



Isle of Wight Ornithological Group Newsletter



Number 87

November 2020

Recent Reports - The Island News Roundup

Compiled by Jon Sparshott

The reports of national or local rarities, included below, have not all been reviewed by the BBRC or the Joint Local Rarities Committee. Observers of the species in these categories are encouraged to submit description details as necessary, and to submit all their records to the Bird Recorder, ideally by the end of January 2021.

Overview July '20 – October '20:

In addition to the usual summer migrants departing and overwintering species arriving, more rare and scarce finds came in the form of a **Pallid Harrier**, **Radde's Warbler**, **Rosy Starlings**, and **Glossy Ibis**. As the autumn months gathered pace healthy numbers of finches were on the move, with **Crossbill**, **Siskin**, and **Redpoll** consistently going over most migration watch points on most days. The sea also was not without its merits as highlighted by both **Cory's** and **Sooty Shearwaters** seen from the south coast. Memorably this period saw the **White-tailed 'sea' Eagle** project move into its second successive year. Here is a recap of the last four months.

Ducks, Geese, and Swans:

The first returning **Dark-bellied Brent Geese** were two at Foreland on September 20th and the peak Solent count was 900 at Ryde Pier on October 19th. Two **Egyptian Geese** at Bembridge Ponds on July 1st. **Teal** numbered six at Yarmouth Station on July 1st. **Wigeon** numbers increased to 106 at Yarmouth Mill by October 10th. A flock of 10 **Pintail** passed Foreland on October 2nd. Nine **Common Scoter** went by Thorness Bay on September 29th.

Seabirds and Herons (and their relatives):

Singles of **Red-throated Diver** at Wheelers Bay on October 13th and 15th. Two records of **Black-**

throated Diver, one at SCP (St. Catherine's Point) on October 26th and one at Fort Victoria on October 30th. Two singles of **Great Northern Diver** at SCP on October 25th and 28th. In August two singles of **Cory's Shearwater**, one at Wheelers Bay on 19th and a 'probable' at SCP on the 26th. **Sooty Shearwaters** were seen at SCP: three on October 20th and two on October 31st. **Manx Shearwater** counts were two at Wheeler's Bay on August 19th, four at SCP on August 21st and a single at SCP on October 20th. The peak single day count of **Northern Gannet** was 477 at SCP on August 25th. Two singles of **Pomarine Skua** at SCP on October 29th and Puckpool on October 31st plus singles of **Arctic Skua** at Wheelers Bay on July 9th, Ventnor on August 23rd, and SCP on both August 26th and October 31st. Two records of **Great Skua** were three at Ventnor and one at SCP (both) on October 20th. The sole record of **Little Tern** was a flock of 13 at Fort Victoria on July 5th. **Black Tern** numbered three at Cowes on August 13th, single at Fort Victoria on October 6th, and two at the latter site on October 8th. A high count of 43 **Sandwich Terns** at Whitecliff Bay on September 11th. **Common Tern** numbers peaked with 200 at Cowes on August 23rd and a final count of 100 at Thorness Bay on September 5th. The main tally of **Kittiwake** was 100 at SCP on October 31st. **Mediterranean Gull** counts peaked to 618 at Bembridge Harbour on July 20th, 24 of which

were 'colour ringed'. A **Lesser-black Backed Gull** count of 20 at Cowes on August 8th. An adult **Yellow-legged Gull** was at Alverstone on July 19th and followed with several juveniles: two at Sandown Pier on July 21st, one at SCP on August 8th, and one at Sandown Pier on August 11th. A **Caspian Gull** was offshore at Castlehaven on October 7th. A single **Bittern** at Brading Marsh on July 5th. Two records of **Cattle Egret** were two at Brading Marsh on July 21st and two at Newtown NNR on September 13th. **Great White Egret** at Brading Marsh numbered four on September 20th. Away from Brading Marsh, one was twice seen at Haddon's Pits, firstly on September 16th and again on September 26th. The only record of **Spoonbill** was a lone bird at Newtown NNR on August 18th. Initially two (then three) **Glossy Ibis** were at St. Helens Millpond and the Brading Marsh area from October 21st. A ringed **White Stork**, an individual from the West Sussex 'Knepp' reintroduction scheme, was at Whitwell on September 17th.

