

Skomer Island

Bird Report 2022



Ymddiriedolaeth Natur
De a Gorllewin Cymru
Wildlife Trust of
South & West Wales

Published by:

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Skomer Island National Nature Reserve is owned by Natural Resources Wales and managed by The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales. More details on visiting Skomer are available at www.welshwildlife.org.

Seabird monitoring on Skomer Island NNR in 2022 was supported a partial financial contribution from the JNCC Support Co and grant funding from The Nature Networks Fund, funded by the Welsh Government and administered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in Wales.

SKOMER ISLAND



Contents

Island rarities summary 2022	5
Skomer Island seabird population summary 2022	6
Skomer Island breeding land-birds population summary 2022	7
Systematic list of birds	8



Sea Mayweed at the Wick – L. Newman

Skomer Island Bird Report 2022

The island was staffed between 1st March to 20th November and from 8th–13th December. During this time, a total of 144 bird species were recorded. A total of five additional subspecies were confirmed during the year.

Island rarities summary 2022

Species	Island status	Last recorded
Black-throated Diver	4th island record	2008
Goshawk	8th island record	2019
Black Tern	18th island record	2016
Yellow-legged Gull	4th island record	2006
Long-eared Owl	16th island record	2018
Nightjar	14th island record	2016
Hoopoe	22nd island record	2019
Red-backed Shrike	35th island record	2020
Woodchat Shrike	18th and 19th island record	2021
Western Bonelli's Warbler	1st island record	-
Melodious Warbler	18th island record	2020
Grey-headed Wagtail	2nd island record	2021

Skomer Island seabird population summary 2022

Twelve species of seabird regularly breed on Skomer. It was a good year for the auks, with Guillemots, Puffins and Razorbills all increasing in number since the previous year. There was a drop in the Fulmar population. Herring Gulls and Lesser Black-backed Gulls declined, however, Kittiwakes and Great Black-backed Gulls increased. Further information can be found in the Skomer Seabird Report (Newman, L. *et al.* 2022).

Species and count units	Totals for 2022	Totals for 2021	% change from previous count	5-year % change
Fulmar (AOS)	538	576	-6.60	-10.12
Cormorant (AON)	0	0	0	-100
Shag (AON)	4	2	+100	+5.26
Lesser Black-backed Gull (AON)	7,262	7,412	-2.02	+20.37
Herring Gull (AON)	266	271	-1.85	-12.96
Great Black-backed Gull (AON)	114	103	+10.68	+1.24
Black-legged Kittiwake (AON)	1,544	1439	+7.3	+8.08
Guillemot (IND)	31,790	27,269	+16.58	+24.09
Razorbill (IND)	10,192	8,168	+24.78	+37.82
Puffin (IND)	38,896	34,813	+11.73	+29.79

Data on the seabirds' breeding season has been compiled from the Skomer Seabird Report 2022.

Skomer Island breeding land-birds population summary 2022

The below data was collected by island staff during the breeding season, mostly through the annual Breeding Bird Survey, mapping territories along set transects across all parts of the island at least three times between mid-April and mid-June. In addition, many breeding territories are noted during daily patrols.

A total of 33 species of 'land-bird' bred on Skomer this year.

Species	2021	2022	5-yr % change
Canada Goose	11	11	-32.9%
Shelduck	2	2	-9.1%
Mallard	5	5	0%
Shoveler	3	2	-28.6%
Common Pheasant	5	12	62.2%
Common Buzzard	3	4	-13%
Water Rail	0	0	-100.0%
Moorhen	6	3	44.4%
Oystercatcher	53	73	40.9%
Eurasian Curlew	3	4	53.8%
Wood Pigeon	4	3	-11.8%
Short-eared Owl	3	1	-76.2%
Peregrine	3	2	-23.1%
Red-billed Chough	6	6	30.4%
Magpie	5	3	-42.3%
Jackdaw	36	30	11.9%
Carrion Crow	9	22	115.7%
Raven	5	4	-36.5%
Skylark	0	1	-16.7%
Barn Swallow	5	7	84.2%
House Martin	1	1	400.0%
Chiffchaff	1	0	-100.0%
Common Whitethroat	13	11	-19.1%
Sedge Warbler	31	28	-32.0%
Wren	96	94	27.0%
Blackbird	9	13	116.7%
European Stonechat	4	5	56.3%
Northern Wheatear	28	31	34.8%
Duncock	10	11	-19.1%
Pied Wagtail	2	3	15.4%
Meadow Pipit	84	133	25.9%
Rock Pipit	21	19	-20.2%
Linnet	6	1	-78.3%
European Goldfinch	1	1	66.7%
Reed Bunting	1	2	-23.1%

Systematic list of birds

Status categories

Vagrant – one to ten records

Rare – 11 to 40 records

Scarce – one to five records per year

Uncommon – six to 50 records per year

Fairly common – 51 to 250 records per year

Common – 251 to 1000 records per year

Abundant – 1001 to 2500 records per year

Very abundant – more than 2500 records per year

Note: Statuses are given in an island context, not a national context.

Breeding categories

Very rare breeder – one to ten breeding records

Rare breeder – 11 to 40 breeding records

Scarce breeder – one to five breeding records per year

Uncommon breeder – six to 50 breeding records per year

Fairly common breeder – 51 to 250 breeding records per year

Common breeder – 251 to 1000 breeding records per year

Abundant breeder – 1001 to 2500 breeding records per year

Very abundant breeder – more than 2500 breeding records per year

Count units and terminology used in this report

AOS – Apparently Occupied Site

AON – Apparently Occupied Nest

AOT – Apparently Occupied Territory

IND – Individual

BBRC – British Birds Rarities Committee

WRP – Welsh Records Panel

NRW – Natural Resources Wales

List of contributors mentioned within the report

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Notes

The species order for this systematic list is taken from 'The British List' published by the BOU in Jan 2013.

Cover photo – Black Redstart – L. Newman

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Rare. 14 previous records, involving 15 birds. Last recorded 2021

One record in 2022, with one bird spotted at Moorey Mere on 6th March.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Uncommon breeder. First bred 1993

The first record of the year was of 28 birds on the 1st of March. They were sighted almost daily thereafter. They were noted as still present on the visit to the island in December. A total of 11 pairs nested on the island in 2022, this being the same as 2021. The five-year trend for this species is one of decline (-32.9%), having decreased from a five-year average of 16.4 pairs. The first eggs were found on 25th March and the first goslings on 8th May. Three chicks were thought to have fledged.

Month	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Max count	34	43	29	29	28	43	48	7	30

Table 1. Monthly maxima of Canada Goose 2022.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Rare, twenty-one previous records. Last recorded 2020

One record in 2022, with six birds seen at the Farm on 6th March.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Scarce breeder (maximum three pairs). First bred 1969. Scarce migrant

The first record of 2022 was of three on North Pond on 12th March. From 20th March they were seen almost daily until 30th June. The next and final record of the year was of a single autumn visitor spotted at North Pond on 13th November.

Two pairs nested on the island this year. The first chicks of the year were seen on North Pond on 11th May. This brood of seven remained seven until 17th May when only six were seen. The last remaining chick was seen on 22nd May.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Uncommon migrant

The only Wigeon of the spring were two birds seen on the 3rd, 5th and 6th of March. The first autumn record was of three on North Pond on 16th November and the next and final record of the year was of a single bird on North Pond on 9th December.

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*

Rare and sporadic breeder (maximum two pairs). First bred 1968. Fairly common, sometimes common migrant

The first two of the year were noted on 2nd March on North Pond, followed by between one and 27 birds (spring peak count) throughout March and into April, with the last spring sighting of two on North Pond on 13th April. There were no sightings in May, June or July. The first autumn record of Teal was of eight birds seen at North Pond on the 22nd of August. They were seen frequently throughout September and October, with a peak autumn count of 60 birds on North Pond on 16th October. The final record of the year was of 34 on North Pond on 9th December.



Eurasian Teal on a dry North Pond – L. Newman

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Uncommon breeder (maximum 18 pairs 1978 and 2000). Fairly common migrant

A minimum of five pairs bred this year. The first brood of six ducklings was seen at North Pond on 10th April, followed by an intrepid brood of eight spotted leaving North Haven with their mother on 29th May. The next and final brood of three ducklings was seen on North Pond on 18th July. No ducklings were seen for longer than a day.

The first record of the year occurred on 2nd March, with two birds on North Pond. This was followed by near-daily sightings of between two and ten birds (spring peak count) through the spring, with small numbers of breeding birds continuing to be seen through the summer almost daily right through to 30th July. A spell without sightings then followed, broken by a record of nine on North Pond on 21st August and 46 on North Pond on 29th August (peak autumn count). There were occasional sightings of between two and 25 birds in October and November, with the last record of the year being five birds on North Pond on 9th December.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Scarce breeder (maximum six pairs). Uncommon migrant

Two pairs were confirmed to have bred, with one brood of eight ducklings seen on North Pond on 14th May with eight still present on the 15th; joined by a second brood of six on Green Pond.

