count since it began in 2010, with only 10.9 individuals per 15-minute count, down from 12.2 in 2016. Shockingly, the 2017 average is only half that of 2013. Although an improvement on 2016, 2017 was the seventh worst year for Butterflies in the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme's (UKBMS) 42-year history [Welcome to the UKBMS | UKBMS](#)

[Butterfly species struggled in 2017, UKBMS report reveals | UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology \(ceh.ac.uk\)](#)

Although difficult to compare with previous years due to differing levels of effort, Butterflies also appear to have had a bad year on the Calf of Man. As shown by Figure 1, 2017, along with the 3 years that preceded it, has a low total number of sightings in comparison with pre-2013 figures. Interestingly, the overall trend pre-2013 was that of increasing numbers of Butterflies recorded, which goes against the British Isles and global trend of decline. Comparisons in this report have been done using data from 2006 to 2017.

Figure 1: Annual Totals of Butterflies

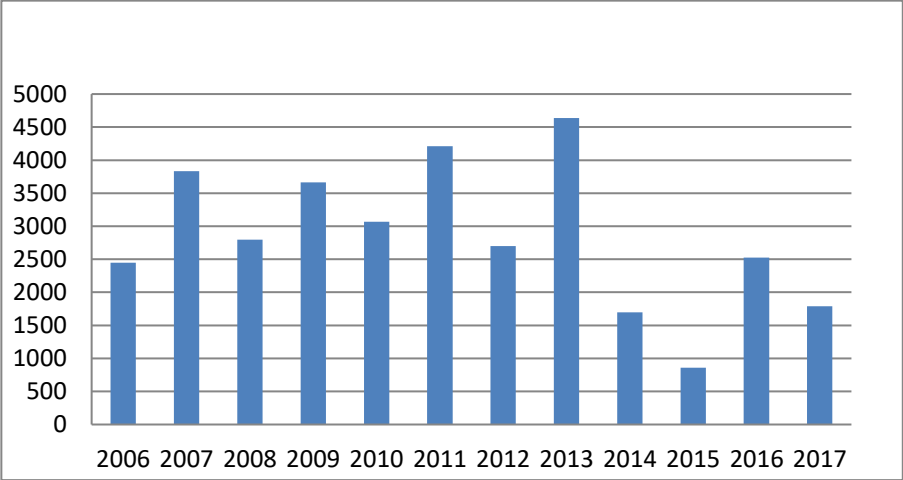


Figure 2: Cumulative Species Totals 2006 to 2017

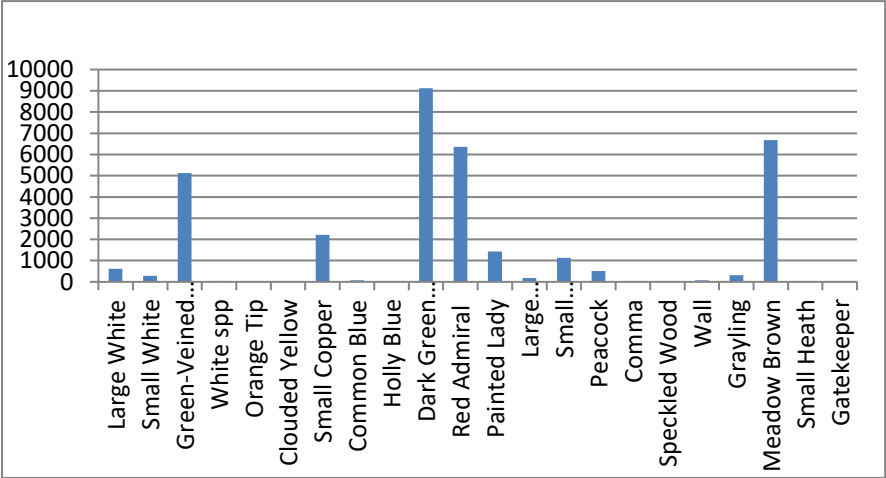
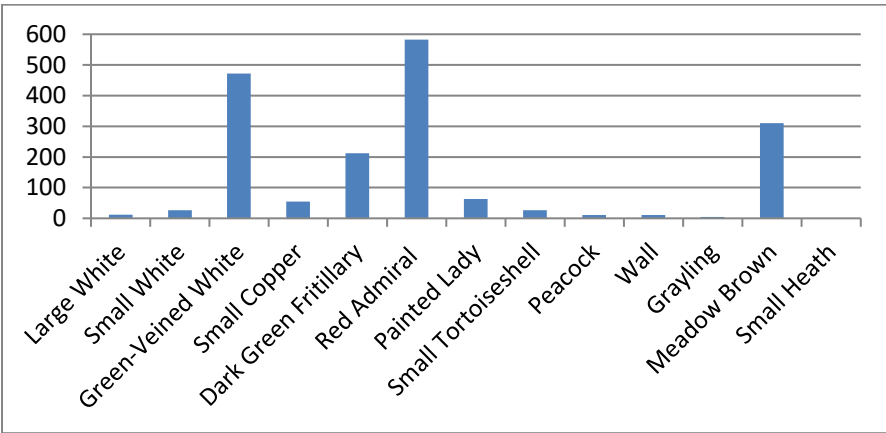


