

Skomer Island

Bird Report 2021



Ymddiriedolaeth Natur
De a Gorllewin Cymru
Wildlife Trust of
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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 is supported by JNCC.

SKOMER ISLAND



Legend

- rock outcrops
- field walls
- Public footpaths



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Skomer Island Bird Report 2021

The island was staffed between 1st March and 23rd November. During this time, a total of 150 bird species were recorded. A total of five additional subspecies were confirmed during the year.

Island rarities summary 2021

Species	Island status	Last recorded
Glossy Ibis	1 st Island record	N/A
<i>Grey-headed Wagtail</i>	1 st Island record	N/A
Alpine Swift	2 nd Island record	2018
Lesser Grey Shrike	3 rd Island record	1993
Great Egret	3 rd Island record	2016
Black Kite	4 th Island record	2018
Velvet Scoter	5 th Island record	2019
Curlew Sandpiper	8 th Island record	2013
Iceland Gull	12 th Island record	2018
<i>Blue-headed Wagtail</i>	12 th Island record	2019
Woodlark	13 th Island record	2015
Woodchat Shrike	16 th Island record	2019

Skomer Island seabird population summary 2021

Twelve species of seabird regularly breed on Skomer. It was a good year for Puffins and Razorbills, with both increasing in number since their previous counts. There was a small drop in the Fulmar population and the Guillemot numbers. All species of gull also declined, varying from a small decline in Lesser Black-backed Gulls to a moderate decline in Kittiwakes. Further information can be found in the Skomer Seabird Report (Newman, L. *et al.* 2021).

Species and count units	Totals for 2021	Totals for 2020	% change from previous count	5 year % change
Fulmar (AOS)	576	580	-0.69	-3.13
Cormorant (AON)	0	1	-100	-100
Shag (AON)	2	3	-33.33	-56.52
Lesser Black-backed Gull (AON)	7,412	7,668	-3.34	22.86
Herring Gull (AON)	271	298	-9.06	-14.13
Great Black-backed Gull (AON)	103	112	-8.04	-9.33
Black-legged Kittiwake (AON)	1439	1,681	-14.40	0.19
Guillemot (IND)	27,269	N/A	-5.31	12.05
Razorbill (IND)	8,168	N/A	8.49	15.13
Puffin (IND)	34,813	34,796	0.05	26.53

Data on the seabirds' breeding season has been compiled from the Skomer Seabird Report 2021.

Skomer Island breeding land-birds population summary 2021

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. House Martin bred for the first time since 1970.

Species	2020	2021	5 yr % change
Canada Goose	15	11	-40.2%
Shelduck	3	2	-16.7%
Mallard	5	5	25.0%
Shoveler	3	3	15.4%
Common Pheasant	14	5	-45.7%
Common Buzzard	6	3	-34.8%
Water Rail	1	0	-100.0%
Common Moorhen	6	6	15.4%
Oystercatcher	58	53	-2.6%
Eurasian Curlew	2	3	15.4%
Wood Pigeon	4	4	33.3%
Short-eared Owl	3	3	-25.0%
Peregrine	3	3	15.4%
Red-billed Chough	4	6	57.9%
Magpie	5	5	-3.8%
Western Jackdaw	22	36	42.9%
Carrion Crow	9	9	-15.1%
Common Raven	5	5	-27.5%
Skylark	0	0	-100.0%
Barn Swallow		5	19.0%
House Martin	0	1	100.0%
Common Chiffchaff	0	1	150.0%
Common Whitethroat	12	13	-5.8%
Sedge Warbler	42	31	-27.9%
Wren	63	96	39.1%
Blackbird	5	9	95.7%
European Stonechat	3	4	33.3%
Northern Wheatear	19	28	22.8%
Duncock	15	10	-35.1%
Tree Sparrow	1	0	-100.0%
Pied Wagtail	3	2	-28.6%
Meadow Pipit	105	84	-24.9%
Rock Pipit	19	21	-10.3%
Common Linnet	4	6	30.4%
European Goldfinch	0	1	66.7%
Reed Bunting	3	1	-68.8%

Systematic list of birds

Status categories

Vagrant – one to 10 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: Status' are given in an island context, not a national context.

Breeding categories

Very rare breeder – one to 10 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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Ceris Aston	CA	David Astins	DA	Freya Blockley	FB
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Ted Wallen	TW				

Notes

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

Cover photo – Common Guillemot – L. Newman

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Rare. 13 previous records, involving 14 birds. Last recorded 2020

One record in 2021, with one bird flying south over South Stream on 30th March.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Uncommon breeder. First bred 1993

Present throughout. A total of 11 pairs nested on the island in 2021, this being a decline on the 15 nests of 2020. The five-year trend for this species is one of decline (-67%), having decreased from a five-year average of 18.4 pairs. The first eggs were found on 1st April and the first goslings on 29th April. Five chicks were thought to have fledged.

Month	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Max count	21	23	21	23	22	14	72	76	2

Table 1. Monthly maxima of Canada goose 2021.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Rare. Last recorded 2020

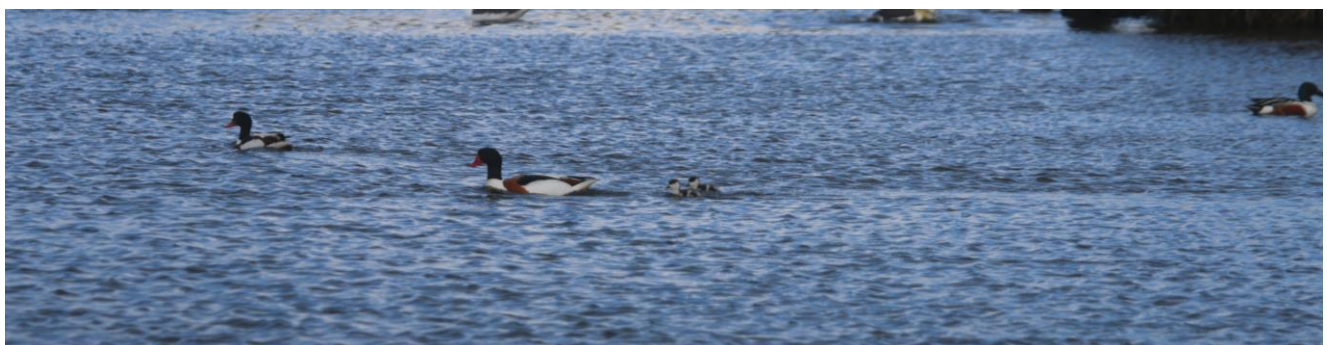
There were three records this season. The first was concerning a flock of 20 un-raced birds noted flying past North Haven on 1st May. The second was of a dark-bellied race bird present on Moorey Mere on 14th and 15th June and the final record was of two un-raced birds flying past Garland Stone on 23rd October.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

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

Two pairs nested on the island this year. The only brood noted consisted of two young on North Pond on 21st May. These two chicks, against all odds, managed to fledge from North Pond.

The first record of the year concerned a single bird which arrived on Moorey Mere on 14th March, followed by three on 20th and almost daily sightings from thereon. The last record of the year was the fledged juvenile on 16th August.



Pair of common shelduck with two chicks, North Pond 2021.

L. Newman

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*
Uncommon migrant

There were no spring records. The first of the autumn involved a single bird which arrived on North Pond on 31st October. This was followed by two on North Pond on 16th November and between one and three on three more dates in November, finishing with three on 22nd November.