The first record this year involved three on North Pond on 2nd March. Birds were seen almost daily from late March through into early June, with a peak count of ten birds on 15th May. The last Shovelers of the spring were seen on 9th June. A single bird on the 13th of November and three on the 11th of December were the only autumn records of 2022.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Rare and sporadic breeder. Last proven breeding 2007. Scarce to uncommon migrant

The only 2022 record was a female seen from Skomer Head on 12th September.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Common migrant

First noted on 30th June, with 14 seen. There were two sightings in July, with six birds on the 11th and nine on the 18th, both from North Haven. 12 birds on the 28th were the only Common Scoter seen in August. They were seen on thirteen days in September and nine in October, with a peak autumn count of 61 seen from North Haven on 19th October. The last record of 2022 was of a single bird seen from Skomer Head on 13th November.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Uncommon breeding resident. Released for shooting during 19th century with population surviving today

Present throughout the season, with 12 territories mapped during the breeding season. The first chicks of the season were noted at the Wick on 17th June. Further chicks were then seen on 19th June, 21st July, and 9th August.

Pheasants were seen almost daily throughout the season. Peak year counts were of 44 on 8th September and 36 on 10th October (once the vegetation had died back).

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Vagrant, three previous records involving six birds. March and April 1979 (involving four birds), September 1992 and October 2008

The only record of the year involved a single bird off Bull Hole on 29th September.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Scarce visitor, though uncommon in some years. Most sightings during early and late season

Three spring records of singles on the 1st, 3rd and 8th of March. A single off Skomer Head on the 8th of October was the only autumn record.

Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*
Common breeder. First confirmed breeding 1960

The whole island population was 538 AOS. This is 38 fewer AOS than 2021. Productivity in 2022 was 0.39 which is a decrease on 2021 (0.45) and is the average productivity over the previous five years.

Present on the island from the start of the recording year until 12th September. There were only two more records in September, both of single birds, and none were recorded in October. Birds were seen sporadically throughout November in low numbers, then returned to the cliffs on 19th November, when 19 were counted in North Haven. They were present on the December visit, with a peak count of 20 in North Haven on the 11th.



Fulmar – L. Newman

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*
Very abundant breeder, largest colony in the world

Manx Shearwater were present throughout the season, first recorded on the team's arrival on the island on 1st March, and last recorded at the Farm on 15th November. Within the standard annual census plots, the number of responses (1,247) decreased from 2021 (1,410). This is the fewest responses in the annual census plots since 2017.



Sir David Attenborough watching a Manx Shearwater chick fledge – Alex Board/Silverback Films

European Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*
Fairly common breeder. Full census conducted 2016

Birds were caught in July and August as part of an ongoing research project at Tom’s House. Fifteen birds were seen in North Haven on 2nd June.

Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*
Very abundant visitor. Abundant breeder on nearby Grassholm

Recorded virtually daily throughout the season, with Skomer being so close to Grassholm, the third largest gannet colony in the UK. Monthly maxima are reported below in Table 2. A clear reduction in numbers was apparent through late October and November, presumably reflecting the departure of the Grassholm population. Avian influenza (HPAI) affected the Gannet population on Grassholm in late 2022, with many dead birds being seen on the water and washed up on Skomer’s beaches.

Month	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Max count	27	24	29	36	255	200	175	68	6

Table 2. Monthly maxima of Northern Gannet 2022.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Uncommon breeder. Fairly common migrant

No Cormorants bred on Skomer in 2022.

There are records of between two and five birds several times a month from March to November.

European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Uncommon breeder, with majority breeding on nearby Middleholm

In the 1960s/70s the shag colony on Skomer was concentrated on Shag Hole Bay, on the north side of the Neck. Over a period of years these moved to Middleholm and by the early nineties, shags had more or less ceased to breed on the main part of Skomer. A few pairs, however, have continued to breed on the north coast of Skomer, at the base of Double Cliff, and on the Garland Stone. In 2022, there were four nests at Double Cliff.

Seven large chicks were seen whilst conducting seabird counts and shortly after. This gives a productivity of 1.75.

The Shag colony on Middleholm was counted as part of the whole island seabird counts which resulted in 18 nests.

Shags were present on the island throughout the season, with the first seen on 2nd March and the last on 18th December. Peak months were August and September, in which there were 144 and 107 sightings respectively, with a maximum of 15 shags seen in any one day (11th August).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Scarce visitor. First recorded 1996. Last recorded 2021

Three records in 2022, with single birds on 11th June and 7th August, and a sighting of three birds at North Pond on 7th September.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Fairly common migrant

The first record this year was of a single bird at North Pond on 12th June. Grey Herons were seen every month from June to November, with a total of 14 birds recorded in the months of July and September. The peak year count was of eight Grey Herons circling North Pond on the 27th July.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Previously a scarce migrant now fairly common. First record 1995, annual since 2010

First recorded on 1st March with a single bird in North Haven. The highest spring count was of three birds at North Pond on 23rd April. May through to September all saw records of single birds. The autumn peak count was of eight birds at South Stream on the 13th of October. In total, up to 93 individual birds were recorded throughout the season.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Scarce migrant

Marsh Harrier were recorded every month from May until October on Skomer in 2022. A male was recorded in North Valley on 14th and 15th May. On 2nd June a male and female were seen in North Valley and Pigstone Bay respectively.

The next record was not until 21st July, but from late July until the end of October Marsh Harrier were frequently seen, with a male and up to four female types including at least two juvenile birds taking up temporary residence on the island.



Marsh Harrier – L. Newman

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*
Uncommon migrant

Present on the team's arrival to the island, with a single ringtail spotted in North Valley on 1st March. Sightings of a single ringtail bird continued most days throughout March until mid-April, with sightings of two ringtails together on 26th and 27th March. The last spring sighting was of a ringtail seen on 30th April. The next record (and only September sighting) was a juvenile on 16th September. Between 3rd and 18th November there were eleven records of one or two ringtails on the island. The December visit to the island saw Hen Harrier still apparently resident, with sightings of a ringtail each day from the 9th to the 12th of the month, joined by an adult male on the 11th.



Hen Harrier over North Pond – L. Newman

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Vagrant. Seven previous records. Last recorded October 2019

The first of the year, and first since 2019, was seen flying through North Haven on 22nd August. This was followed by six September records, between the 1st and 16th of the month, and five October records. The last record of the year was on the 26th of October at North Pond.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Uncommon migrant, though can be fairly common in some years

The first of the year arrived on 12th March, with a further five singles seen throughout March, and two birds seen on the 29th. Sightings were sporadic throughout spring, with singles seen on nine more days in April and May. The first bird of the autumn was seen on 28th July. There were near-daily sightings between 24th August and 23rd September, followed by 16 sightings in October, and eight in November. An individual in North Haven on 8th December was the last record of the season. No more than two birds were seen at any point in the year.



Sparrowhawk surveying North Valley – L. Newman

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Scarce breeder, though uncommon in some years (maximum eight pairs 1954). Fairly common migrant, particularly in the autumn

Four pairs nested on Skomer in 2022. Pairs nested at Amy's Reach, Robert's Wick, South Plateau and Waybench. The first nest was noted on 16th April and the first chick was seen on 13th May. The first fledged chick was seen on 12th July.

Noted on the team's arrival, with two counted on 1st March. Thereafter counts of between one and 23 were noted daily throughout the season. Numbers rose in September and October as birds arrived to take advantage of the Manx Shearwater fledging period. There were 243 birds logged in September and 251 logged in October, compared to an average from the rest of the season of 99 per month. The last record was of three birds at South Stream on 12th December.



Common Buzzard perched on top of the Chicken Sheds – L. Newman

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare migrant, though becoming scarce

There was only one record of Osprey in 2022: a single bird seen from the Wick on 26th April.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Very rare breeding species, one record 2013. Fairly common migrant

First noted on 2nd March when two were recorded at North Pond. Birds were present for most of March and April with the last record of likely wintering birds being on 27th April. No other birds were recorded until autumn. The only July record was an individual on the 1st of the month, after which the next record was on 16th August. Thereafter, autumn migrants were recorded on a further five dates in August, 22 dates in September, 25 in October, and ten in November. The last record of the year was an individual bird at Moorey Mere on 9th December. The high count of the year was seven on 13th October.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Uncommon breeder, though scarce in some years

Present throughout the season, three pairs of Moorhen nested in 2022 – half the number that nested in 2021. The first chicks were found on 21st April with six at Moorey Mere. The first chicks weren't seen on North Pond until 21st May.

Moorhen were seen every month between March and December. Autumn counts were highest, with the population being bolstered by fledged juveniles. Peak counts include 31 on 15th August, 30 on 21st August, and 41 on 23rd August.



Young Moorhen on North Pond – L. Newman

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostrélagus*
Fairly common breeder

Present throughout the season, with 73 breeding pairs mapped. This is up on the 53 pairs of 2021. The first pairs mating were seen on 30th April and the first chicks were seen on 29th May.

Peak spring counts in March included 174 on 13th, including 163 birds at the South Stream roost, and 127 on 14th, with 114 birds at South Stream. By late March the roost had depleted in numbers and birds had started to move on to the island plateau. The largest count of the autumn was 69 on 15th October.