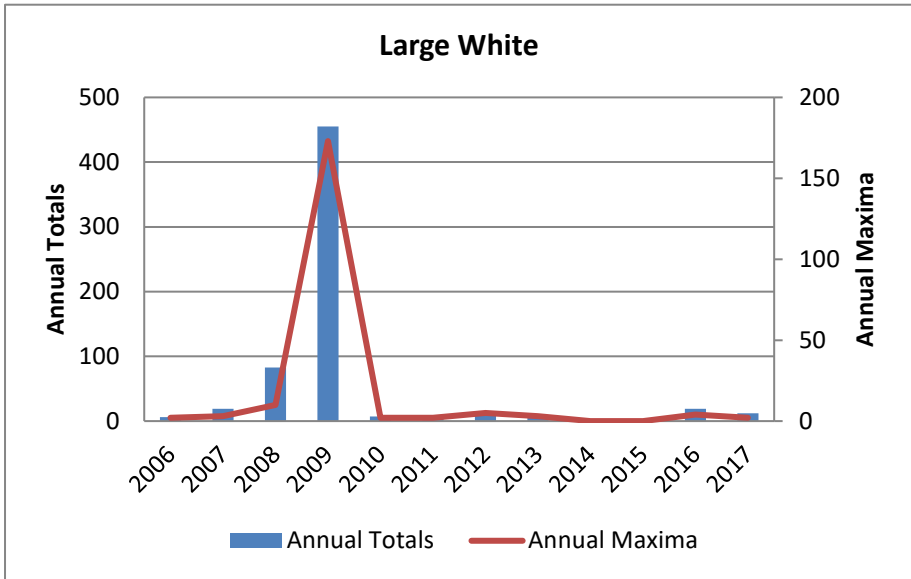
Figure 3: **2017 Species Totals**



**Large White** *Pieris brassicae*

12 records between the 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 27<sup>th</sup> August, with a peak count of 2 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

The first and last sightings of this species were early and late respectively this year. When comparing the data on Large Whites since 2006, it is apparent that there was an anomalously high number of Large Whites in 2009 and to a lesser extent in 2008, it is interesting that in 2009 the number of Green-Veined Whites was reasonably low, potentially indicating that Green-vein Whites were misidentified as Large Whites. Large Whites did have a good year in the British Isles as a whole though in 2009, with a 135% increase from 2008 (UKBMS Annual Report 2009). If the anomalous year of 2009 is disregarded, then 2017 was an average year for Large Whites on the Calf. This species had a relatively poor year in the British Isles with a 19% decrease from 2016.

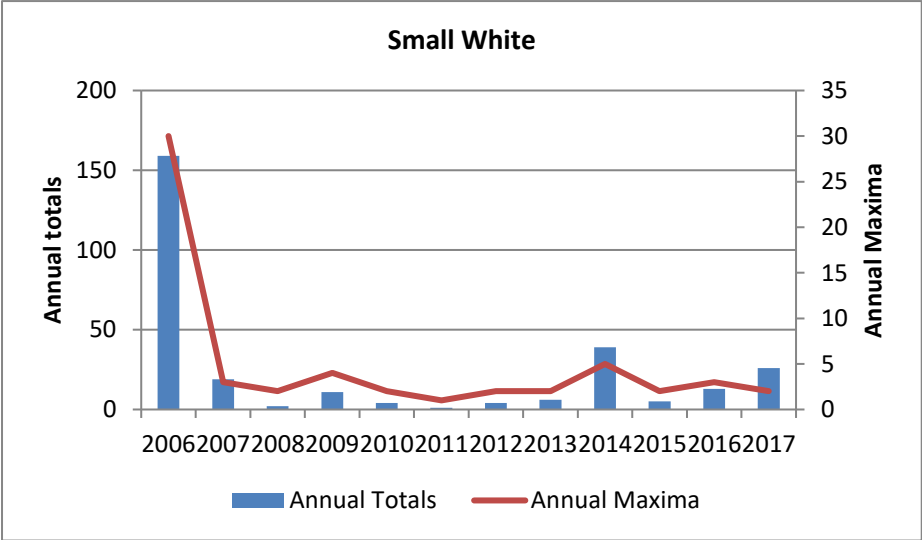


### Small White *Pieris rapae*

26 records between the 22<sup>nd</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> September, with a peak count of 2 on numerous days.

After only being recorded in 2 months the previous year, September and October, this species was recorded in 6 months this year, April through to September. As Figure 5 shows, 2017 was a good year for Small Whites on the Calf, with 26 records being the third highest since 2006, 26 is also over double the 10-year average of 11. When comparing the data on Small Whites since 2006, it is apparent that there was an anomalously high number of Small Whites in 2006, it is interesting that in 2006 the number of Green-Veined Whites was reasonably low, potentially indicating that Green-vein Whites were

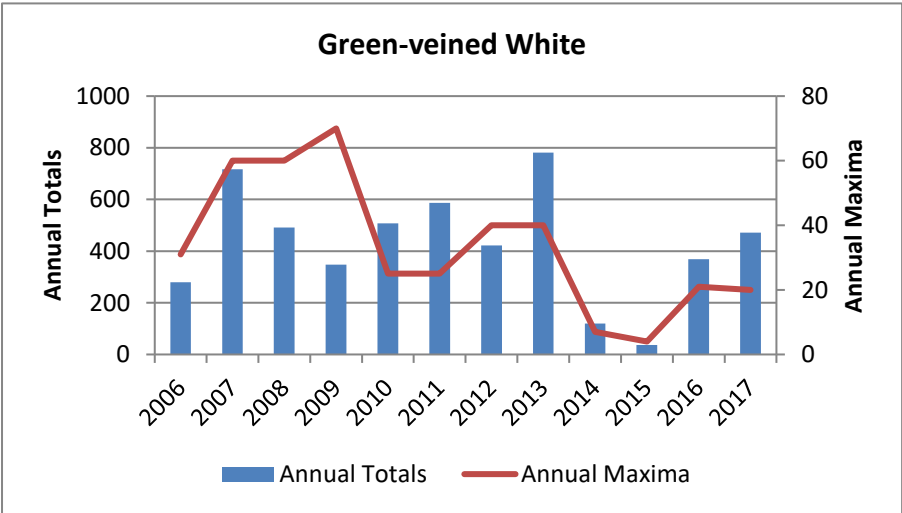
misidentified as Small Whites. Smalls Whites did not have a particularly abundant year in the British Isles in 2006 (UKBMS Annual Report 2006). If the anomalous year of 2006 is disregarded, the number of Small Whites recorded in 2017 is comparatively high, with only 2014 having more records. The line showing annual maxima, highlights that the records for 2017 consists of multiple days of records as opposed to fewer days with Small Whites being recorded, but more individuals being recorded on one or more of them few days. This species experienced a relatively poor year in the British Isles as a whole, with a 16% decrease from 2016.