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 two and 27 birds (spring peak count) on most days until 7th April. There were no sightings in May or June with five being seen on one day in July. August sightings started on 19th with one bird on Green Pond followed by six more days of sightings from 24th – 30th. Birds were then present nearly every day through September, October and November. The maximum count of the autumn was in November with 36 on North Pond.

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 four ducklings was seen in North Valley on 13th April, followed on 1st May by a brood of five on Moorey Mere and a brood of eight seen on 7th May.

The first record of the year occurred on 2nd March, with six birds. This was followed by near-daily sightings of between two and 13 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 8th August. A break in sightings then followed, with only one bird seen on 18th August and only one bird being seen on North Pond throughout September. Numbers increased in October with a peak count of 45 seen on 31st October and 1st November.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

Rare breeder (first bred 1988 – first Welsh record). Last bred 2002. Scarce to uncommon migrant. Less than annual in recent years

One record of Pintail this year was concerning a single bird on North Pond on 12th April.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Scarce breeder (maximum six pairs). Uncommon migrant

Three pairs were confirmed to have bred, with one brood of eight ducklings seen on 15th May, one brood of five ducklings seen on 21st May and a brood of ten on 27th May.

The first record this year involved two on 27th March on North Pond. Birds were seen almost daily throughout April with numbers peaking at five on 18th which was the maximum spring count, equalled on 21st May. The last Shovelers of the spring were seen on 5th June with the first birds of the autumn seen on 13th October. Shoveler were then recorded on six further dates through October and November with a peak count of three birds on three of those dates.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

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

Three records in 2021, all in March. The first was of one bird on 10th, with three on 13th and one on 15th.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Common migrant

First noted on 20th March, with 19 seen. Two May records concerned 14 past North Haven on 10th and two past Skomer Head on 16th. Autumn sightings started in July with 30 seen from Bull Hole on 19th (maximum autumn count). Sightings were then sporadic through the autumn with birds seen on 22 further days until the wardens left in November.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Vagrant. Four previous records involving five birds 1966, 1993, 2006 and 2019.

One seen flying south (LN) on 9th October with 24 Common Scoter is the first record since 2019.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

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

Present throughout the season, with five territories mapped during the breeding season. The first chicks of the season were noted on 24th June with two at Moorey Mere. Further chicks were then seen on 27th July and 15th August.

Peak year counts came in November (once the vegetation had died back), with 18 being seen on 16th November.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Scarce visitor, though uncommon in some years. Most sightings during early and late season. Probably more frequent during the winter

The first and only record of the year involved a single off Skomer Head on 5th March.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

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

Just two records, one in spring, with one noted on 2nd March and one in autumn with one flying past North Haven on 27th October.

Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Common breeder. First confirmed breeding 1960

576 AOS, four fewer than 2020 with a 3.13% drop compared to the five-year average. Productivity was up from 0.28 to 0.45 chicks per AOS.

Present on the island from the start of the recording year until late September. There was a gap between the 25th September and the start of November with only the odd bird being seen from sea watches in between.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Very abundant breeder, largest colony in the world

Within the Shearwater census plots the number of responses was comparable with 2020 as were the total number of burrows. Breeding success in 2021 was 0.43 per pair in the Isthmus study plot, a drop of 0.22 compared to 2020.

European Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Fairly common breeder. Full census conducted 2016

No birds were seen away from the breeding colonies. Four ringing visits were made to Tom's House in which 77 individuals were trapped.

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.

Month	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Max count	20	48	31	26	40	102	30	51	11

Table 2. Monthly maxima of Northern Gannet.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Uncommon breeder. Fairly common migrant

No Cormorants bred on Skomer in 2021, however, ten pairs bred on nearby Middleholm.

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 2021, there were two nests at Double Cliff.

Two visits were made by boat to the colony near Double Cliff in June and July and 2 AONs were identified. This may be an underestimate as nests are well hidden and difficult to observe.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Rare visitor. First recorded 1996. Last recorded 2018

Three records in 2021, all coming in August. The first was a flock of three noted flying over the Moorey Mere on 23rd; with a single bird seen on 24th in North Haven and 25th in South Haven and the Garland Stone, potentially involving some of the same birds.

Great Egret *Egretta alba*

Vagrant. Two records, May 2015 and September 2016

A flock of seven were seen flying south over Skomer on the morning of 1st June. This is only the third record for Skomer and the largest flock recorded on the island. They were later seen from Skokholm island.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Fairly common migrant

The first record this year came from one bird over the Wick on 18th June. This was followed later by four records of birds in July, three singles and a flock of three, five records in August, three records in September, and a flock of three on 11th October were the final sightings of the year.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Vagrant. No previous records.

A bird was seen flying high, east, loosely associated with a flock of jackdaw on 11th October (LN). This represents the first record for Skomer.



Glossy Ibis below flock of jackdaw, North Valley 2021.

L. Newman

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Vagrant. Twelve previous records, involving 14 birds. Last recorded 2018

One record of a bird flying over North Valley on 24th May.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Scarce visitor

Two records this year with one bird on North Pond on 2nd June and another bird on North Pond on 3rd November.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Vagrant. Three previous accepted records, May 1998, May 2014 and May 2018.

Surprisingly, given the previous dates of occurrence on Skomer, one was seen on 23rd August heading east away from the Farm (EB). This represents the fourth island record.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

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

First recorded on 1st March with four birds being seen (highest spring count). The last spring sighting was on 17th May. The first sighting of the autumn was on 5th September with a maximum autumn count of three on 21st September, 11th October, 2nd and 7th November. In total, up to 83 individual birds were recorded throughout the season.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Scarce migrant

A wing-tagged juvenile (IL) was first recorded on 2nd March and was seen again on 22nd March. Autumn sightings were frequent with the first record on the 19th July, with what is likely the same bird recorded in the first few days of August and in the last few days of the month. This increased to two individuals on 2nd September with birds seen almost daily until departure in November.

Wing-tagged IL – ‘The bird has been loitering around the Pembrokeshire coast since 19.11.2020, when it was seen on Castlemartin Corse, then floating between there and Marloes Mere until 22.02.2021. The bird was ringed and tagged near Thorpe Haddiscoe in South Norfolk on 07.06.2020, and was one of four young (3 Male 1 Female). He was first seen near Felixstowe on 30.10.2020, before heading west. His sister was in Northamptonshire on 09.09.2020 and a brother in north Norfolk on 24.11.2020.’



Marsh harrier, North Pond 2021.

L. Newman

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*
Uncommon migrant

Present on the Warden's arrival to the island, with a ringtail in North Valley on 1st March seen sporadically throughout the month and start of April with the final date it was seen being the 12th April. A ringtail was also seen on 5th May. The first bird of the autumn was an adult male seen on 27th and 28th October. The first ringtail was seen on 5th November and was seen throughout November with up to two present on 9th.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
Uncommon migrant, though can be fairly common in some years

The first of the year arrived on 17th March, with further singles seen on 28th and 29th March. Sightings were sporadic throughout spring, with singles seen on 10 more days in April and May. The first bird of the autumn was seen on 13th July with sightings again sporadic through until 21st August when two birds were seen. From there onwards birds were seen most days until departure in November with a high count of four on 31st August.



Eurasian sparrowhawk, East Bog 2021.