European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*
Uncommon migrant

There were three sightings of single birds in May, on the 1st, 3rd and 13th. These were the only birds until August, which had a single bird spotted on 28th and two on 29th of the month. There were three further records in September and one in October, with a peak count for the year of only three birds at Skomer Head on 2nd September.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*
Rare migrant. Thirty previous records, most recent records September 2016

One bird was recorded at the Farm on 14th April, the first since 2016.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*
Uncommon migrant. Bred annually on the island until 2000

The only 2022 record was of four birds in North Valley on 19th October.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Uncommon migrant, though scarce in some years

The first of the year was a single bird seen on 12th August, followed by one on the 15th and then sightings of singles on the 27th, 28th and 29th August. Single birds were also seen on 1st and 11th September; the latter was the last of the year.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Common spring and autumn migrant. Rare in winter

The first record of the year was of seven birds on 16th April. Birds were seen nearly every day until 26th May with a peak count of 16 birds on 24th April. A pair of birds were recorded on 18th July. Autumn passage began on 17th August with a single bird, followed by ten other August records. They were then seen daily from the 1st to the 14th September, the latter being the last record of the year.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Scarce breeder. Common migrant

Birds were present throughout the season with four pairs attempting to nest on Skomer. The first singing was noted around North Pond on 10th March, with the first territorial behaviour noted over Gorse Hill on 21st April. The first chick was seen on 25th May at North Pond, this rose to three chicks with a pair in the fields around North Pond Public Hide on 31st May. The first chick at Gorse Hill was seen on 7th July. Two chicks are thought to have fledged, one from Gorse Hill and one from the North Pond Public Hide pair.

Birds in the spring and autumn are bolstered by migrating birds. The following counts are the peak from each month:

Month	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max count	24	11	7	7	23	31	16	19	4	15

Table: Maximum daily counts per month of Eurasian Curlew



Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Scarce migrant

The first record of the year was a single bird on 6th April, followed in May by another single bird on the 27th. The next sightings came between the 24th of June and 3rd July, when either an individual or a pair were recorded on six dates at North Pond. The next and final records of the year concern two individuals on 27th August at North Pond and a single bird at the farm on the 28th of this month.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Scarce migrant

There were only two sightings of Bar-tailed Godwit in 2022 – in the spring, an individual was seen at South Stream on 22nd April, and in the autumn, another single bird was spotted on the 7th of September in North Haven.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Common migrant

The first record was on 3rd March with three on North Haven beach. Birds were recorded every month except June; the last record of the spring was 13th May whilst the first of the autumn was on 25th July. The peak spring counts were of eight birds on the 10th and 20th March. Autumn peak counts included ten on 8th September, nine on 11th October and nine on 4th November. The last record of the year was of two birds on 10th December at the Mew Stone.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Rare migrant

One record in 2022 of a single bird seen at the Garland Stone on the 6th of September.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Uncommon migrant

First recorded on 15th April with 35 seen at the Garland Stone, the highest count of the year. Single birds were seen on the 23rd, 24th and 25th April. May saw four records of between one and three birds, with one individual lingering at Moorey Mere until 3rd June. This was the last record until a single bird was seen on 27th July. Between two and four birds were seen on the 7th, 9th and 10th of September; the latter was the final record of the year.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Uncommon spring and autumn visitor. Scarce in some years

Only three records for Purple Sandpiper in 2022: The first record of the year was of 16 birds on the 8th of March seen at their roost site on South Castle. A flock of six were seen at the Garland Stone on 3rd May. The final record of the year notes their presence at South Castle on 28th October.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*
Uncommon migrant

The first record of the year was of two birds at North Pond on the 23rd of April, followed by three other records of single birds in the last week of this month. There were four records of single birds sporadically throughout May; the last spring sighting was 30th May. A single bird was seen at North Haven on the 29th of July, then in August there were five records of between one and three birds, with the last of the year seen on the 29th of August.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*
Scarce migrant

There were no spring records in 2022. The first bird of the autumn was an individual at North Haven on 18th July, with two further records of single birds on 10th August and 5th September.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
Scarce migrant

The first record of the year came on 29th August with a single on North Pond. The only other record was of a single bird at the Farm on 1st September.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*
Scarce migrant, though uncommon in some years

Only two records in 2022: an individual bird at North Pond on 29th June, and another at North Haven on 12th August.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*
Scarce migrant

There were two spring records, with two flushed near Bull Hole on the 23rd of March and a single flushed from the same spot on the 25th. The only autumn record was of a single bird seen at the Farm on 20th October.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*
Uncommon spring and autumn migrant, scarce in some years

The first and only bird of the spring was recorded on 3rd March. The first bird of the autumn arrived on 19th October, with a further single bird spotted on the 24th of this month. The last sightings of the year were of individual birds on the 14th and 15th of November.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Common migrant

The first record of the year was on 2nd March. Birds were recorded regularly throughout the first three weeks of March, but April saw only three records. The last spring record was an individual at the Farm on the 30th of April. The maximum spring count was 12 at North Pond on the 3rd of March. The first birds of autumn were recorded on 12th August. 19 birds were recorded in August, 29 in September, 32 in October and seven in November. Two birds on 11th December and one on the 12th were the last of the year. The peak count from autumn was nine birds on 11th October.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

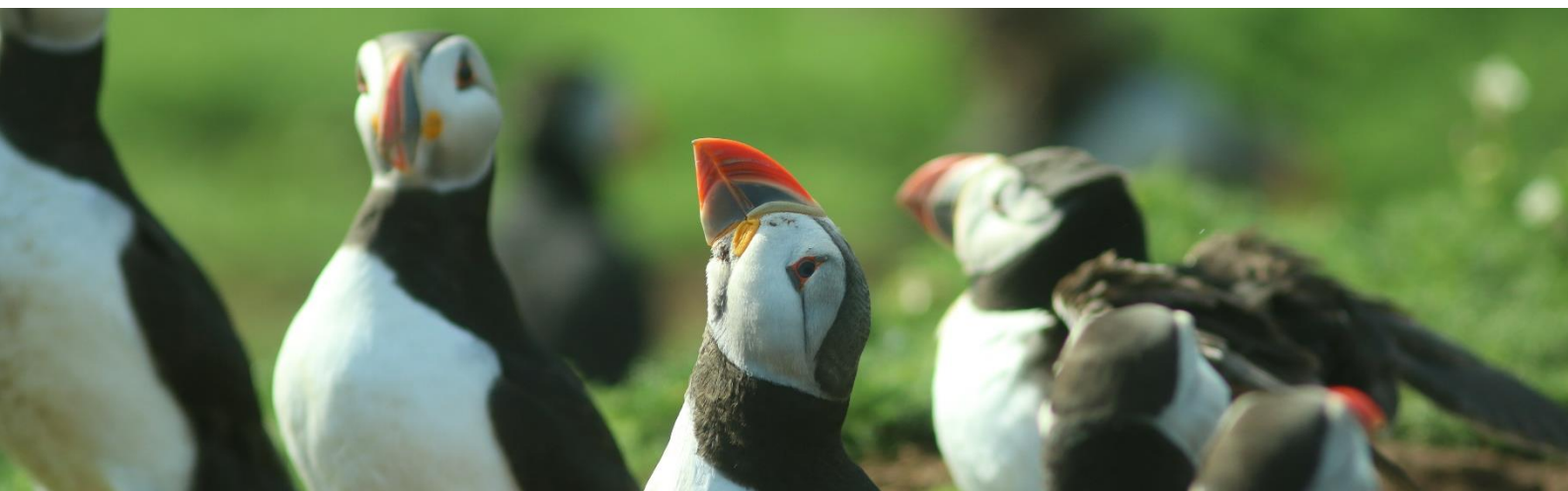
Scarce migrant, though uncommon in some years. Sighting frequency heavily affected by observer coverage and effort

In the spring a single bird was seen from Skomer Head on 18th April, and another on 13th May. These were the last records until September, when three were seen on the 8th from North Haven and one from Garland Stone on the 9th. This was the final record of the season.

Atlantic Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Very abundant breeder

The first birds of the year were seen on 10th March. A total of 38,896 individual puffins were counted on 24th March. This represents an increase of 11.7% on 2021 (34,813). The last birds of the year were two spotted in North Haven on 10th August.



Atlantic Puffin – L. Newman

Razorbill *Alca torda*
Very abundant breeder

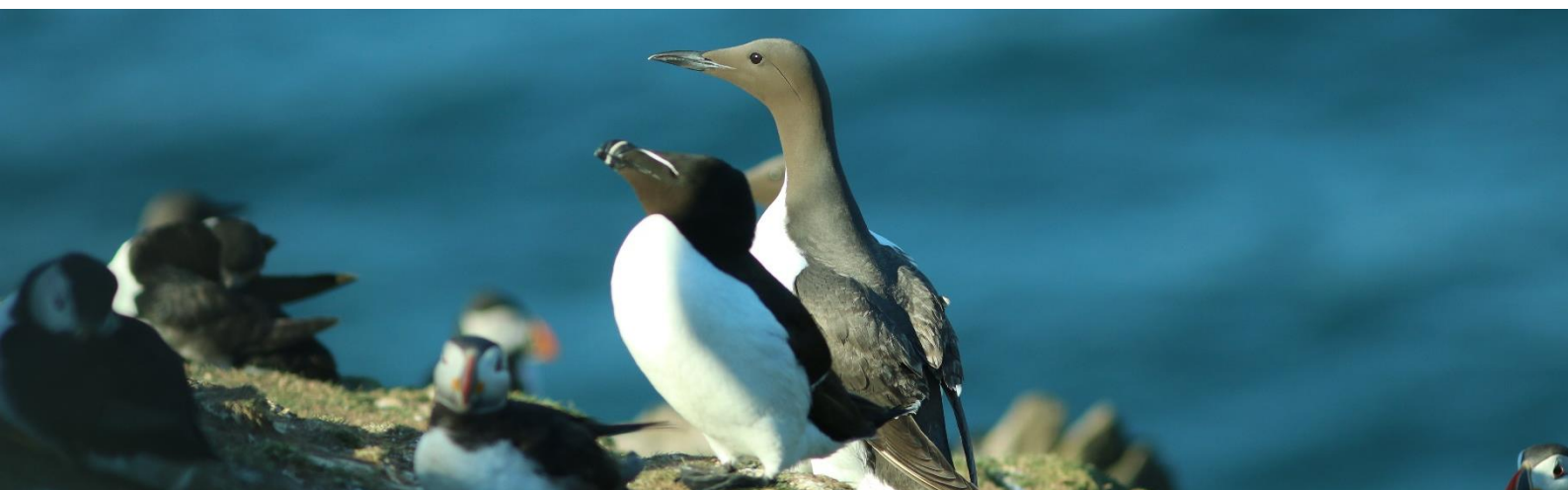
First seen on 3rd March when thousands were present on the cliffs. An individual in North Haven on 18th October was the final record of the year.