**Green-veined White *Pieris napi***

472 records between the 11<sup>th</sup> April and 11<sup>th</sup> September, with a peak count of 20 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August and 13<sup>th</sup> August.

This species is the fourth most numerous species on the Calf since 2006, with a total of 5131 records, as shown by Figure 2. As Figure 3 shows, Green-veined White was the second most numerous species in 2017, with 472 records. The abundance of this species in 2017 was slightly above the 10-year average of 413 records, it is also encouraging that the abundance of this species has continued its upward trend since very low numbers in 2014 and 2015. The annual maxima line is interesting; highlighting that numbers of individuals recorded on a single day have substantially decreased, from 70 in 2009 to 20 in 2017. Like other Pieridae species, Green-veined White also experienced a relatively poor year in the rest of the British Isles with a 2% decrease from 2016.



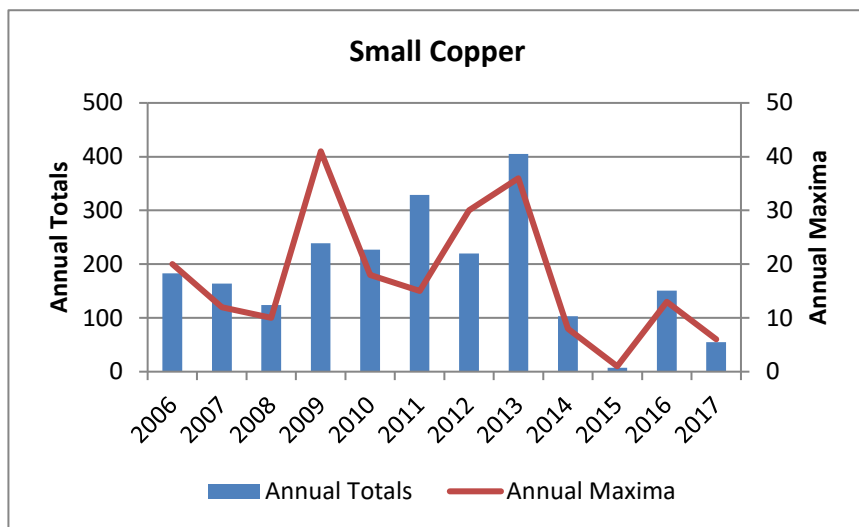
**Small Copper** *Lycaena phlaeas*

55 records between the 8<sup>th</sup> May and 11<sup>th</sup> September, with a peak count of 6 on the 15<sup>th</sup> August.

55 records is the second lowest recorded since 2006, as shown by Figure, Figure 7 highlights the decrease in abundance of Small Coppers on the Calf since 2006, but especially since 2013, when there was 405 records, this possibly



indicates a decrease in abundance of Small Copper's primary larval food plants Common Sorrel and Sheep's Sorrel, on the Calf. 55 records represent a poor year for this species: well below the 10 year average of 186 records. The poor year for Small Copper on the Calf contrasts with the rest of the British Isles where Small Copper experienced a good year after a series of poor years, with an increase of 28% from 2016.



### Dark Green Fritillary *Argynnis aglaja*

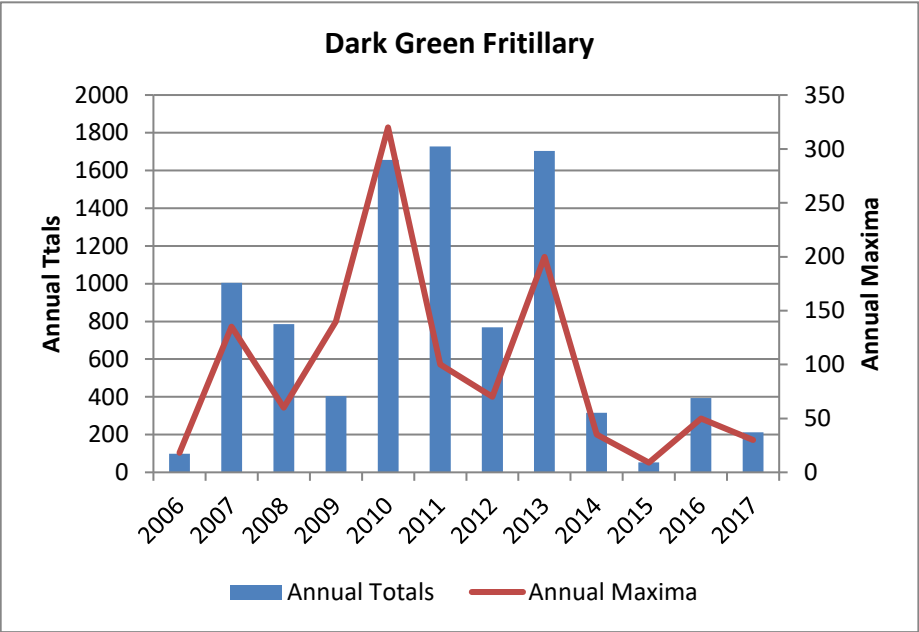
212 records between the 23<sup>rd</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> August, with a peak count of 30 on the 24<sup>th</sup> June.

212 records is the thirds lowest recorded since 2006, as shown by Figure 2 Dark Green Fritillary is the most numerous species on the Calf since 2006. Figure 8 highlights the decrease in abundance of this species on the Calf, especially since a period of high abundance between 2010 and 2013, possibly indicating a decrease in suitable



habitat on the Calif. 212 records in 2017 is well below the 10-year average of 851 records.

Dark-Green Fritillaries require violets, particularly Common Dog-Violets, within Bracken mosaics frequently consisting of one-third Bracken and two-thirds grass (<https://butterfly-conservation.org/files/habitat-bracken-for-butterflies.pdf>). Although efforts are made to control Bracken on the Calif, it is very dense in the majority of the extensive areas that it is present. This species experienced a relatively good year with a 20% increase from 2016.