L. Newman

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

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

Three pairs nested on Skomer in 2021. Pairs nested at Amy's Reach, South Plateau and Waybench. The only nest visible from land was Amy's Reach. One chick was first noted in this nest on 30th May.

Noted on the Warden's arrival, with four counted on 1st March. Thereafter counts of between one and 14 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 152 birds logged in October, compared to an average from the rest of the season of 81 per month.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare migrant, though becoming scarce

Five records this year with the first bird of the year noted flying north on 30th March. There were two further spring records on 24th and 26th May and the final birds of the year were recorded on 24th August when two separate birds were seen flying over North Haven and then North Valley a few hours later. It's possible this record concerns the same bird.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

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

First noted on 2nd March when three were recorded. Birds were present for most of March with the last record of likely wintering birds being on 24th. One bird was recorded on 15th May and no other birds were recorded until autumn. The first migrants of autumn were recorded on 25th August with sightings nearly every day until departure in November. The high count of the year was 15 on 7th November.



Water rail, Moorey Mere 2021.

L. Newman

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Uncommon breeder, though scarce in some years

Present throughout the season, with six pairs nesting, this being the same as 2020. The first chicks were found on 20th April with five at Moorey Mere. Further broods were recorded from North and South Valleys during the spring with three simultaneous broods recorded on North Pond in May.

Autumn counts were highest, with the population being bolstered by fledged juveniles. Peak counts include 47 on 25th, 42 on 26th August and 31 on 5th September.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Very rare breeder. Three previous breeding records, between 1996 and 2000. Scarce migrant

Two records concerned one in North Haven, rafting with Puffins on 23rd July, and one on Green Pond on 17th September.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostrelagus*
Fairly common breeder

Present throughout the season, with 53 breeding pairs mapped. This is slightly down on the 58 of 2020. The first pairs began prospecting on the plateau of the island on 7th March and the first chicks were seen on 16th May.

Peak spring counts in March included 124 roosting at South Stream (15th) and 114 there on the 11th. 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 44 on 10th October.

European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*
Uncommon migrant

The first record came on 4th March with seven over North Pond. There were two records in August, two on 27th and one on 28th with three further records in September and three in October. The maximum count of the year was 14 on 14th September which consisted of flocks of five, eight and a single bird.

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

The first record of the year was a bird at North Pond on 16th March. Further sightings came in July with 2 on 15th and 1 on 19th. There were five on 24th August, 50 over North Haven on 16th November and one over the Farm on 22nd November was the final sighting of the year.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
Uncommon migrant, though scarce in some years

The first of the year was seen on 19th May which constituted the only spring record. There were three records of single birds in August and a run of sightings in September saw 10 birds recorded over eighteen days. High counts consisted of two on the 5th and 7th of September. The last of the year was recorded on 19th September.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*
Common spring and autumn migrant. Rare in winter

The first record of the year was a single bird on 15th April. Birds were seen on nearly every day until mid-May with high counts coming on 20th April with 11 birds and 23 on 7th May. A pair of birds were recorded on 15th June and four birds were recorded on three days in July. Autumn passage was poor with one bird in August, four birds recorded over three days in September and one bird in October.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*
Scarce breeder. Common migrant

Birds were present throughout the season with three pairs attempting to nest on Skomer. The first singing was noted on 8th March, with the first displaying noted on 19th March. No fledglings were noted and it is unclear when the birds failed. These are now the last breeding curlew in Pembrokeshire.

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
Max count	27	12	8	3	9	13	5	6	15

Table: Maximum daily counts per month of Eurasian curlew

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Scarce migrant

The first record of the year came with two on 18th March. A single bird was recorded at Moorey Mere on 7th April with a single present on North Pond 12th to 16th, 25th, and 28th to 30th. A single bird was recorded on Moorey Mere on 29th May. The first autumn records consisted of 20 flying over North Pond on 12th July. Two were seen on 24th August and two were seen on 12 September.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Scarce migrant

A poor year with a single record of one bird on 5th March on North Pond.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Common migrant

The first record was on 1st March with four on North Haven beach. Birds were recorded sporadically through spring with a peak count of nine at North Haven on 16th March. 20 were seen flying over the centre of the island on 19th May. The first birds of autumn were noted on 2nd September. Peak counts from the autumn consisted of 14 on 12th and 29th September and 12 on 6th October.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Rare migrant

One record in 2021 came from a single bird seen on North Haven beach on 18th July.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Vagrant

One was found on North Pond on 7th September (CA). This is the first record since 2013 and only the eighth island record.



Curlew sandpiper with redshank, North Pond 2021.

L. Newman

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*
Uncommon migrant

First recorded on 25th April with one on North Pond, this soon built to two on 28th and three on 29th. Further single birds were seen during May with the largest flock of the year (50) seen flying over the Farm in the fog on 8th May. Autumnal records started on 23rd August with one bird. Singles were recorded on four dates in September, two were seen on 2nd October, one over North Valley on 10th October and the final bird of the year was a single flying over Captain Kites on 5th November.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*
Uncommon spring and autumn visitor. Scarce in some years

Noted on three consecutive dates in November at their roost site on South Castle. Seven were present on 12th, five on 13th and four on 14th.



Purple Sandpipers, South Castle 2021.

L. Newman

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*
Uncommon migrant

The first record of the year was of one bird in North Haven on 9th and 11th May. Autumn migrants were first recorded on 14th July with two in North Haven. Birds were recorded on eight further days during the autumn.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*
Scarce migrant

Seven records in 2021 with two in the spring and five in the autumn. The first spring bird was recorded on 25th April with another on 18th May. The first autumn record was a single bird on 19th July with another single on 22nd July. One bird was recorded on 23rd July. The last two sightings were recorded on 1st and 2nd of September.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*
Rare migrant. Eighteen previous records, most recently September 2017

Two records in 2021. One in spring came in the form of a summer plumaged bird on North Pond on 25th April. The second record was in the autumn on 27th August when it flew over the Farm. These are the first records since 2017.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
Scarce migrant

The first record of the year came on 25th August with a single on North Pond. The only other record was of two birds on North Pond on 7th September.

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

The only spring record was of a bird flying over North Haven on 1st April. Six birds were recorded in autumn with the first on 10th August and last on 7th September.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*
Scarce migrant

There was only one record this year, involving a bird which was flushed from Moorey Mere on the morning of 1st April.

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

The first birds of the spring were recorded on 2nd March with four being seen. Two further records in spring consisted of two on 3rd and one on 10th March. The first bird of the autumn arrived on 24th October. Further birds were recorded from 5th to 18th November when the final three birds of the year were seen.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Common migrant

The first record of the year was on 2nd March. Birds were recorded regularly throughout the spring with the final record on 7th May. The maximum spring count was of 26 on 1st April. The first birds of autumn were recorded on 15th August with birds present right through until the Warden's departure in November. The high counts from spring include 11 on 13th, 10 on 14th and nine on 22nd November.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*
Scarce migrant

Just two records in 2021. A single bird seen off the Garland Stone on 4th May was the only spring record and the second and final record came on 29th September, seen from North Haven.

Atlantic Puffin *Fratercula arctica*
Very abundant breeder

A total of 34,813 individual puffins were counted in April. This represents an increase of 0.05% on 2020 (34,796). Puffin productivity was 0.70 which is lower than the average for the previous 5 years (0.72).