10,192 individuals were counted in 2022, this represents an increase of 24.78% since the previous whole island count in 2021. Productivity was 0.47 fledglings per active and regular nest site which is a decrease on 2021 (0.5) and below the previous five-year average of 0.54.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*
Very abundant breeder

Birds were first seen on 3rd March with thousands on land. They were then present most days until 13th April, thereafter every day until 6th August. They were last seen in November, with 350 birds visiting the cliffs on the 6th and 40 on the 13th, this the last record of the year.

31,790 individuals were counted in 2022, which is a 16.58% increase on the previous count in 2021. Productivity was 0.73 which is an increase of 0.13 on 2021.



Guillemot in North Haven with Razorbill and Puffins in the foreground – L. Newman

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*
Rare migrant. Seventeen previous records, involving 48 individuals. Last recorded September 2016

Two birds were spotted from the Garland Stone on 8th September (ES).

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*
Scarce migrant, though uncommon in some years

The first record of the year was of two birds seen on 27th July at Garland Stone. There were then 14 spotted on 8th September and one on 13th September, this the final record of the year.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Scarce migrant. Possibly under-recorded, with many records of 'Commic' tern in the logs likely to have mostly involved this species

The only record came in the form of 'Commic' terns (either Common or Arctic). 399 individuals were recorded between 5th and 9th September.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Abundant breeder

1,544 AON were counted in 2022, which is an increase on the previous year's 1,439. Productivity was 0.63, a decrease compared to the previous year (0.79), and higher than the average productivity for the last five years (0.61).

Large movements in the autumn include 1,000 on 26th and 900 on 27th September.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Bred at North Pond between 1965 and 1970, maximum 25 pairs. Abundant migrant, particularly in the autumn

First noted on 6th April with one in North Haven. The rest of the records came in autumn with sightings increasing in frequency from 1st July onwards. The maximum day counts were 21 birds on the 10th and 22nd September.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Uncommon visitor. This species has undergone a remarkable change in status, being considered a vagrant on the island (less than ten records) as recently as 2007

A poor year compared to 2021's 50 records, with only eight birds recorded in 2022. These were all autumn records, starting with two birds on 27th and one on the 28th of July. The only August record was a single juvenile at the Farm on the 6th. On September 8th another juvenile was seen at Rye Rocks, followed later in the month by two birds seen from North Haven. The final record of the year, and only November record, was an individual at the Garland Stone on the 9th.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Uncommon visitor

Only two records this year; an individual on 3rd March at Skomer Head and another on 30th September at the Garland Stone.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Very abundant (but declining) breeder

The whole island population estimate was 7,262 AON which is 2.02 % lower than 2021.

European Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*
Common (but declining) breeder

This year's whole island count of 266 AON is a decrease of five AON compared to 2021. Productivity was 0.79 which is the highest since 2012.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*
Vagrant. Three previous records, August 1999, May 2000 and June 2006

One record of this rare gull was of a single adult bird on North Pond on 27th July (SD).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*
Fairly common breeder.

114 AON were counted in 2022 which is 11 more than 2021 (103). Productivity was 1.64, which is below the five-year average of 1.67.



Great Black-backed Gull – L. Newman

Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*
Fairly common visitor

First noted on 2nd March with two birds at the Farm. Birds were recorded every month of the season except October. June saw the peak number of sightings, with 30 records of birds, followed by 16 records in September. The maximum count was ten birds on 5th September.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*
Previously an uncommon breeder (up to 50 territories in 1970s). Last breeding record 1988. Scarce migrant

Three records involving a total of four birds in 2022 include one at Moorey Mere on 20th March, one at the Wick on 28th April, and two at North Haven on 19th October.

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Scarce breeder, though uncommon in some years. Common migrant, particularly in late autumn

Present throughout the season with birds first recorded on 4th March. Three pairs were proven to have bred. The highest count of the spring was of 22 birds on 17th May. There were no large autumn movements of birds – peak counts were of 15 birds on 26th July, 25 birds on 29th August and 13 birds on 6th September.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Uncommon migrant

First recorded on 17th April with a bird at the Farm, followed by an individual at Tom's House on 25th of the month. May saw three counts of single birds, one of two and one of three – the highest count of the spring. A single bird was recorded on 13th June. Autumn records began with a single bird on 22nd August, followed by three further records of individuals in August. The final record of the year was an individual spotted in the fields east of the Farm on 10th September.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Rare and sporadic breeder. Last confirmed breeding record 1991 (possibly 2002). Scarce migrant

There were four birds sighted in the spring – three were seen on 15th May, with a further single bird on 29th of this month. Autumn sightings started on 8th July with one at North Haven, followed by sightings of individuals on the 21st and 30th of July. There were four sightings in August, with single birds seen on the 3rd, 4th, 19th and 30th.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Scarce and sporadic breeder. Last breeding record 2007

First seen on the 3rd of March, a sighting of an individual on the 13th of March was the second and last spring record. The first autumn record was of a single bird at North Haven on 10th October, followed two days later by a sighting of perhaps the same bird at the Farm. Individuals were also seen on the 26th and 29th of this month. November saw an individual bird at the Farm on the 18th and 19th of the month.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Rare visitor. Fifteen previous records (four in the spring), most recently October 2018

An individual was spotted roosting in the trees at North Valley Crossing on 11th October (FB). This was the first sighting since three were seen in October 2018.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Scarce breeder, though uncommon in some years. Maximum 14 territories 1993. Uncommon migrant

Just one pair bred on Skomer in 2022. First noted on 2nd March with a bird at North Valley Crossing. Sightings were sporadic as the breeding season progressed suggesting a small number of pairs. Territorial behaviour was noted near North Pond on 3rd May. One fledgling was seen on 27th June, but no other chicks were seen to have fledged. The first sighting of the autumn was of an individual on 25th September, the only record for this month. There were sporadic sightings throughout October, with a maximum count of two on 23rd. The only November sighting and final record for the year was of an individual in North Valley on 14th.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Historical breeder (pre-1946). Rare migrant. Thirteen previous records, involving 14 individuals, most recently May 2016

One record in 2022 of a bird flying around Captain Kites (LN) during the day being mobbed by Rock Pipits. Viewed for a short amount of time it then disappeared into South Haven still being pursued by riotous Rock Pipits.

Common Swift *Apus apus*

Common migrant

The first record of the year came on 27th April with two birds over North Haven. Sightings were regular throughout May with a peak count of 41 on 11th. Sightings dropped off in June, with a total of 19 birds recorded. The highest count during July was nine on 9th. There were two August records: a pair on 11th and a single on 14th. The final record of the year, and only September record, was a single bird in the fields east of the Farm on the 1st.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Rare migrant. Twenty-one previous records, most recently one in May 2019

A single bird found at the Garland Stone on 23rd March (AR) was the only record of the year. It was a flighty and mobile bird which did not allow close approach, later seen at the Farm for a few moments before flying off west.



Hoopoe outside the Farm – L. Newman

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Rare migrant. Eleven previous records, most recently September 2019

One record of one bird seen in South Haven on 3rd September.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Scarce migrant, though uncommon in some years

There were no spring records. The first records of the autumn were of an individual at the Farm and another at North Haven on 15th August. An individual which was presumably the former bird was then seen at the Farm every day from the 17th to 21st August.



Wryneck underneath the solar panels at North Haven – L. Newman

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Scarce migrant, previously a rare migrant with only five records up to 2007

The first bird was seen at the Lantern on 11th October with further singles seen on three more dates in October. November saw five records of single birds, all in North Valley and all between 3rd and 9th of the month.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Scarce and sporadic breeder. Last breeding attempt 2013. Uncommon migrant, though fairly common in some years

A single bird was present on 1st March on the team's arrival and was recorded most days until 15th of the month, followed by one sighting on 22nd. There were two sightings of individuals in May, on 2nd and 8th. There was one record of a single bird in June and three individuals in July. The first sightings of autumn occurred on 17th August, with five further sightings in this month. Birds were recorded most days in September and October, followed by five November sightings prior to the team's departure in November. The last sighting of the year was of an individual at North Haven on 12th December. The peak counts this year were a maximum of two birds, seen in September, October and November.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*
Uncommon migrant

The first record of the year came on 7th March with an individual at the Wick. This was the only March record. A single was then recorded on six dates in April and two in May. The last spring record was an individual on 8th May. The first sighting of the autumn was an individual at North Haven on 4th October, followed by six more October records of single birds. There was one November record of a single bird in North Valley on the 19th. The last records of the year were of individuals on 8th and 9th December.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*
Scarce breeder. Maximum four pairs 1998 and 2003. Uncommon migrant

Present throughout, with two pairs breeding. Territories were held at Protheroe's Dock and Double Cliff. The first chick was noted on 16th June at Protheroe's Dock, and this is the only chick thought to have fledged. Peak counts were of seven birds on both the 16th May and 28th October.