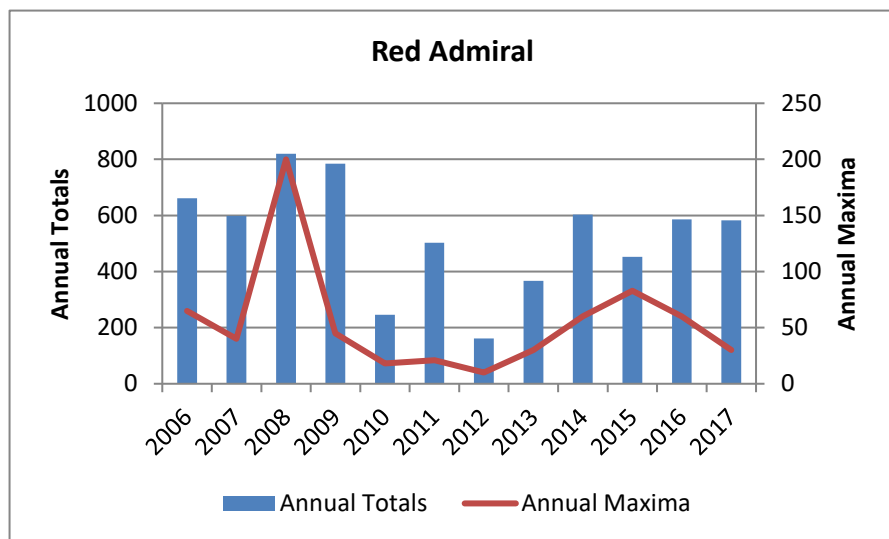


### Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*

583 records between the 27<sup>th</sup> March and 20<sup>th</sup> October, with a peak count of 30 on the 27<sup>th</sup> May.

583 records represent a relatively good year for this species on the Calf; the 10-year average is 520 records. In the British Isles as a whole, Red Admirals followed a good year in 2016 with another good year in 2017, with numbers in the Big Butterfly Count being up 75% compared with 2016 and 300% with 2015.

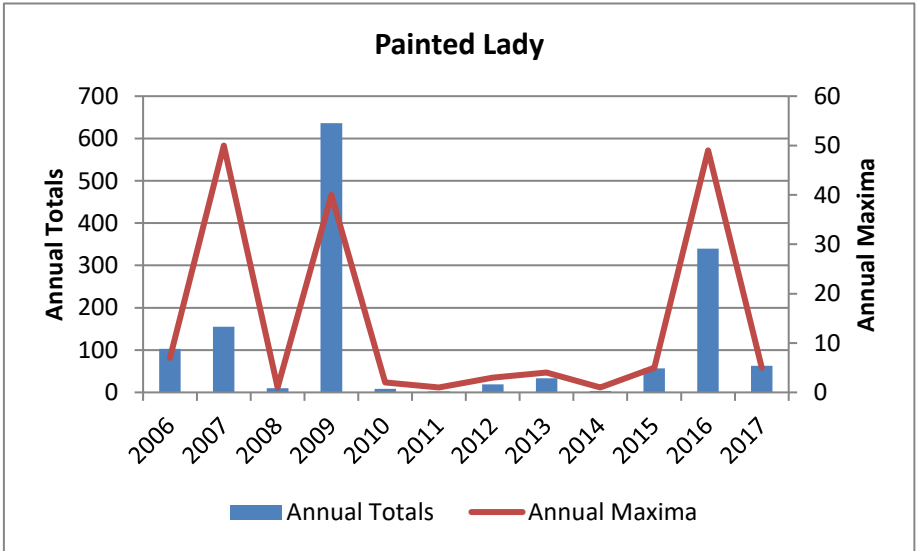
Red Admiral is the third most numerous species on the Calf since 2006, as shown by Figure 2. Figure 9, highlights that remarkably in 2008 200 individual Red Admirals was seen on one day.



**Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui***

63 records between the 27<sup>th</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> September, with a peak count of 5 on the 24<sup>th</sup> August.

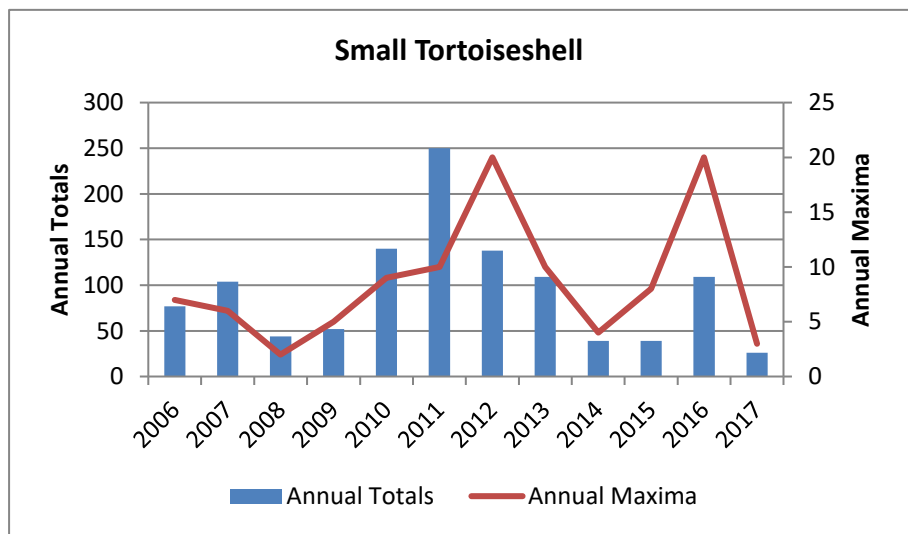
This migratory species often fluctuates in the numbers that reach the British Isles; a key factor is often the abundance of thistles in North Africa. The fluctuating nature of the abundance of this species is also highlighted by the annual maxima on Figure 10, with 2007, 2009 and 2016 experiencing daily totals in excess of 40. 63 records represents a modest year for Painted Ladies on the Calf; the 10 year average is 103 records. Interestingly, for the British Isles as a whole this species experienced an increase of 31% compared to 2016 in the Big Butterfly Count but a decrease of 26% in the UKBMS records.