Razorbill *Alca torda*
Very abundant breeder

8,168 individuals were counted in 2021, this represents an increase of 8.49% since the previous whole island count in 2018. Productivity was 0.5 fledglings per active and regular nest site which is an increase on 2020 (0.46) but below the previous five-year average of 0.52.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*
Very abundant breeder

27,269 individuals were counted in 2021, which is a 5.31% decrease on the last count in 2019. Productivity was 0.61 which is the lowest since 2014. Adult survival at the Amos study colony was similar overall to that in the last five years.

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

The first record of the year was of one bird seen on 3rd July in North Haven. There were two on 2nd August, 2 on 7th September and four on 23rd September.

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). Four were noted flying past the Garland Stone on 20th August.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*
Vagrant

One record in 2021 concerned an adult flying north past North Haven on morning of 25th October (LN). This was during a large movement of kittiwake also moving out of St. Brides Bay after overnight winds.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*
Abundant breeder

1,439 AON were counted in 2021, which is a decrease on the previous year's 1,681. Productivity was 0.79, an increase compared to the previous year (0.60), and higher than the average productivity for the last five years (0.58).

Large movements in the autumn include 541 on 20th, 342 on 21st, 133 on 22nd and 856 on 25th October.



Kittiwake carrying nesting material, the Wick 2021.

L. Newman

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 27th May with 14 in South Haven. The rest of the records came in Autumn with regular sightings from 12th July onwards. Maximum day counts peaked in October when there were 124 past North Haven on 8th.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*
Rare migrant. Last recorded 2020

One record of Little Gull, seen flying north past North Haven on the morning of 25th October (LN). This was the same sea watch that recorded a large movement of Kittiwakes and the only Sabine's Gull of the year.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Uncommon visitor. This species has undergone a remarkable change in status, being considered a vagrant on the island (less than 10 records) as recently as 2007

Another good year with 50 records. The only spring birds were recorded on 20th April as two adults in summer plumage flew south over the Lantern. Autumn records began in mid-July with singles on 13th, 15th and 16th. Larger movements were noted in October with 8 on 8th, 20 on 21st and 12 on 25th. One record in November concerned four birds on 7th.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Uncommon visitor

First noted in autumn with a single on 31st July. Singles on 21st September and 21st October rounded out the rest of the year's records.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Very abundant (but declining) breeder

The whole island population estimate was 7,412 AON which is 3.34 % lower than 2020. Productivity of 0.67 chicks per AON is higher than 2020 (0.24) and is the highest since 2015.



Lesser Black-backed Gull, South Stream 2021.

L. Newman

European Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Common (but declining) breeder

This year's whole island count of 271 AON is a decrease of 27 AON compared to 2020. Productivity was 0 which is the lowest on record.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Vagrant. Eleven previous records, most recently in 2018

There was one record of a second-calendar-year bird (DA) seen on 4th and 6th April, initially over North Haven and then North Pond.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Fairly common breeder.

103 AON were counted in 2021 which is less than 2020 (112). Productivity was 1.68, which is above the five-year average of 1.62.

Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Fairly common visitor

First noted on 7th April with two birds on the Neck which were again present on 20th April. Further sightings were restricted mainly to the autumn with one sighting on 12th June. There were 36 more records from July until mid-November with a maximum count of six birds on 28th August.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

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

Three records involving nine birds in 2021 include one in North Valley on 1st April, two over South Plateau on 7th November and six over East Bog on 15th November.

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 2nd March. Four pairs were proven to have bred. The highest count of the spring was of 23 birds on 20th May. Large autumn movements started in November with 1185 on 2nd, 524 on 3rd, 2932 on 5th, 815 on 10th, 953 on 11th, 265 on 13th, 318 on 14th and 152 on 15th.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Uncommon migrant

First recorded on 23rd March with a bird in North Valley Willows. The highest counts of the spring were two on 16th, 29th and 30th May and 2nd June. Three singles were recorded in August and the final record of the year was of two birds on 11th September.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

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

A good year with the first record on 10th May. Five birds were recorded on 15th with two the following day. Two more singles on 22nd and 24th May and two on 29th May finished the spring sightings. Autumn sightings started on 12th July with a juvenile on 12th and 13th with possibly the same bird seen on 15th and 16th. There were two sightings in August with a juvenile at North Valley Crossing on 1st and an individual at the Farm on 26th.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Scarce and sporadic breeder. Last breeding record 2007

There were no spring records. The first autumn record was of a single bird at the Farm on 14th and 15th October. A single bird was seen on 20th and then two were seen on 28th October. There were nine records of single birds in November, likely relating to the same bird.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

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

First noted on 7th March with a bird over Gorse Hill, sightings became more regular as the breeding season progressed with counts of between one and six seen in the spring. Three pairs bred on Skomer in 2021 which is similar to the 18-year average of breeding birds on Skomer (range of 1-9 pairs). The first chicks were heard on 3rd June at North Valley Rise and North Valley Crossing. Three chicks were found at North Valley Crossing on 12th June.

There were no noticeable increases in autumn numbers and evening roost counts resulted in few if any short-eared owls. The maximum count from the autumn was two in North Valley on 21st September. Birds were sporadically recorded until the Warden's departure from the island.



Short-eared owl, North Valley 2021.

L. Newman

Common Swift *Apus apus*

Common migrant

The first record of the year came on 4th May with two birds over North Haven. Sightings were regular throughout May with a peak count of 25 on 19th. Sightings dropped off in June and increased from mid-July onwards. The highest count during July was 36 on 13th. There were three records of single birds in August and four records of single birds in September, which were likely related to the same bird.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*

Vagrant. One previous record in 2018

The second record for the island was seen on 1st April. Having been found on Skokholm before heading north to Skomer, it first entered Skomer's airspace over the Neck before circling above Captain Kites and the Harold

Stone. It was re-found later in the afternoon feeding above the Farm and spent the rest of the day feeding west of the Farm.



Alpine Swift, Central Fields West of Farm 2021.

D. Astins

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Scarce migrant, though uncommon in some years

There were no spring records. The autumn proved to be poor despite a number of birds turning up on neighbouring islands and the nearby mainland. The first and only bird of the autumn was found at the Farm on 31st August and was seen up until 12th September not including 1st and 2nd.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Scarce migrant, previously a rare migrant with only 5 records up to 2007

A productive year for this classically out of place migrant on Skomer. The first bird was seen at High Cliff on 11th September with further singles seen on seven more dates in September. Birds were seen nearly every day in October with a peak count of six on 6th and three on 9th and 11th. A single was recorded nearly every day from 1st November until the final bird on 15th. Birds were regularly seen on the 'stick' outside the Farm, on the chimney of the Old Farmhouse and on the bird hides including the newly built North Pond Research Hide.

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 Warden's arrival. A single bird was recorded for the rest of March and April with just three records of single birds in May. There were two records of single birds in June and three in July. The first sightings of autumn occurred on 23rd August with two logged on 25th and 29th. Birds were then recorded almost every day until the Warden's departure in November. The peak counts during this period were five on 8th and 10th and seven on 21st September.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*
Uncommon migrant

The first record of the year came on 8th March with an individual on the Neck. A single was then recorded on three more dates in March and three more in April. May saw seven sightings of single birds before a break in the sightings from 19th May. The first sightings of the autumn were of a possible at the Garland Stone on 28th August followed by single birds on 16th, 24th, 28th and 30th October. There were two sightings in November on 11th and 13th.