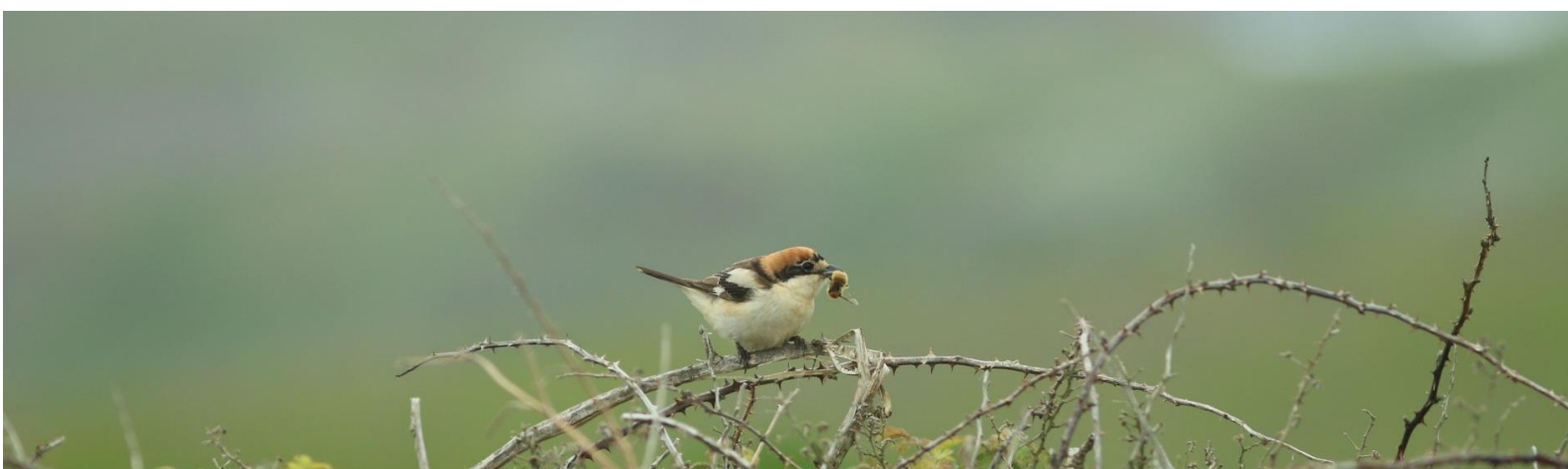
Peregrine Falcon – L. Newman

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*
Rare migrant. Thirty-four previous records, most recently May 2020

A smart male Red-backed Shrike was spotted first by a hostel guest and remained near the Farm from the 18th to 20th May.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*
Rare migrant. Seventeen previous records, most recently June 2021

A good year, with one spring and one autumn record. The first record for the year was a male seen first on South Plateau (CA) and then taking up residence for two days at Moorey Mere, where good views were obtained of the bird singing and catching bees. A later bird was first spotted by day visitors, on South Plateau on 12th July.



Woodchat Shrike devouring a bee at Moorey Mere – L. Newman

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Scarce breeder. Fairly common visitor from the mainland

Seven territories were held with six pairs attempting to breed. The breeding territories were at the Lantern, Matthew's Wick/Castle Bay, South Castle Beach Cave, The Wick, Payne's Ledge, and Pigstone Bay. The seventh pair were nest building in the middle of the season at Welsh Way.

The first nest building was noted on 20th March. Behaviour which indicates incubation was noted on 1st April at the Wick and the first confirmed chicks of the season were noted on 8th May at the Garland Stone. The first fledged chicks were seen on 8th June at the Lantern. The total number of fledged chough per site is as follows: Lantern – four, Matthew's Wick/Castle Bay – two, South Castle Beach Cave – one, Wick – two, Payne's Ledge – two, Pigstone Bay – two.

The highest count of the spring was 37 birds on 24th March, equalled by the autumn peak count of 37 birds on 16th September.



Chough – L. Newman

Magpie *Pica pica*
Uncommon breeder

Present throughout the season, with three pairs breeding. This is below average (5.2) for the previous five years. The first birds carrying food were seen very early on 10th April. The first chick was seen at Moorey Mere on 2nd July.

High counts from the year include 19 on 24th April, and 24 on 2nd October.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*
Fairly common breeder, though not censused every year. Fairly common to common migrant

Present throughout the season, with 30 pairs. This is a decrease from 36 pairs in 2021. On the December visit to the island, no jackdaws were observed.

Month	Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Max count	105	59	30	120	110	210	225

Table 5. Monthly maxima of Jackdaw.



Jackdaw at Captain Kites – L. Newman

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*
Uncommon migrant

The first record was a single bird on 16th April. It was followed by three on the 20th, two on 22nd, three on 25th and one on 26th April. There were no later records.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Uncommon breeder

Present throughout the season, with 22 pairs nesting. This is the highest number of pairs since 1969 when there were also 22 pairs. First noted nest building on 29th March and first noted sitting on eggs on 12th April. The first chicks were seen on 5th May and the first fledged birds were seen on 25th May.

High counts included 82 on 27th March and 67 on 11th October.

Raven *Corvus corax*
Scarce breeder. Fairly common autumn visitor

Four pairs nested on Skomer in 2022. Birds nested at Matthew's Wick, Pigstone Bay, Double Cliff and the Wick. Birds were first noted nest building on 3rd March but it is likely they started before the team's arrival on the island. The first bird was noted as sitting on the nest (eggs out of sight) on 6th March at the Wick. The first chicks were seen on 13th April; the first sighting of fledged chicks was on 13th May.

Peak counts for the spring were 20 birds on 14th March and 16 on 9th April. Autumn numbers started building on 15th August with 19 noted. As is typical, birds began to arrive in the autumn to take advantage of the fledging Manx Shearwaters. Peak counts in the autumn were 57 on 19th September and 59 on 2nd October. Numbers reduced through October and were back down to the breeding population by November. They were last recorded on the island on 12th December.



A curious Raven at Skomer Head – L. Newman

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*
Fairly common migrant

The first record of the year was on 14th March, when five birds were seen. This was followed by four more sightings in March of between one and four birds. April saw two sightings of single birds, with an individual on 17th being the last spring record. June saw a single bird at the Farm on the 1st, the last record until 1st September. Birds were seen frequently throughout the autumn until the team's departure in mid-November. The last record of the year was an individual seen at the Farm on 9th December.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

Scarce autumn migrant, though uncommon in some years (at least 65 previous records). Rare spring migrant.

An individual was spotted at North Valley Willows on 20th March, allowing uncharacteristically good views. A second bird was seen in the ivy at North Haven on 12th September. These were the only records for the year.



Firecrest in North Valley Willows – L. Newman

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Fairly common autumn migrant

The only spring record was of a single bird spotted at North Valley Crossing on 24th March. July 1st saw a juvenile at the farm, the last record until October when there were nine sightings of between one and three birds between the 11th and 20th of the month.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Uncommon migrant. Scarce in some years, and occasionally absent

Three records in 2022: One bird was seen at the Farm on 26th March and an individual was seen on 15th and 16th April.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Bred annually until 2018. Previously an uncommon breeder. Common autumn migrant

One pair bred on Skomer in 2022. The first singing bird was noted on 13th March west of the Farm. Birds were noted as present in the fields west of the Farm until mid-May but no chicks were seen to have fledged. On 1st August a single bird was spotted in North Valley, the last record until September. There were five records of between one and six birds in September. Movements of birds were recorded regularly through October and November with high counts in the table below.

Date	8th Oct	13th Oct	14th Oct	3rd Nov
Max count	514	372	339	247

Table 6. Peak counts of Skylark.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*
Common migrant

The first record of the year was an individual seen at the Garland Stone on 25th March, followed by two more sightings of individuals on the 25th and 31st of the month. The next sighting was on 13th April, thereafter birds were seen most days until 19th May. This was the last spring record. Peak spring counts were 14 birds on 16th and 17th April and seven on 8th May.

The first week of June saw four sightings of between one and five birds. The next record was not until 15th August, followed later in the month by sightings of between one and three birds on the 29th, 30th and 31st. Birds were recorded on six days in September, with a peak count of 100 on the 19th. The last records of the year were individuals seen on 2nd and 11th October.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
Uncommon breeder. Very abundant migrant

Seven pairs bred in 2022, with all birds nesting at the Farm. The first singing birds were noted on 25th April and the first nesting material was noted on 12th May. The first fledged chicks were noted on 8th July.

First recorded on 28th March with one seen at the Farm and one at South Haven. Sightings were then near daily until late October. Peak spring counts were 117 on 28th April, 85 on 29th April, 75 on 11th May, and 70 on 14th May.

The first movement of autumn was noted on 17th July with 14 birds at the Farm. The high counts of autumn are detailed below.