**Small Tortoiseshell** *Aglais urticae*

26 records between the 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> October, with a peak count of three on multiple days.

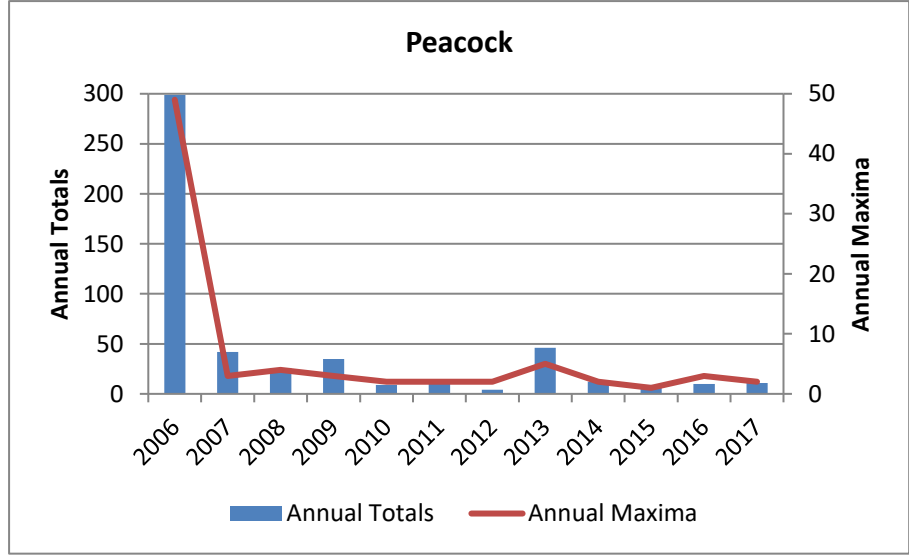
26 records is the lowest total for this species since 2006, as shown below, and unsurprisingly is well below the 10-year average of 99 records. Contrastingly, the annual total for 2011 was over double that of 2016 but the annual maxima is half of what was recorded in 2016. In the British Isles as a whole this species has been a concern for a decade and the sightings in the Big Butterfly Count remained low, with only a 4% increase from 2016 and an 18% increase in UKBMS data.



**Peacock *Inachis io***

11 records between the 25<sup>th</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> September, with a peak count of 2 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July and 30<sup>h</sup> August.

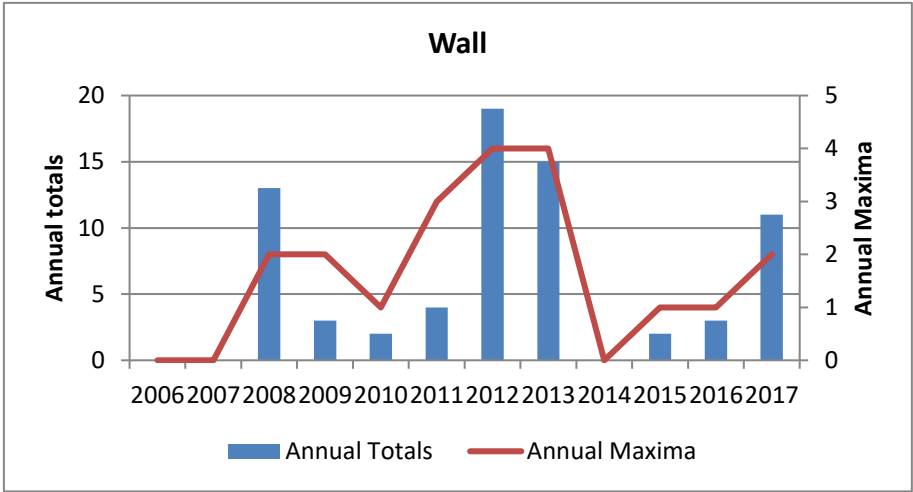
After a remarkable 299 records in 2006, this species has remained below 50, with the 11 records in 2017 representing a low abundance. As with Small Tortoiseshell, Peacocks have also been of a source of concern in the British Isles as a whole in the last decade and this species only experienced a 1% increase in sightings in the Big Butterfly Count compared to 2016.



**Wall *Lasiommata megera***

11 records between the 7<sup>th</sup> May and 29<sup>th</sup> July, with a peak count of 2 on the 13<sup>th</sup> June.

11 records represents a good year for this species on the Calf; the fourth highest since 2006 and almost double the 10 year average of 6 records. Wall experienced a good year in the British Isles as a whole with a 48% increase from 2016.

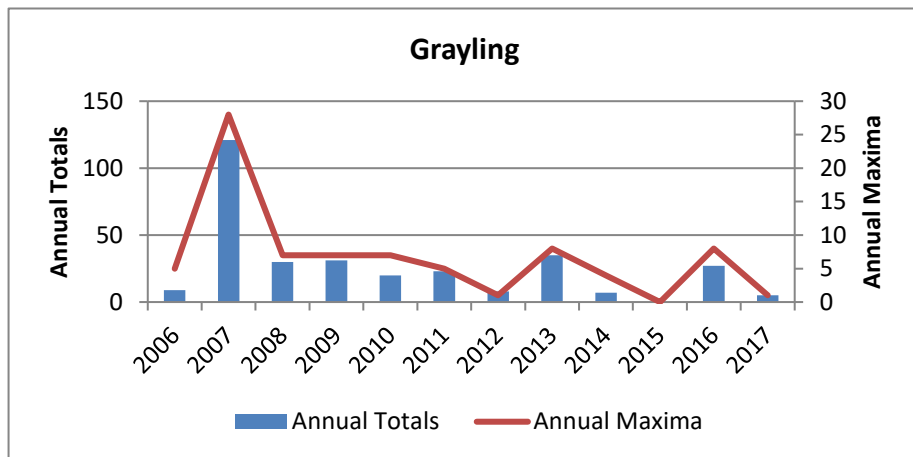


**Grayling** *Hipparchia semele*

5 records between the 27<sup>th</sup> July and 12<sup>th</sup> August, all of which were counts of 1 individual.