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

Present throughout, with three pairs breeding. Territories were held at Protheroe's Dock, High Cliff and Double Cliff. The first fledged chicks were noted on 19th July and in total four chicks were fledged. The pair at Protheroe's Dock fledged one chick, the High Cliff Pair fledged one chick and the Double Cliff / Garland Stone pair fledged two young.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*
Vagrant. Two previous records, September 1974 and July 1993

Found in the afternoon of the 31st May, at the Farm, this striking bird was the third record for Skomer (LN).



Lesser Grey Shrike, Well Field 2021.

L. Newman

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*
Rare migrant. Fifteen previous records, most recently 2019

Found on 1st June (LM), this stunning bird was the fifteenth record for Skomer after a string of records from 2016 to 2019. The bird stayed for a single day. Preferring the habitat below and to the west of the Farm, it

was enjoyed by staff, volunteers and visitors alike and was a fantastic way to finish off spring and a short purple patch.

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Scarce breeder. Fairly common visitor from the mainland

Six pairs attempted to breed in 2021. The five pairs that were successful nested at the Lantern, South Castle Beach Cave, the Wick, Pigstone Bay and Payne's Ledge. The sixth pair, which failed some point during the nest building phase, were nest building at Matthew's Wick. The first nest building was noted on 19th March with birds carrying material to Matthew's Wick. Behaviour which indicates incubation was noted on 1st April at the Wick and the first confirmed chicks of the season were noted on 19th June at the Wick.

The highest count of the spring was 25 birds on 16th May and the highest count of the autumn was of 31 birds on 23rd August.

Maggie *Pica pica*

Uncommon breeder

Present throughout the season, with five pairs breeding. This is average for the previous five years. The first birds carrying food were seen on 22nd May and the first chick was seen in North Valley on 26th May.

High counts from the year include 14 on 11th May, and 14 on 10th October.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Rare migrant. Seventeen previous records, most recently a feather found in North Valley 2011

A record year for Jay with four days' worth of records consisting of 110 birds. The first birds were noted on 29th September with seven at North Pond. There was a single bird on 30th September with the largest numbers on 6th October with 101 birds. The only other record was of one bird on 8th October.



Jay flock, North Haven 2021.

L. Newman

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Fairly common breeder, though not censused every year. Fairly common to common migrant

Present throughout the season, with 36 pairs. This is an increase on 22 pairs in 2020.

Month	Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Max count	172	21	104	100	200	300	1530

Table 5. Monthly maxima of Jackdaw.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Uncommon migrant

The first and only spring record was a single bird on 14th April. Further records in September saw two at the Farm on 4th, 13 on 11th, 27 on 14th and 1 on 15th September. The only other record was of one bird at the Farm on 10th November.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Uncommon breeder

Present throughout the season, with nine pairs nesting. This is equal to last year's total and is just below the five-year average. First noted nest building on 19th March, the first chicks were seen on 24th May.

High counts included 20 on 17th March and 50 on 15th September.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Rare migrant

One was noted this year, at the Farm on 27th April. This is the first record since 2017.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Scarce breeder. Fairly common autumn visitor

Five pairs nested on Skomer in 2021. Birds nested at Matthew's Wick, Pigstone Bay, The Basin, Double Cliff and the Mew Stone (nest not visible). Birds were first noted nest building on 5th March but it is likely they started long before the Warden's arrival on the island. The first bird was noted as sitting on the nest (eggs out of sight) on 13th March at the Basin. The first possible food carry was seen on 23rd March with a bird seen carrying food three times on 2nd April. The first definitive sighting of fledged chicks was on 23rd May.

The only large movement of birds in the spring was a flock of 23 birds on 25th April. Autumn numbers started building on 10th August with 24 noted. As is typical, birds began to arrive in the autumn to take advantage of the fledging Manx Shearwaters.

Peak counts in September were 80 on 14th and 53 on 7th. Numbers reduced in October and were back down to the breeding population by November.



Raven, Garland Stone 2021.

L. Newman

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Fairly common migrant

The first record of the year was on 2nd March. This was followed by one on the 8th. Records really picked up from 16th March until 1st April with birds seen nearly every day. High counts from this period include six on 19th, 21st, 24th and seven on 30th March. April only saw a single bird on 1st, two on 13th and one on 14th. Autumn records started on 31st August with one at Moorey Mere. Birds were seen more or less every day through autumn with the highest counts coming in October with 11 on 6th and 13 on 10th and 12th.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Fairly common autumn migrant

First noted on 5th March with four birds present. There were multiple records between one and four birds until 17th March probably all concerning the same birds, however on the 17th a bird was watched flying across Little Sound and landing at the Lantern briefly before returning. The first autumn records came on 14th September with a bird at South Stream. Likely the same bird was seen at the Farm on 15th and 19th before a break in sightings. A single bird was recorded on 11th October with two on 12th and singles again on 13th and 14th with the final bird of the month recorded on 30th. There were two November records both involving single birds on the 5th and 7th.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Uncommon migrant. Scarce in some years, and occasionally absent

Two records in 2021. Six birds on 11th October and one bird on 13th October.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

Rare migrant. Twelve previous records. Most recent October 2015

One was seen and heard flying north over Skomer Head and Pigstone Bay on 30th October (LN). This represents the thirteenth island record.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

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

Sadly, no longer a breeding species and as a result now a scarce bird in spring with just one record of a single bird on 2nd March.

Autumn skylark passage was first noted on 20th September with eight, followed by 17 the next day. Movements were recorded regularly through October and November with high counts in the table below.

Date	11 th Oct	30 th Oct	2 nd Nov	13 th Nov
Max count	193	203	136	117

Table 6. Peak counts of skylark.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Common migrant

The first record of the year was five birds seen flying through North Haven on 23rd March. There was just one further record from March with two on 30th. Sightings were spaced out through spring with the highest counts coming in April with 21 on 18th, 48 on 19th and 53 on 20th.

Always an early migrant, the first birds of autumn were seen on 1st July with three further sightings in July. The bulk of records came during late August and early September with 54 on 24th August and 159 on 7th September. The final birds of the year consisted of five seen flying through North Haven on 22nd giving a pleasing symmetry to the first and last records.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Uncommon breeder. Very abundant migrant

Five pairs bred in 2021, with all birds nesting at the Farm. The first chicks were noted on 2nd July with the first fledged chicks seen on 13th July.

First recorded on 29th March with three seen at the Garland Stone. Sightings were then near daily until late October. Peak spring counts were 101 on 7th May and 69 on 26th May. The first movement of autumn was noted on 22nd July with 16 birds at the Farm. The high counts of autumn are detailed below.

Date	22 nd Aug	3 rd Sep	4 th Sep	12 th Sep	15 th Sep	21 st Sept	22 nd Sep	6 th Oct
Max count	111	137	107	150	562	811	1349	694

Table 8. Peak autumn counts of Barn Swallow.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Bred during the late 1960s/early 1970s. Common migrant

The first two birds of the spring were seen at Skomer Head on 2nd April. Sightings were then irregular through April with a maximum count of 16 on 28th. The maximum count in May consisted of 36 on 26th. The first birds of the autumn were noted on 10th August with a bird over North Haven. 17 on the 22nd and 13 on the 27th made up the rest of the August sightings. High counts of September were 25 on 3rd, 62 on 15th and 40 on 22nd. The final birds of autumn were recorded on 6th October with 71 seen.