Date	29th Aug	2nd Sep	14th Sep	16th Sep	19th Sep	23rd Sept	2nd Oct
Max count	200	121	100	90	5000	380	138

Table 8. Peak autumn counts of Barn Swallow.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*
Bred during the late 1960s/early 1970s, and again in 2021. Common migrant

The first bird of the spring was seen at the Farm on 26th March, with the next not being spotted until 15th April. Sightings were then frequent throughout the rest of April with a maximum count of 17 on 28th. The maximum count in May consisted of 21 on 14th. The first birds of the autumn were noted on 29th August with three birds seen at the Farm. High counts of the autumn were 87 on 10th and 200 on 19th September, followed by 70 on 8th October. The final bird of autumn was recorded on 13th October at North Valley Willows.

The first individual noted as singing around the Farm was on 8th May with nest building commencing five days later on 13th May. A second pair which did not go on to breed, were seen prospecting on 15th May. The first chicks (two) were noted in the nest on 10th July with three chicks fledging sometime around the 20th of July.

Yellow Browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*
Scarce autumn migrant. Most recently 2020

Two records involving up to three birds. First seen at North Valley Crossing on 3rd October with another single bird seen at North Pond on the 4th. The next record was of a single bird at Moorey Mere on 10th October staying until 14th October.

Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli*
Vagrant. First island record. Two previous records of Bonelli's sp. in 2017 and 2018

One seen at the Farm on 29th August (SS) is the first island record identified to species level. A vocal bird, it spent the day in the elders at the Chicken Sheds.



Western Bonelli's Warbler on the Chicken Sheds – L. Newman

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*
Very rare and sporadic breeder, noted 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2021. Abundant migrant

First recorded on 10th March, with three birds present. Birds were frequently recorded throughout the rest of the month, with high counts of 19 on 20th and 26 on 21st March (high count for the year). Birds were recorded on 20 days in April with high counts of ten on 13th and nine on 17th and 26th. Birds were recorded regularly through May. The last bird of the spring was recorded on 6th June in North Valley.

Autumn migration started on 16th July with one bird seen at the Farm. Birds were recorded on five further days in July. August records began on 11th, with between one and two birds seen on six other August dates. Birds were then recorded frequently throughout September, October and into November. The last record was of a single bird at the Farm on 15th November. High counts of the autumn were 11 on 8th September and 14 on 11th and 13th October.

Siberian Chiffchaff *P. c. tristis*
Rare migrant. Further records of 'eastern' birds possibly relating to this subspecies. However, owing to confusion regarding the identification of this sub-species in the past, this may represent a false status

The first record of the year was a bird seen at South Stream on 26th April. October saw records of at least two different birds, seen in the North Valley Willows/East Bog area on four different dates between the 27th and 31st of the month. Early November saw a record of two birds on the 4th and one on the 5th – the latter was the final record for the year.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*
Abundant migrant

The first bird of the year was an individual at North Valley Willows recorded on 21st March. Birds were recorded frequently through spring with the final record of the spring coming on 25th May. Spring peak counts were 46 birds on 25th April and 73 on 27th April. The first bird of the autumn was recorded on 11th July. There were 14 further days in July where Willow Warblers were recorded. Birds were recorded on 28 days in August with 21 on the 1st the highest count from the month. Passage peaked in September with the high count of the year coming on the 1st with 53 recorded. Also notable was a record of 27 birds on 8th September. The final Willow Warbler of the year was recorded on 1st October at North Pond.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*
Fairly common migrant

The first bird of the year was a male at North Valley Crossing recorded on 20th March, followed by two more sightings of individuals on the 24th and 30th of this month. Birds were recorded most days in April and frequently in May up until the 18th. The only later spring record was two birds at Green Pond on 2nd June. The spring accounted for the majority of records with 190 birds recorded (105 in autumn). High counts of the spring were 16 on 13th, 17 on 25th and 34 on 27th April.

A single outlying bird was seen on 5th July. With no birds recorded in August, the next sighting was of two birds on 1st September. There were 13 further September records of between one and five birds. Blackcap were recorded on 21 days in October, with peak counts of seven birds on the 21st and 12 on the 28th of the month. Between two and three birds were seen on four November dates, with three at Moorey Mere on the 14th being the final record of the year.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*
Uncommon migrant

There were two spring records – a single bird at North Valley Willows on 14th May and another at South Stream on the 15th. Two individuals were also recorded in the autumn, on the 1st and then the 12th of September.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*
Scarce migrant

There were no spring records. Autumn saw birds recorded on five days – an individual at North Pond on 8th September, then four records between 28th October and 4th November at North Valley Willows of a possible *blythi* bird.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*
Uncommon breeder, though scarce in some years.

The first record came on 3rd April with a single at the Farm. Single birds were recorded on multiple days until 23rd April when two were recorded. Whitethroat were then recorded almost every day through May, June and July, with numbers starting to peter out in August. The last record of the year was an individual seen at the Wick on 15th September. The highest spring count was of 15 birds on 15th May; the peak count of the autumn was nine on 19th August.

A total of 11 breeding pairs were mapped during Breeding Bird Surveys and other observations. This is two pairs fewer than 2021. The first bird carrying nesting material was seen at South Stream on 12th May with the first fledged birds seen on 3rd July.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Very rare, cryptic breeder, last record 1981. Uncommon migrant

The first record came on 17th April with an individual heard at South Stream. Two on 22nd, one on 24th and one on 27th April comprised the remainder of the year's records.

Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta*

Vagrant. Seventeen previous records, involving 20 individuals, most recently in 2020

There was one record of Melodious Warbler in 2022. A bird found at Moorey Mere on 6th October (CA) stayed until the 10th of the month.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Uncommon breeder. Uncommon migrant

A total of 28 breeding pairs were recorded in 2022 which is three fewer than 2021.

The first bird of the year arrived on 2nd April, followed by two birds on 13th. From the 19th of April sightings were then almost daily until 12th September. Thereafter an individual on 16th and another on 20th September marked the last records of the year. Peak spring counts included 18 on 27th April, 21 on 29th April (highest count of the year), and 18 on 13th May.

Birds were recorded as present every day in July. Throughout August and into mid-September, numbers between one and 12 were recorded. A peak of 12 birds suggests autumn migration was poor.

The final bird of the year was recorded on 20th September.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Uncommon migrant

The year started with a record of a single bird on 28th April at North Valley Willows. There were five records in May starting on the 14th with a single bird at Moorey Mere. There were four on the 15th – the high count of the year – and singles on the 16th, 18th and 22nd April.

Autumn records began in July with a single bird at South Stream. There were no further records until 10th August when there was one at North Valley Crossing. This was followed by one on the 21st and one on the 24th August, the final records of the year.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Fairly common breeder

Present throughout the season from the first day of arrival. There were 94 territories mapped, two fewer than 2021. The first bird carrying nesting material was seen on 27th April, with the first bird carrying food recorded on 2nd May.



Wren singing its heart out – L. Newman

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
Very abundant migrant

First noted on 1st March with ten east of the Farm. Birds were present through most of March with daily counts reaching 38 on the 5th. The only April records were of single birds seen on four consecutive days from the 27th of April; these records ran into the first two days of May with a single on the 1st and two on the 2nd. June records started on 8th with three birds. There was then a gap of seven days until the next record on the 16th. From the 16th onwards there were records on eight days until the end of the month, peaking at 19 birds on the 26th. Birds were recorded nearly every day in July with a peak count of 75 on the 22nd. Birds were also recorded on nearly every day in August with counts peaking at 80 on the 8th, 79 on the 9th and 100 on the 16th. September contained just one record, six birds, on the 11th. Birds were then regularly seen from 8th October onwards with peak counts below:

Date	19th Oct	29th Oct	3rd Nov	4th Nov	6th Nov
Max count	223	250	2140	1800	390

Table 9. Peak autumn counts of starling.



Starlings moving over Skomer – L. Newman

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Uncommon migrant

Six spring records with the first bird seen on 23rd March. There were two seen on the 31st of March, then a single on the 13th, three on 23rd, one on 24th and one on 29th April. There was only one autumn record which was of a single bird at Moorey Mere on 20th October.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Scarce breeder, previously uncommon. Common migrant

First recorded on 1st March, 13 pairs bred on Skomer this year. This is four pairs more than 2021 and over double the five-year average of six pairs. The first birds carrying nesting material were seen on 15th April and the first bird carrying food was seen on 7th May. The first juvenile was noted on 24th May.

Separating breeding birds from spring migrants is difficult but counts of 18 on 14th March and 16 on 12th and 24th March are likely to involve migrants. Autumn migration started in October with 21 on the 5th. Selected high counts of October are as follows: 45 on the 11th, 43 on the 13th and 35 on the 20th of October. The highest count of November was 34 on the 1st.



Blackbird at Moorey Mere – L. Newman

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Fairly common, occasionally common migrant

Two spring records with a single bird on the 27th of March and two on the 28th March.

The floodgates opened in autumn with the largest recorded movement of Fieldfares on Skomer. On the 19th of October, 3,414 birds were recorded flying east over a period of a couple of hours counted from Captain Kites. It's thought that strong weather patterns had pushed these birds off-course and they were re-orientating. Fieldfare were recorded nearly every day in October after this deluge although numbers quickly dropped off. 390 were recorded on the 20th and just eight on the 21st, whilst a slight increase on the 23rd saw 35 birds noted. November records were more characteristic for Skomer with a single bird on the 1st, two on the 6th, one on the 12th, four on the 13th, two on the 14th, and one on the 15th and 16th November.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Scarce and very sporadic breeder. Common migrant

The first record of the year (one bird) was on the day of arrival on 1st March. Birds were present on 16 days in March with a high count of six on the 21st. April only saw three records with single birds on 23rd, 24th and 26th. There were no May records but there was a single bird logged in June on the 12th. Records through July, August and September were sporadic and low in number with a small arrival in late July running into early August. The only other record in August was of a single bird on the 24th. September saw just one record: a single bird on the 1st.