This species was predominantly seen on a collection of rocks quite near to the shore in Mill Giau. Figure 14 shows that 2017 was a poor year for Grayling on the Calf, with 5 records being the second lowest total and substantially below the 10-year average of 28. Figure 14 also highlights the exceptional year of 2007 for Grayling on the Calf. In the British Isles this species had its worst year in the UKBMS's 42-year history, which also followed the previously worst year in 2016.

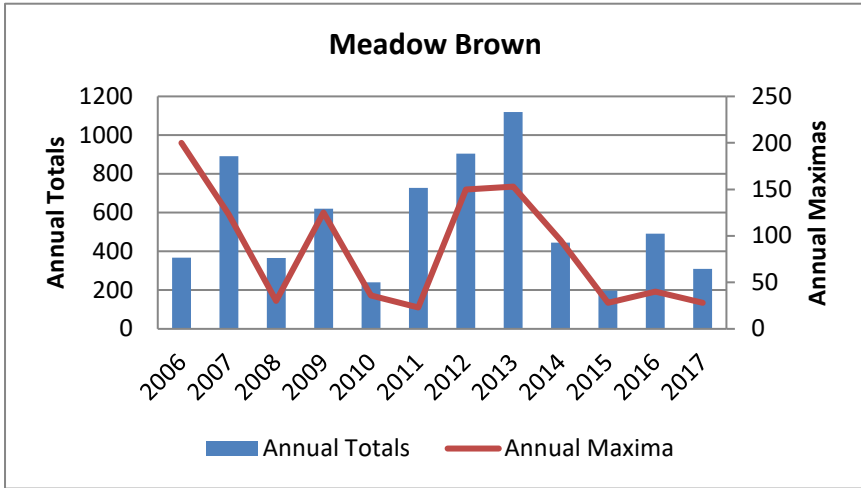




### **Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina***

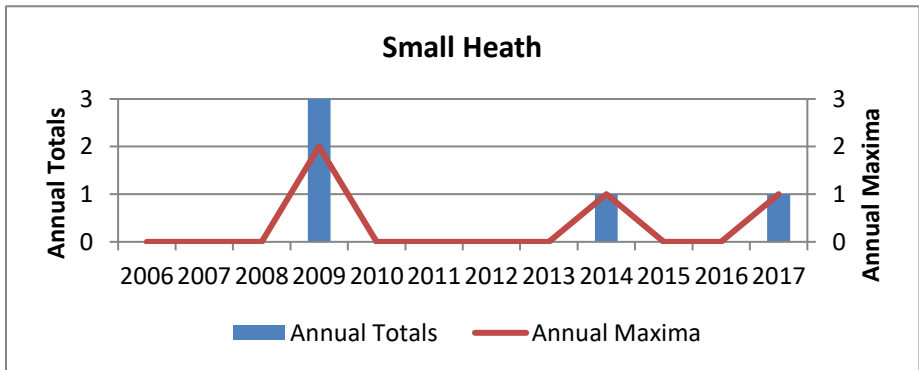
310 records between the 26<sup>th</sup> June and 8<sup>th</sup> September, with a peak count of 28 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

This species is the second most numerous on the Calf since 2006, as shown by Figure 2. Although Meadow Brown was the third most numerous species on the Calf in 2017, as shown by Figure 3, 2017 was a relatively poor year for this species, with 310 records being over 200 below the 10-year average of 588. Contrastingly, in the British Isles as a whole this species had a good year with a 58% increase on 2016.



**Small Heath** *Coenonympha pamphilus*

1 record on the 19<sup>th</sup> May, which represents a good year for this species on the Calf; joint second highest, with the species only being recorded 3 times since 2006, with 1 record in 2014 and 3 in 2009. The individual was seen by the Mill Pond. Small Heath had a good year in the British Isles a whole, with a 65% increase on 2016.



# **2017 Moth Report**

Trap nights – 23

First trap date and last trap date – 03/04/2017 and 26/10/2017

Number of species – 70

Number of individuals – 720

The total of 70 species recorded this year represents a relatively poor year when compared to the average since 2006 of 116 species. When comparing data however it is important to consider effort, unfortunately in 2017 it was only possible to run the moth trap on 23 occasions. The low number of trap nights was due partly to unsuitable weather but mostly an unreliable power supply and lack of time due to both Wardens being required to complete other duties. Of the 720 individuals recorded this year, 693 were caught in the moth trap and 27 were daytime observations. The average of 30 moths per night in 2017 is low and there were also only 3 nights where more than 50 individuals were recorded: 60 on the 26<sup>th</sup> May, 172 on the 26<sup>th</sup> August and 144 on the 27<sup>th</sup> August. The inconsistency of effort can be highlighted by the incredibly high amount of effort in 2016 when 31294 individuals were recorded.

Two new species for the Calf were recorded in 2017; a macro - Clouded Silver *Lomographa temerata* and a micro – Scotch Smudge *Rhigognostis incarnatella*. Clouded Silver is a common moth in the British Isles; therefore it is strange that it has taken until 2017 to be recorded on the Calf. Scotch Smudge is classified as Nationally Scarce A, which means that it does not fit within Red Data Book categories,

but it is non-the-less uncommon in Great Britain and is thought to occur in 30 or fewer 10 km squares of the National Grid.

We should thank Ian Scott for identifying species that we struggled with and additionally Mike Haigh for fulfilling this role in person when he was volunteering on the Calf, especially for his enthusiasm for micros.