On 7th June two birds were seen prospecting for nest sites at the Farm. These two birds continued to prospect and chose to nest in the artificial nest box above the Visitor Centre. Sightings of both birds became less regular from 17th June indicating incubation. The first chicks were confirmed on 12th July with two chicks fledging on 3rd August. This appears to be the first breeding record since 1970.



House Martin, The Farm 2021.

L. Newman

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Very rare and sporadic breeder, noted 2009, 2011, 2012 and 2014. Abundant migrant

One pair were thought to have bred in North Valley Willows with a bird singing throughout the spring and into the summer. No fledged birds were seen.

First recorded on 2nd March at Moorey Mere, with one bird present. This was followed by birds being recorded on 25 days with high counts of 22 on 22nd and 41 on 30th March (high count for the year). Birds were recorded on 24 days in April with high counts of nine on 2nd and 18th. Birds were recorded regularly through the first half of May with sightings becoming more sporadic after 17th. The final birds of the spring were recorded on 4th June.

Autumn migration started on 10th July with two birds seen at the Farm. Birds were recorded on seven further days in July. Birds were then recorded regularly from 1st August until the 22nd of November. High counts of the autumn were eight on 23rd August and seven on 5th and 14th September and 24th and 25th 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

Two records this year consisted of one vocal bird at the Farm on 25th October and another single bird, not heard to call, on 7th November in the fields west of the Farm.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Abundant migrant

The first birds of the year were recorded on 30th March in a fall of Willow Warblers where 26 were recorded. Birds were recorded regularly through spring with the final record of the spring coming on 29th May. High

counts of the spring came from 50 on 18th April and 56 on 20th April. The first bird of the autumn was recorded on 12th July. There were eight further days in July where Willow Warblers were recorded. Birds were recorded on 25 days in August with 36 on the 1st the highest count from the month. Passage peaked in September with the high count of the year coming on 7th with 73 recorded. Other notable counts were 67 on 5th and 52 on 8th. The final Willow Warbler of the year was recorded on 4th October at Moorey Mere.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*
Fairly common migrant

The first birds of the year were recorded on 30th March with 31 logged; the highest count of the year. Birds were recorded regularly through spring with the final sighting on 2nd June, not including an outlying female seen on 24th June. The spring accounted for the majority of records with 222 birds recorded (91 in autumn). Other high counts of the spring were 26 on 18th April and 18 on 20th April.

The first bird of the autumn, a female seen at Moorey Mere, was seen on 9th August. There were four further days with Blackcap recorded in August. The bulk of the autumn records came between 4th September and 14th October with a high count of 13 on 16th September. The final bird of the year was seen at North Haven on 13th November.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*
Uncommon migrant

The first bird of the year was a single bird at North Valley Crossing. There were two birds at North Valley Willows on 8th May and a single bird at Moorey Mere on 13th. There were three records in autumn with singles seen on 3rd, 4th and 8th September.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*
Scarce migrant

There was one spring record, a bird on 9th June at the Farm. There was also one autumn record, a bird seen at the Farm on 14th October.

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

The first record came on 3rd April with a single at Moorey Mere. Single birds were recorded on multiple days until 21st April when three were recorded. Whitethroat then became a regular migrant with single figure counts on most days through the end of April and May. The highest counts of the spring were 12 on 11th May, 14 on 29th May. Autumn arrivals are likely masked by breeding birds but 24 on 10th August likely involved migrants. The final birds of the autumn were recorded on 18th September.

A total of 13 breeding pairs were mapped during breeding bird surveys and other observations. This is one pair more than in 2020 and just below the five-year average of 13.8 pairs.



Common whitethroat, The Farm 2021.

L. Newman

Western Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia inornate*
Vagrant

A male was found in North Valley Willows on 30th May (DA), although views proved tricky with the bird being very shy. If accepted (in circulation) this will represent the first record of a Subalpine Warbler since 2018.



Western subalpine warbler, North Valley Willows 2021.

L. Newman

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*
Very rare, cryptic breeder, last record 1981. Uncommon migrant

The first record came on 19th April when two were heard reeling, one at the Farm and one in North Valley Willows. There was a single on 20th, two on 21st and a single on 22nd April. The only other spring record was of a bird at High Cliff on 25th May. There were no autumn records.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*
Rare migrant. Twenty previous records, most recently 2020

There was one record of Icterine Warbler in 2021. A bird found at Moorey Mere on 28th August (EB) stayed for just the day.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
Uncommon breeder. Uncommon migrant

A total of 31 breeding pairs were recorded in 2021 which is 11 fewer than 2020 and 12 fewer than the five-year average. Birds were first heard singing on 19th April and first seen carrying nesting material on 17th May.

The first birds of the year arrived on 19th April with two recorded. Sightings were then almost daily throughout April with 21 on 30th. Birds were recorded throughout May with a high count of 34 on 11th, 40 on 14th (highest count of the year). Autumn migration was likely masked by breeding birds but 23 on 10th August likely involved migrants. The final bird of the year was recorded on 16th September.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*
Uncommon migrant

The first two birds of the year were recorded on 26th May with one at Moorey Mere and one at North Pond. There were four more days in spring when reed warbler was recorded with a high count of four on 28th May. The first of the autumn was seen at the Farm on 21st July. A total of ten birds were seen over seven days in August and 13 birds seen over 10 days in September. The final record of the year was a single bird at North Valley Crossing on 21st September.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
Fairly common breeder

Present throughout the season from the first day of arrival. There were 96 territories mapped, the highest total to date and 27 pairs more than the five-year average. The first fledglings were noted at North Haven on 11th June.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
Very abundant migrant

First noted on 2nd March with 200 in North Valley. Birds were then present throughout March with numbers peaking at 380 on 13th March. The only April record was just four birds on 2nd April. There was a break in sightings until 7th June when the first juveniles were recorded. Records were then regular through June, July and August with peaks of 55 on 27th June, 100 on 14th and 16th July and 222 on 9th August. September only saw one record of one bird on the 5th. Migration then started in on 8th October. Peak counts can be found in the table below. The final birds were recorded on the Warden's final day on 22nd November.

Date	13 th Oct	30 th Oct	2 nd Nov	4 th Nov	5 th Nov	10 th Nov	13 th Nov	15 th Nov	16 th Nov
Max count	263	867	2641	1250	2890	5760	4320	9661	1730

Table 9. Peak Autumn counts of starling.



Starling flock, The Farm 2021.

L. Newman

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*
Uncommon migrant

Ten spring records with three first seen on 2nd April. The rest of the spring sightings were of single birds on 4th, 14th, 15th, 18th, 20th, 25th, 26th, 29th April and one on 1st May. The only bird of the autumn was a single bird in North Valley on 16th October.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*
Scarce breeder, previously uncommon. Common migrant

First recorded on 2nd March, nine pairs bred on Skomer this year. This is four pairs more than 2020 and higher than the five-year average of 4.6 which could suggest a recovery in the breeding population after falling to two pairs between 2014 and 2016. The first birds carrying nesting material were seen on 2nd April and the first bird carrying food was seen on 17th May. The first juvenile was noted on 2nd July.

Separating breeding birds from migrants is difficult but counts of 18 on 17th March, 17 on 30th March, 19 on 19th April are likely to involve migrants. Autumn migration started in October with 12 on 8th, 11 on 13th and 15 on 30th. Numbers in November peaked at 42 on 5th, 32 on 13th and 47 on 16th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*
Fairly common, occasionally common migrant.