There were more regular records from the 2nd of October onwards with birds recorded most days until the team's departure. The high count from this period was 11 on 29th October. The final record of the year was of five birds on 12th December.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Common migrant

Three on the 2nd of March were the first records of the year. Almost daily records through the start of March ceased on the 14th, with single birds seen on the 21st and 26th the only other records in March. The final records of spring were seven birds logged at North Haven on 4th April.

Autumn started with a bang with 381 logged on 19th October, easily the highest count of the year. Records were then almost daily through late October and early November with a gap in sightings between 6th and 12th November. Two logged on 13th November were the last ones to be recorded before the departure of the island team with the only other record of the year being a single bird on the 12th of December.



Autumnal Redwing in the bracken – L. Newman

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Uncommon migrant

There were no spring records with only six records in autumn. All records were of single birds which were seen on the following dates: 14th, 23rd and 24th October; 3rd, 4th and 13th November.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

One breeding record 1985. Common migrant

The first spring records were single birds on 26th and 27th April. May saw more records with two on the 1st the first record of the month. There were low single digit counts for the records in May apart from a count of 26 on the 15th and 18 on the 16th. The final record of spring was a single bird on 17th June.

Autumn records began on 14th August with two noted. Records were somewhat sporadic through the rest of the month, peaking at 11 birds on the 30th and the 31st of August. September started well with 41 birds logged on the 1st being the highest count of the year. The rest of the month did not follow in the same suit, however, and subsequent records peaked at three birds on the 13th. The final record of the year was of one on the 12th of October.



Spotted Flycatcher in North Valley – L. Newman

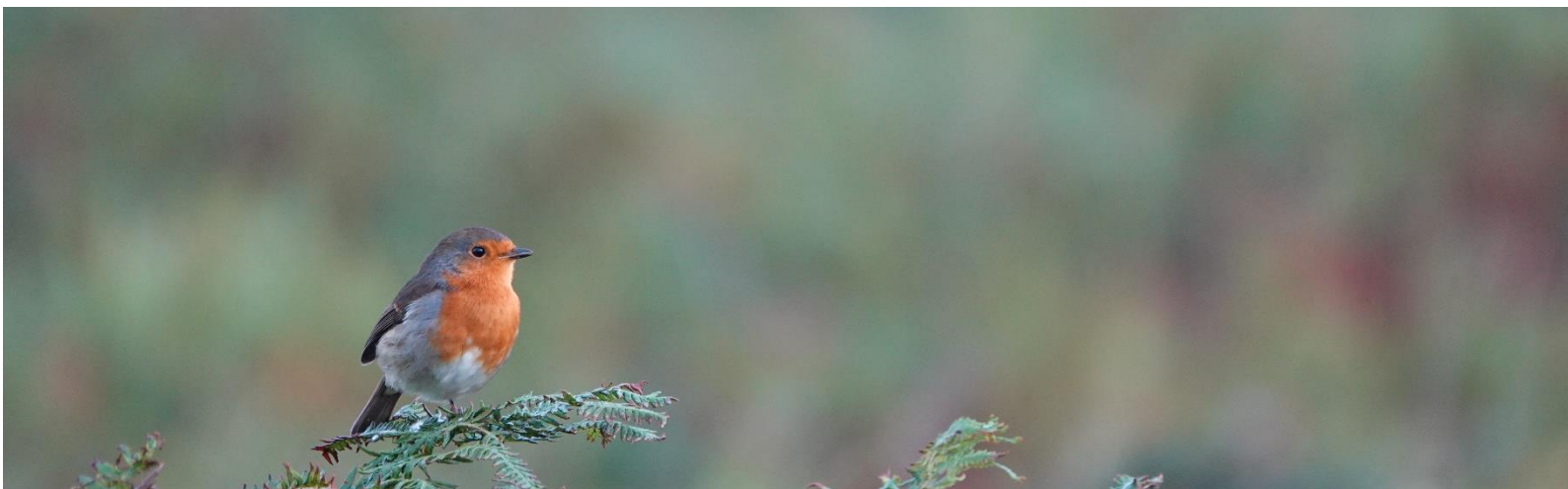
Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Last confirmed breeding record 1994. Very abundant migrant

Present on the first day of arrival with one bird at North Haven. Birds were seen throughout March and are likely to have been overwintering birds, however, ten on the 10th appear to indicate some movement. There were sporadic sightings through April and May with the final spring sighting on 22nd May.

The first bird of autumn was a juvenile seen on 24th July with another bird seen on the 26th. August records started on the 1st with two at the Farm. There was then a gap of nine days with no records until five were recorded on the 10th. Birds were then recorded nearly every day until the departure of island staff on 20th November. Birds were also recorded on all days in a week's visit in December. By late August, numbers recorded each day had reached double figures. Selected high counts of the autumn are below:

Date	10th Sept	12th Sept	19th Sept	1st Oct	2nd Oct	8th Oct	13th Oct
Count	39	53	39	45	63	71	68



Robin surveying its territory – L. Newman

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*
Uncommon migrant

Just the one spring record with a bird at North Valley Crossing on the 15th of May. There was a slightly unseasonal record of one in North Valley on 16th July with no further records until mid-August with a female type at the Farm on the 13th. There were records on the last four days of August with a high count of two on 30th August. September records began on the 1st with two birds recorded. There were no further records until the 9th when there was a string of records and a high count of five on the 12th. The final record of the year was one on the 25th of September.



Pied Flycatcher in North Valley Willows – L. Newman

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*
Uncommon migrant

Spring records began on 19th March with a single bird at North Haven. Birds were then recorded every day until the 29th with a high count of seven on the 23rd. April records were mainly restricted to single birds on nine days with two birds seen on two days (17th and 18th at the Garland Stone).

Autumn records started in October with a male at the Farm on the 10th. There were two at Pigstone Bay on the 20th and one in the same location on the 21st. Birds were recorded nearly every day until the end of the month with a high count of four on the 31st of October. November records started with a male at the Farm on the 1st. There were two on the 4th, one on the 5th, one on the 12th, five on the 13th, two on the 14th, one on the 15th and one on the 16th, which was the final record of the year.



Black Redstart on the cliffs – L. Newman

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Uncommon migrant

Just two records this year with a male seen on 24th April in the fields west of the Farm with another single bird seen in the same place on the 1st of October.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Uncommon migrant

There were two spring records, the first, a single bird on the 27th of April and the second another single bird on 15th May. The first autumn record came in late July with a single bird at Tom's House on 26th. There were no August records, with the next record being four birds on 1st September. There were 12 other records in September with a high count of seven on 12th September. There were 14 days in October with records, the first on the 1st, the last on the 28th and a high count of four on the 8th.

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Scarce breeder. Uncommon migrant

Present on the team's arrival to the island. Five pairs bred: one pair more than 2021. Singing was first noted on 14th March, nesting material was first noted on 25th March, birds carrying food were first seen on 29th April and the first fledglings, one at Bull Hole, were seen on 30th April.

Peak spring counts were 13 on 6th and 14th March. Peak counts of birds in the autumn were 13 on 6th September. The final record of the year was on 12th December with one seen at the Wick.



Recently fledged Stonechat – L. Newman

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*
Common migrant. Uncommon breeder

A total of 31 pairs were recorded breeding in 2022. This is an increase of three pairs on 2021 and is above the five-year average of 23 pairs. The first birds carrying food were noted on 2nd May and the first fledged birds were seen on 31st May.

The first bird of the year was seen at Bull Hole on 10th March. Birds were recorded nearly every day from 14th March right through spring. The highest count of the autumn came on 26th August with 34 recorded and the final record of the year came on 18th October.

Date	23rd Mar	13th Apr	17th Apr	22nd Apr	24th Apr	29th May
Max count	17	18	19	23	79	32

Table 10. Peak spring counts of Northern Wheatear.