The following lists all the species recorded in 2017. The species account follows the nomenclature in '*Log Book of British Lepidoptera*' by J.D. Bradley and D.S Fletcher (2000). 'No.' refers to the number allocated to each species in this publication. The first and last dates the species was recorded are given, as is the number of days/nights the species were recorded and the maximum counts and what the date that this maximum count occurred. The species in bold are new species for the Calf.

| No.  | Scientific Name        | English Name     | Max Count                                                                   |
|------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 18   | Hepialus fusconebulosa | Map-winged Swift | 1 on 28 <sup>th</sup> May & 24 <sup>th</sup> Jun                            |
| 385  | Anthophila fabriciana  | Nettle Tap       | 2 on 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct                                                    |
| 1184 | Epiblema scutulana     |                  | Recorded 7 times between 20 <sup>th</sup> May – 24 <sup>th</sup> Jun, max 2 |
| 1395 | Udea ferrugalis        | Rusty-dot Pearl  | 1 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug & 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct                            |
| 1643 | Saturnia pavonia       | Emperor Moth     | 1 on 8 <sup>th</sup> May                                                    |
| 1740 | Epirrhoe galiata       | Galium Carpet    | 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> & 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                |
| 1768 | Thera obeliscata       | Grey Pine Carpet | 1 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                   |
| 1769 | Thera britannica       | Spruce Carpet    | 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> & 30 <sup>th</sup> May                                |
| 1777 | Hydriomena furcata     | July Highflyer   | 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                   |

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Scientific Name</b>          | <b>English Name</b>    | <b>Max Count</b>                                                                                                         |
|------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1823       | <i>Eupithecia venosata</i>      | Netted Pug             | 1 on 18 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                                                |
| 1883       | <i>Acasis viretata</i>          | Yellow-barred Brindle  | 1 on 23 <sup>rd</sup> May                                                                                                |
| 1884       | <i>Abraxas grossulariata</i>    | Magpie Moth            | 1 on 30 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                                                |
| 1902       | <i>Petrophora chlorosata</i>    | Brown Silver-line      | Recorded 11 times between 18 <sup>th</sup> May – 24 <sup>th</sup> June, max 27 on 26 <sup>th</sup> May                   |
| 1906       | <i>Opisthograptis luteolata</i> | Brimstone Moth         | 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                                                |
| 1912       | <i>Ennomos quercinaria</i>      | August Thorn           | 2 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                                                                |
| 1981       | <i>Laothoe populi</i>           | Poplar Hawk-moth       | Singles recorded 6 times between 19 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> May                                                 |
| 1984       | <i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i> | Humming-bird Hawk-moth | Singles recorded 3 times between 8 <sup>th</sup> Sep – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct                                               |
| 2003       | <i>Notodonta ziczac</i>         | Pebble Prominent       | Singles recorded 4 times between 21 <sup>st</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> May                                                 |
| 2060       | <i>Spilosoma lubricipeda</i>    | White Ermine           | 1 on 19 <sup>th</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> May                                                                             |
| 2061       | <i>Spilosoma luteum</i>         | Buff Ermine            | Recorded 5 times between 26 <sup>th</sup> May – 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug, max 6 on 5 <sup>th</sup> Jul                       |
| 2064       | <i>Phragmatobia fuliginosa</i>  | Ruby Tiger             | 1 on 24 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                             |
| 2069       | <i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>          | Cinnabar               | Recorded 5 times between 25 <sup>th</sup> May – 7 <sup>th</sup> Jun, max 2 on 28 <sup>th</sup> May & 7 <sup>th</sup> Jun |
| 2078       | <i>Nola confusalis</i>          | Least Black Arches     | 1 on 30 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                                                |
|            |                                 |                        |                                                                                                                          |

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Scientific Name</b>       | <b>English Name</b>                    | <b>Max Count</b>                                                                                                        |
|------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2080       | <i>Euxoa obelisca</i>        | Square-spot Dart                       | 139 recorded on 3 occasions between 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug – 7 <sup>th</sup> Sep, max 66 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug          |
| 2087       | <i>Agrotis segetum</i>       | Turnip Moth                            | 1 on three dates between 23 <sup>rd</sup> May – 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                    |
| 2089       | <i>Agrotis exclamationis</i> | Heart and Dart                         | 1 on three dates between 5 <sup>th</sup> Jul – 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                     |
| 2090       | <i>Agrotis trux</i>          | Crescent Dart                          | 11 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug & 7 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                                  |
| 2091       | <i>Agrotis ipsilon</i>       | Dark Sword-grass                       | Recorded 6 times between 3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr – 7 <sup>th</sup> Sep, max 4 on 24 <sup>th</sup> May & 5 <sup>th</sup> Jul |
| 2102       | <i>Ochropleura plecta</i>    | Flame Shoulder                         | Recorded 5 times between 19 <sup>th</sup> May – 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug, max 2 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug                     |
| 2107       | <i>Noctua pronuba</i>        | Large Yellow Underwing                 | Recorded 7 times between 26 <sup>th</sup> May – 25 <sup>th</sup> Sep, max 20 on 5 <sup>th</sup> Jul                     |
| 2109       | <i>Noctua comes</i>          | Lesser Yellow Underwing                | 7 on 26 <sup>th</sup> & 10 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                                      |
| 2111       | <i>Noctua janthe</i>         | Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing | Recorded 3 times between 7 <sup>th</sup> Jun – 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug, max 4 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug                      |
| 2117       | <i>Eugnorisma glareosa</i>   | Autumnal Rustic                        | 6 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug & 3 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                                   |
| 2118       | <i>Lycophotia porphyrea</i>  | True Lover's Knot                      | Recorded five times between 7 <sup>th</sup> Jun – 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug, max 10 on 5 <sup>th</sup> Jul                   |
| 2123       | <i>Diarsia rubi</i>          | Small Square-spot                      | Recorded on 6 dates between 19 <sup>th</sup> May – 24 <sup>th</sup> Jun, max 5 on 26 <sup>th</sup> May                  |