One spring record of a single bird at the Farm on 18th March. The first autumn records came with five on 5th November. There were eight further days with Fieldfare records in November, all consisting of between one and eight records, apart from 26 on 8th November. The final record of the year was of one bird on 21st November.



Fieldfare, the Farm 2021.

L. Newman

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Scarce and very sporadic breeder. Common migrant

Present from the 2nd of March with two recorded. Noted almost daily up until 21st March with no further records until April. Birds were seen on four days in April, three on the 2nd equalling the highest count of the spring.

There was one record of a single bird on 12th July and no further records until 9th August; which was one of five records in August. There were no September records with birds being recorded again from 8th October onwards. Birds were then recorded nearly daily until the Warden's departure. The highest counts of the autumn were 16 on 13th October and 14 on 5th November.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Common migrant

Recorded on the first day on the island and on sporadic dates through March and early April. Four on 7th and 21st were the highest spring counts. Apart from one bird on 18th April, there were no sightings of Redwing from 3rd April until 9th October. Birds were recorded near daily during October and November with the highest count of the year coming on 13th October with 539 individuals.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Uncommon migrant

There were no spring records with only two records in autumn. Three were seen on 3rd November and eight were seen on 10th November.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

One breeding record 1985. Common migrant

First record was of a single bird on 8th May followed by sightings on 15 dates in May. The peak count of May and of the spring was 12 on 28th May. There were two sightings in June, one on the 2nd and one on the 15th. The first bird of the autumn was recorded on 4th August. There were 11 further days of records in August; 20 on 24th August being the highest count of the month. A total of 103 birds were recorded over 20 days in September with the highest count of the month and year (22) coming on the 10th. The only record in October, and the last of the year, was a single on 7th.

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, 11 on the 8th and 20th may indicate some movement. There were sporadic sightings through April and May with the final spring sighting on 25th May.

The first bird of autumn was seen on 3rd August and there were sightings on all but one day until the end of the Warden's stay in November. Numbers had reached double figures by 23rd August with 36 recorded. Selected high counts of the autumn are below:

Date	23 rd Aug	14 th Sept	21 st Sept	11 th Oct	7 th Nov
Count	36	45	83	42	34

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Uncommon migrant

A blank spring, with no records. The first birds were noted in August with two on 24th and three on 25th. There were eight further days with sightings in September which consisted of: one on 2nd, two on 3rd and 4th, one on 5th, five on 7th and one on 8th, 12th and 13th. This bird on the 13th September was the final record of the year.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Uncommon migrant

There were seven spring records, a female-type on 4th March was the first of the year followed by another female-type on 6th. There was a female-type at the Farm on 23rd and 24th March and two were recorded on 30th March. There were no April sightings with the final two birds of the spring recorded on 30th May and 3rd June.

Autumn birds were first recorded on 12th October with one at the Farm, shortly followed on 14th by two at the Farm. Black Redstart was recorded on seven more days in October with high counts of three on 24th and 30th. Three were also recorded on 1st November with six more days with sightings including the last record of the year on 17th November.



Black Redstart, North Haven 2021.

L. Newman

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*
Uncommon migrant

The first of the spring was recorded on 15th April. There were two on 18th, one on 22nd and one on 25th April which concludes all spring sightings. The first bird of the autumn was seen on 18th August with no further sightings for the rest of the month. There was one on 1st September, one on 4th, three on 7th, two on 8th, one on 9th and one on 11th September which was our final sighting of the year.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*
Uncommon migrant

The first and only record of the spring was of a male on 15th May. Birds were recorded on three dates in August with one on 25th, three on 26th and six on 27th. There were birds seen on 13 dates in September with the first birds of the month seen on 2nd, the final birds seen on 21st and the highest count of the year, 15, on 7th September.

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*
Scarce breeder. Uncommon migrant

Present on the Warden's arrival to the island. Four pairs bred; the highest breeding population since four bred in 1984. Singing was first noted on 8th March, birds carrying nesting material were first noted on 19th April and the first fledglings, three at Bull Hole, were seen on 24th May. Peak counts of birds from the spring were nine on 7th and eight on 14th March. High counts of birds in autumn were 13 on 10th and 12th and 17 on 23rd August and 11 on 7th September. The final record was of a single bird in North Haven on 19th November.

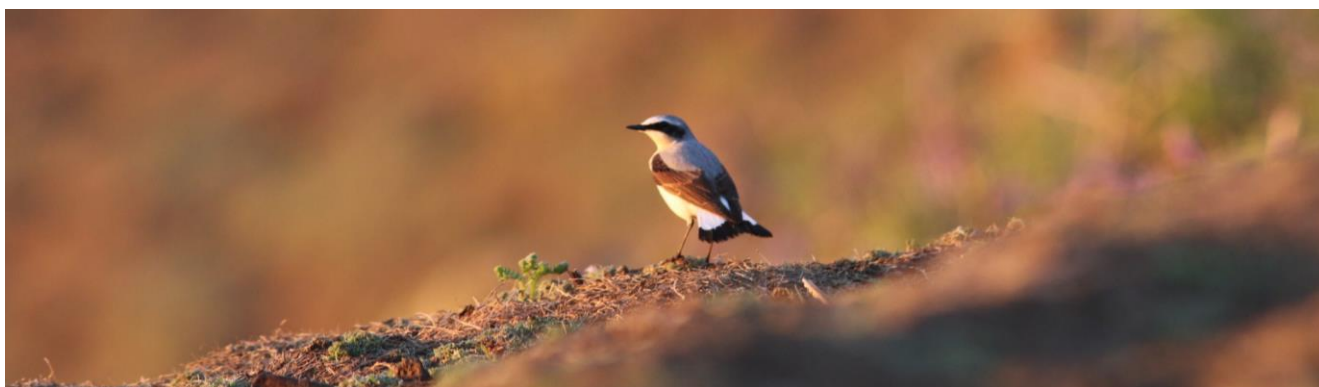
Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*
Common migrant. Uncommon breeder

A total of 28 pairs were recorded breeding in 2021. This is an increase of nine pairs on 2020 and is above the five-year average of 22.8 pairs. The first pairs nest building were noted on 18th April and the first fledged young were seen on 3rd June.

The first bird of the year was seen on 7th March at Skomer Head. Spring counts mainly consisted of between one and 20 birds with days over this total shown below. The autumn produced no big arrivals, the highest count being 16 on 7th September.

Date	30 th Mar	2 nd Apr	15 th Apr	16 th Apr	25 th Apr	4 th May
Max count	26	29	27	24	23	36

Table 10. Peak spring counts of Northern Wheatear.



Northern wheatear, North Haven 2021.

L. Newman

'Greenland' Wheatear *O. o. leucorhoa*
Uncommon migrant

First noted on 25th April with five present. There was one on 15th and one on 29th May.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*
Uncommon breeder. Fairly common autumn migrant

Present throughout with 10 pairs mapped. This is a drop of five pairs on 2020 and 5.4 below the five year average. Birds were first noted nest building on 27th April.