Northern Wheatear in North Haven – L. Newman

'Greenland' Wheatear *O. o. leucorhoa*

Uncommon migrant

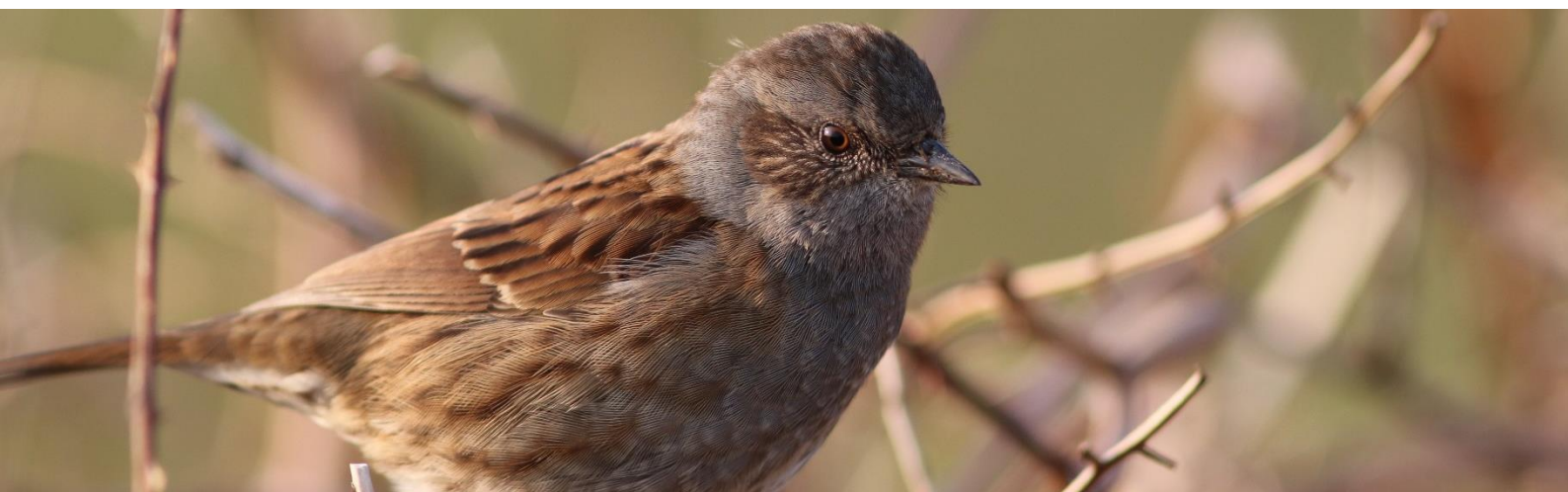
First noted on 22nd April with two present. There were further records on 23rd, 24th, 26th and 27th April. There were records on four days in May with a high count of three and there was a single bird seen in June on the 7th. There was one autumn record on 2nd September.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Uncommon breeder. Fairly common autumn migrant

Present throughout with 11 pairs mapped. This is an increase of one pair on 2021 but still below the five-year average of 13.6 pairs. Birds were first noted singing on 12th March and started nest building on 13th April. The first food being carried was on 7th May and the first chicks seen on 28th June.

Counts of between one and ten were typical through most of the spring with high counts of 12 on 24th March, 13 on 13th April, 12 on 14th and 13 on 24th. The highest count of the autumn was 25 on 11th October. The final record of the year was on 12th December.



Dunnock at the Farm – L. Newman

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Bred sporadically between 1965 and 1969. Uncommon migrant

The first record of the year was a female at the Farm on 25th March. There was another single female at the Farm on 27th June and a single bird at the Farm on the 20th of September. Records were more numerous in October with two at the Farm on 8th, ten on the 11th and three on 13th.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Uncommon migrant

The first record was on 24th April, followed by two further spring records of one on the 13th and two on the 14th of May. A single bird west of the Farm was found on 26th July and was seen sporadically through the rest of the month and into August. The final record was of a single bird on 1st September.

Grey-headed Wagtail *M. f. thunbergi*
Vagrant. One previous record in 2021

One found at Bull Hole (DA) on 6th June stayed for just one day. This is the second record for the island after the first in 2021.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
Uncommon migrant

The first and only spring record was of a single bird at North Haven on 3rd March. Autumn records started on 1st July with one at North Haven. There were four further single bird records in July and one in August. Records peaked in September with a maximum day count of six on 9th and 29th. There were three records of single birds in October including the final record of the year on 9th October.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*
Scarce breeder. Fairly common migrant

Present on the team's arrival with three pairs nesting, one up on 2021 and just above the five-year average (2.6). The first birds carrying food were seen on 22nd May and the first fledglings were seen a week later on the 29th of May.

Spring counts varied between one and seven individuals. Notable autumn influxes occurred on 20th August with 19 birds and on 5th September with 22 birds. The final records of the year were on 10th November.



Pied Wagtail – L. Newman

White Wagtail *M. a. alba*
Uncommon migrant

The first spring records came with two seen at North Haven on 20th and 22nd March. There was one April record with a single bird at Pigstone Bay on 22nd.

Autumn records started on 27th August with two at the Wick. There was a single on the 29th and two on the 30th. Records from September were all single birds; seen on 2nd, 10th, 11th, 13th and 20th. There was a single record in October of one at North Pond on 29th.

Unidentified, 'fly-over' wagtails, are noted as pied/white wagtails. Of this genre there were 13 on 19th September and two on 29th September. In October there was one on the 6th, nine on the 8th, three on the 10th, five on the 11th and three on the 16th.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Uncommon migrant

The first bird of the spring was heard flying over the fields east of the Farm on 27th April. There was one further record in spring, concerning a single bird on 15th May.

The first record of autumn was of three birds on 15th August. There were a further two birds on 31st August and then singles on 1st and 19th September.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Fairly common breeder. Abundant migrant

Present throughout the season, with 133 breeding pairs. Birds were first noted singing on 12th March and nest building on 17th April.

Spring passage is often camouflaged in the breeding population but counts of 60 on 5th March and 42 on 20th March are likely to involve migrants. Autumn passage is a similar story but counts of 55 on 11th, 43 on 14th September and a flock of 35 birds on South Plateau on 16th September are likely to consist of migrants.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Uncommon breeder. Fairly common migrant

Present throughout the season with 19 pairs breeding. This is a decrease of two pairs on 2021 but below the five-year average of 23.8 pairs. The first birds carrying food were seen in North Haven on 25th April and the first fledged chicks were seen on 14th June.

There were no days in which counts indicated an influx of migrant birds.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon migrant

A good six-day passage of birds in March saw the first records of the year with two on the 20th. There were two on the 21st, five on the 22nd, one on the 23rd, three on the 24th and two on the 25th of March.

Autumn records started on 10th October with two at the Farm. There were also two at the Farm on the 13th, one on the 18th and 20th and there were two on the 28th of October. One Brambling on the 3rd of November was the final record of the year.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*
Common migrant

Three records from the spring, these were of a single bird at the Farm on 21st and 25th March and a single bird at North Haven on 2nd April.

The first autumn records started on 2nd October with three at North Pond. From 8th October onwards birds were recorded every day until the end of the month. High counts consisted of 63 on 22nd, 195 on 25th, 82 on 29th and 149 on 31st. October's records continued into November with birds recorded nearly every day until the final record on 19th November. The peak counts of November were 155 on 3rd and 159 on 13th.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*
Uncommon migrant, though fairly common in some years.

There were no spring records and only one autumn record. The only sighting of the year was of ten birds on 28th October which consisted of one bird at the Farm and nine over North Valley.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*
Scarce and sporadic breeder. Very abundant migrant

A single pair nested on Skomer in 2022, this is five fewer than in 2021. The first bird carrying nesting material was seen on 22nd May and the first juveniles (four) on 18th June.

The first records of the year were of two birds on 6th March consisting of a single at North Haven and a single bird at the Garland Stone. Birds were recorded on most days through the year with the final sighting of the year on 4th November.

Date	23rd Mar	16th April	18th April
Max count	25	43	20

Table 12. Peak spring counts of Linnet.

Date	25th Aug	10th Sep	12th Sep	19th Sep	2nd Oct	8th Oct
Max count	40	52	61	95	52	95

Table 13. Peak autumn counts of Linnet.



Linnets on the wall at the Farm – L. Newman

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*

Uncommon migrant

The only record of the year was one bird seen at North Valley Crossing on 20th September. Redpoll sp., not assigned to species (usually flyovers), included one on 15th May and one on 6th October.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Abundant migrant

One pair are thought to have bred on Skomer this year with birds present throughout the spring with singing first noted on 27th March. The first fledged chick, one at the Farm, was seen on 29th June.

First noted on 18th March with a single bird at the Farm. Birds were present regularly through the spring with high counts of 47 on 16th April.

The first 'autumn' influx of birds noted was on 11th July with 20 birds recorded. This remained the highest count of the autumn until the 29th of September when there were 25 seen at Pigstone Bay. There were regular records through October with high counts of 27 on 2nd, 24 on 8th, 23 on 14th and the highest count of the autumn of 36 on 16th. There were ten days with records of Goldfinch in November with the highest count of 16 on 4th and the final record of the year of three on 19th November.



Goldfinch at Moorey Mere – L. Newman

Siskin *Spinus spinus*
Uncommon migrant

The only spring record was of a single bird at South Stream on 17th April.

Autumn records got off to a good start with a passage of 87 on 11th October, which was the highest count of the year. There were other pulses of migration noted with 16 on 13th, 19 on 16th, 25 on 20th and 32 on 22nd the highest counts of October. The third and fourth of November saw 43 and 19 birds recorded respectively. There were no further records until 12th where there were five consecutive days of single digit counts: a peak of four on 12th, and the final record of the year of one Siskin on 16th November.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*
Scarce autumn migrant, though absent in some years

The only record of the year consisted of a male first seen at Skomer Head on 28th October. This bird was seen at Skomer Head on 30th and at Tom's House on 31st.



Snow Bunting at Tom's House – L. Newman

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*
Scarce breeder. Uncommon migrant

Two pairs bred on Skomer this year, below the five-year average of 2.6 pairs. The first singing birds were logged on 17th March. No chicks were seen to have fledged.

The first birds of the spring were recorded on 4th March with two at North Valley Crossing. Numbers remained low throughout the spring with the highest count of three on 21st and 23rd March and 16th, 23rd and 29th April. There were three records of birds in June and one in July. There was one August record of a single bird on the 10th. Records became more regular in September with birds seen on five days through the month. October saw eight days with records and the peak count of autumn (three) on 13th and 20th. November had four days with records, with the final bird of the year seen on 13th November.

References

Moss, J. (2017). Skomer Island Systematic List 2017. *Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales, Cilgerran, Pembrokeshire.*