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Scientific Name</b>     | <b>English Name</b>        | <b>Max Count</b>                                                                                                      |
|------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2126       | Xestia c-nigrum            | Setaceous Hebrew Character | 1 on three dates between 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug – 25 <sup>th</sup> Sep                                                  |
| 2128       | Xestia triangulum          | Double Square-spot         | 1 on 24 <sup>th</sup> Jun                                                                                             |
| 2134       | Xestia xanthographa        | Square-spot Rustic         | 1 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                                                             |
| 2135       | Xestia agathina            | Heath Rustic               | 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                                                             |
| 2139       | Cerastis rubricosa         | Red Chestnut               | Recorded 5 times between 5 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> Apr, max 3 on 6 <sup>th</sup> Apr                         |
| 2147       | Hada plebeja               | Shears                     | Recorded 6 times between 20 <sup>th</sup> May – 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug, max 4 on 23 <sup>rd</sup> May                   |
| 2158       | Lacanobia thalassina       | Pale-shouldered Brocade    | 1 on 19 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                                             |
| 2160       | Lacanobia oleracea         | Bright-line Brown-eye      | Recorded 9 times between 18 <sup>th</sup> May – 5 <sup>th</sup> Jul, max 6 on 18 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup> May |
| 2163       | Melanchra pisi             | Broom Moth                 | Recorded 9 times between 18 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> May, max 12 on 30 <sup>th</sup> May                      |
| 2167       | Hadena perplexa capsophila | Pod Lover                  | Recorded 7 times between 29 <sup>th</sup> Apr – 30 <sup>th</sup> May, max 4 on 26 <sup>th</sup> May                   |
| 2171       | Hadena confuse             | Marbled Coronet            | 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> May & 2 on 28 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                 |
| 2174       | Hadena caesia              | Grey                       | 1 on three dates between 19 <sup>th</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup> May                                                      |
| 2176       | Cerapteryx graminis        | Antler Moth                | 8 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug and 1 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                               |
| 2187       | Orthosia cerasi            | Common Quaker              | 1 on 3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr                                                                                              |

| No.  | Scientific Name               | English Name             | Max Count                                                                                            |
|------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2188 | <i>Orthosia incerta</i>       | Clouded Drab             | 1 on 29 <sup>th</sup> Apr                                                                            |
| 2190 | <i>Orthosia gothica</i>       | Hebrew Character         | 1 on 24 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                            |
| 2232 | <i>Aporophyla nigra</i>       | Black Rustic             | 1 on 7 <sup>th</sup> Sep & 2 on 25 <sup>th</sup> Sep                                                 |
| 2243 | <i>Xylocampa areola</i>       | Early Grey               | 1 on 5 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> April                                                         |
| 2255 | <i>Polymixis lichenea</i>     | Feathered Ranunculus     | 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct                                                                            |
| 2263 | <i>Agrochola lota</i>         | Red-line Quaker          | 1 on 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct                                                                             |
| 2270 | <i>Omphaloscelis lunosa</i>   | Lunar Underwing          | 7 on 25 <sup>th</sup> Sep & 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Oct                                                |
| 2289 | <i>Acronicta rumicis</i>      | Knot Grass               | Recorded 3 times between 22 <sup>nd</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> May, max 4 on 26 <sup>th</sup> May      |
| 2305 | <i>Euplexia lucipara</i>      | Small Angle Shades       | 2 on 24 <sup>th</sup> May & 3 on 26 <sup>th</sup> May                                                |
| 2306 | <i>Phlogophora meticulosa</i> | Angle Shades             | Recorded 6 times between 18 <sup>th</sup> May – 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug, max 3 on 7 <sup>th</sup> Jun   |
| 2321 | <i>Apamea monoglypha</i>      | Dark Arches              | Recorded 3 times between 24 <sup>th</sup> Jun – 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug, max 33 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug |
| 2326 | <i>Apamea crenata</i>         | Clouded-bordered Brindle | 2 on 30 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                            |
| 2343 | <i>Mesapamea secalis</i>      | Common Rustic            | 1 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                                            |
| 2350 | <i>Chortodes pygmina</i>      | Small Wainscot           | 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug & 2 on 7 <sup>th</sup> Sep                                                 |
| 2381 | <i>Hoplodrina alsines</i>     | Uncertain                | 3 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                                            |
| 2439 | <i>Plusia festucae</i>        | Gold Spot                | 2 on 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug & 6 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug                                                |
| 2441 | <i>Autographa gamma</i>       | Silver Y                 | Recorded 3 times between 25 <sup>th</sup> May – 7 <sup>th</sup> Sep, max 2 on 25 <sup>th</sup> May   |

| No.  | Scientific Name                  | English Name   | Max Count                                                                                       |
|------|----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2450 | <i>Abrostola tripartite</i>      | Spectacle      | Recorded 7 times between 18 <sup>th</sup> – 28 <sup>th</sup> May, max 4 on 23 <sup>rd</sup> May |
| 2469 | <i>Scoliopteryx libatrix</i>     | Herald         | 2 on 18 <sup>th</sup> Sep                                                                       |
| 468  | <i>Rhigognostis incarnatella</i> | Scotch Smudge  | 1 on 21 <sup>st</sup> May                                                                       |
| 1958 | <i>Lomographa temerata</i>       | Clouded Silver | 1 on 26 <sup>th</sup> May                                                                       |

## **List of Contributors & Credits**

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## Photographic Credits

All photos by Aron Sapsford except:

### Wardens' Report:

EUFA photo

– Exposure.com

### Monthly summaries:

Red-footed Falcon

– Kevin Scott

Wheatear

– Shelley Kirkpatrick

Grey Seal & Pup

– Hayden Bridgeman

Black Redstart

– Hayden Bridgeman

### Storm Petrel Catch Analysis

Storm Petrel

– Mike Haigh

### Butterfly Report:

Small Copper

– Nathan Wilkie

Dark Green Fritillary

– Nathan Wilkie

Grayling

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