Counts of between one and eight were typical through most of the spring with high counts of 13 birds on 17th and 20th March. There were no large autumn counts of Dunnock with the highest count of the year being 13 on 21st August.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
Bred sporadically between 1965 and 1969. Uncommon migrant

A good year with records on nine days; four in the spring and five in the autumn. The first record of the year was of two birds at the Farm on 30th March with one present two days later. There was then a male at the Farm on 16th and 17th April. Autumn records started on 11th October with five at the Farm, three of which were present the next day. There was one on 25th and three on 30th October with two on 2nd November being the final records of the year.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*
Uncommon migrant

First recorded on 24th April with a flyover over North Haven. There were five further records in spring all involving single birds in May and early June with the final sighting on 2nd June. The first record of the autumn involved four on 29th August with one the following day. There were eleven further records in the autumn, all involving between one and three birds in September apart from the final bird of the year which was a first-calendar-year individual on 9th October.

Blue-headed Wagtail *M. f. flava*
Vagrant. Most recently 2019

One record this year was of a male first seen at the Amos by Ted and Mike Wallen whilst gull counting. It was re-found on Moorey Mere where it stayed for roughly a minute before not being seen again.

Grey-headed Wagtail *M. f. thunbergi*
Vagrant. No previous records

One found at Moorey Mere (FB) on 21st May lingered until the 22nd. This is the first record for the island.



Grey-headed Wagtail, Moorey Mere 2021.

L. Newman

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*
Uncommon migrant

There were no spring records and so the first birds of the year were seen on 23rd August with four over North Valley. Birds were recorded almost daily until late September when sightings became less frequent with three records in October and the final record of the year on 2nd November. The highest count of the year, 13 birds, came on 20th September.

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

Present on the Warden's arrival with two pairs nesting, one down on 2020 and just below the five-year average (2.8). The first nest building was noted on 28th April with the first fledglings noted on 22nd June.

Spring counts varied between one and seven birds with notable counts of 9 on 30th March and eight on 9th May. The peak count in autumn involved 21 birds on 12th October. The final record of the year was one on 16th November.

White Wagtail *M. a. alba*
Uncommon migrant

One bird in spring was at the farm on 22nd March. Autumn passage started on 25th August with two recorded. Recorded on 11 days in September, the peak count was of eight on 7th. The final record of the year was one at North Haven on 24th October.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Uncommon migrant

The first birds of the spring were two on 13th April. There were two more on 18th and one on 19th April. The only other spring sightings were one bird on 4th and one on 11th May. The first autumn birds were seen on 23rd August with three recorded. Birds were recorded near daily until 11th September with high counts of 12 on 25th August and 11 on 2nd September. The final record of the year was two at the Garland Stone on 21st September.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Fairly common breeder. Abundant migrant

Present throughout the season, with 84 breeding pairs. This is the lowest total since 2013 and 25% down on the previous five-year average.

Spring passage is often camouflaged in the breeding population but counts of 35 on 14th, 36 on 17th, 81 on 18th and 99 on 20th March are all likely to involve migrants. Autumn passage is a similar story but 154 on 4th and 190 on 14th September are likely days with migration occurring.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Uncommon breeder. Fairly common migrant

Present throughout the season with 21 pairs breeding. This is an increase of two pairs on 2020 but 10% below the five-year average of 23.4 pairs. The first fledged birds of the year were seen at South Stream on 25th May.

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

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon migrant

The first of the year was a bird in South Valley on 13th October. There were four more days of records in October with a high count of four birds on 30th. There were nine records in November, with a high count of eight on 2nd and the final record, five birds, on 16th.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Common migrant

Eight spring records all involving single birds and likely to involve three individuals. There was a female at North Haven from 15th until the 18th March, a single bird in North Valley on 27th, 29th and 30th March, and a single bird at the Farm on 18th April.

There was just one September record with a bird on 15th. Birds were recorded most days in October and November with passage commencing on 6th October. October produced between one and 36 birds throughout the month, except high counts of 154 on 25th and 292 on 30th. November produced similar numbers most days with high counts of 189 on 2nd, 119 on 5th, 112 on 7th and 313 on 14th. The final birds logged in the autumn were 21 on 22nd November.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Uncommon migrant, though fairly common in some years.

There were no spring records with autumn records starting on 12th October. October produced one on 12th, 13th and 30th. Sightings in November were limited to one on 5th, 10th and 13th, with the 13th being the final sighting of the year.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

Scarce and sporadic breeder. Very abundant migrant

This year there were six breeding pairs, two more than 2020 and above the five-year average of 4.6 pairs. The first record of nesting material was on 26th May, although it is likely they started nest building much earlier than this as the first chicks were seen on 4th June with two at the Farm.

The first record of the year was of one bird in South Valley on 2nd March. Birds were recorded on most days through the year with the final sighting of the year on 16th November.

Date	17 th Mar	16 th May	26 th May
Max count	33	25	21

Table 12. Peak spring counts of Linnet.

Date	14 th Sep	16 th Sep	20 th Sep	21 st Sep	22 nd Sep	10 th Oct	11 th Oct	12 th Oct
Max count	131	50	178	149	50	219	98	45

Table 13. Peak autumn counts of Linnet.

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*

Uncommon migrant

The first record of the year was of a single bird at North Haven on 11th May. There was then another bird at North Valley Crossing on 30th and 31st May. There were no autumn records.

A bird, of the 'mealy/common' race was seen at the Farm on 19th May.

Redpoll sp., not assigned to species (usually flyovers), included three on 26th May.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Abundant migrant

One pair are thought to have bred on Skomer this year with birds present throughout the spring. The first fledged chicks, two at the Farm, were seen on 20th June.

First noted on 15th March with one bird at Moorey Mere, birds were present throughout the spring and summer, with between one and six birds recorded regularly. The highest count of the spring was 12 on 30th March.

Migrants started to arrive during July with 10 on 8th being the first sign of movement. The highest count of the month was 20 on both the 12th and the 27th July. Between one and 20 were recorded on most days in the autumn, with counts above this as follows: 29 on 23rd and 22 on 29th August, 25 on 6th, 149 on 10th, 22 on 11th and 38 on 13th October and 21 on 10th and 11th November. The final sighting of the year was one bird on 17th November.



Goldfinch migrating, the Wick 2021.

L. Newman

Siskin *Spinus spinus*
Uncommon migrant

First recorded in March with a single bird over the Neck on 17th, there was one further March sighting with a single bird on 30th. There were eight records in April, all involving one bird, apart from four on 1st, two on 2nd and two on 20th. There was just one May record with a single bird east of the Farm on 6th.

A good autumn for sightings, involving 204 birds spread across 23 days. The first birds of the autumn involved three birds seen on 28th August with another three seen on 29th. There was just one September sighting with a bird at the Wick on 21st. Passage peaked in October with 52 on 13th the high count of the year. The final sighting of the year was of four birds on 16th November.

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

There were three records this year with one bird over North Haven on 13th October, one bird on the Neck on 15th October and the final record coming on 25th October at Captain Kites.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*
Uncommon autumn migrant, though scarce in some years

A poor year with just one record of a single bird over South Stream on 11th October.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*
Scarce breeder. Uncommon migrant

Just the one pair were recorded breeding on Skomer this year, two fewer than 2020 and below the five-year average of 3.2 pairs.

The first birds of the spring were recorded on 16th March with one at North Pond. Numbers remained low throughout the spring with the highest count of seven on 30th March very much an exception. No birds were seen in June, perhaps suggesting the breeding attempt was a failure. Birds were seen on three days in July with singles on 13th and 17th and two on 25th. Sightings became more regular from August onwards. There were no significant arrivals of birds with the peak count of the autumn being six birds seen on 11th and 13th October. The final record of the year was on 14th November.

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