Gamebirds, Raptors, and Owls:

A lone **Quail** was at Shanklin Down on July 15th. Singles of **Red Kite** at Ashey Down on July 15th, Wroxall Down on July 17th, and Blackgang on August 24th. The Sea Eagle Project proceeded with the second release of seven juvenile **White-tailed Eagles** on August 18th. Each releasee soon took to exploring far and wide along the south coast; one was soon spotted in Cornwall on October 15th. Meanwhile, the older four from last summer's initial release seem to be doing well, with two keeping ever faithful to the Island and two roaming further afield in parts of Northern England. Aside from the numerous records at Brading Marsh, singles of **Marsh Harrier** were at Culver Down on July 30th, SCP on September 16th, and Gore Down on October 9th. At least one **Osprey** was regularly reported from Newtown NNR July 30th – August 26th. Elsewhere, individuals were at Whale Chine on August 10th, Shanklin on August 30th, Bonchurch on September 6th, Brading Marsh September 26th – October 5th, Appuldurcombe Down on September 15th, Wootton Millpond on September 18th; with the final bird at St. Helens on October 26th. A lone **Barn Owl** arrived at SCP on October 18th seen to gradually make its way inland was an interesting record. **Short-eared Owl** records began with one at The Needles on August 11th, two at Laundry Lane on August 22nd; singles at Ventnor Downs

on September 26th, WHD on September 27th, and SCP on October 18th; and three at Culver Down on October 23rd. **Honey Buzzards** passed through mostly in ones: Bonchurch Down on August 28th, Ventnor Downs on September 4th, Brading Marsh on September 6th, and Alverstone on September 20th. Lastly, two went over Ventnor Downs on September 21st. The quality find of this period was a juvenile **Pallid Harrier** at Brading Marsh, September 2nd – 5th, which had likely relocated from the relatively nearby Thorney Island, Sussex. It is also quite likely the ringtail harrier sp. seen heading east at Bembridge Down on September 6th was *it* leaving and returning to its original mainland haunt, where it was seen again for a short time. Other reports of ringtail **harrier sp.** concerned one at Blackgang on September 17th and one at Culver on September 26th. **Hen Harrier** records were odd singles, a ringtail at St. Catherine's Hill on September 29th, a male at an unspecified location on October 20th, and a male at Chillerton on October 26th. **Merlin** returned at Luccombe Down on August 27th followed by several scattered singles at typical localities. The last **Eurasian Hobby** was a single at Brading Marsh on October 21st

Waders:

Two **Avocet** at Thorness beach on October 20th. Singles of **Dotterel** went over Bonchurch Down on August 1st, Luccombe Down on August 27th, and WHD/Tennyson Down on September 20th. **Whimbrel** totalled 12 at Newtown NNR on July 19th. Singles of **Bar-tailed Godwit** were at Brown's Golf Course and Bembridge Harbour on August 30th. **Common Sandpiper** counts were three at Bembridge Ponds on July 12th and three at Western Yar on July 28th. Aside from a few odd singles, three **Green Sandpipers** were at Atherfield July 29th. A minimum of one **Spotted Redshank** remained at Yarmouth throughout the period with two there on September 28th. Elsewhere one was at Shalfleet Quay on September 13th. A **Curlew Sandpiper** was at Newtown NNR on September 2nd and two **Jack Snipes** were at Thorness Marsh on October 12th.

Near passerines and passerines:

The last **Cuckoo** records were one at Nansen Hill on July 1st and one at Alverstone on August 8th. **Swift** numbers peaked to 1000 at Chillerton Down on July 10th and the last individual was at Seaview

on October 1st. A lone **Hoopoe** lingered at Niton Undercliff August 8th – August 27th. **Wryneck** singles were at Freshwater Bay on August 17th, Ventnor Downs on August 27th, Alum Bay Chine on September 21st, and Wheelers Bay on September 27th. Two **Yellow-browed Warblers** were at Laundry Lane on September 20th followed by several scattered singles. An autumn highlight was a **Radde's Warbler** at Ventnor Park on October 9th. **Willow Warbler** peaked with 52 at Ventnor Downs on August 8th and the last bird at St. Catherine's Hill on September 29th. A final single **Garden Warbler** at WHD on September 11th. Several **Grasshopper Warbler** singles with the last one at Blackgang on September 15th. It was a good year for **Rosy Starling** with two sightings: one at Ryde Pier on July 23rd and a juvenile at SCP on October 18th. **Ring Ouzel** records began with a single at Bembridge Fort on September 2nd and latterly a high day count of 12 at St. Catherine's Hill on October 14th. The main **Fieldfare** single day count was 100 at Cridmore on October 17th. **Redwing** counts of 18 at Brading Marsh on October 11th and 361 calls recorded overnight (Nocmig) at Shanklin on October 12th. A single and last **Spotted Flycatcher** at Bembridge Embankment on October 3rd. A final **Nightingale** was at WHD on August 28th. The first **Black Redstart** was at Seaview on September 7th followed by many scattered singles and three at Ryde Harbour on October 20th. The last two singles of **Redstart** were at Blackgang and Gore Cliff on October 9th. The main count of **Whinchat** was eight at St. Catherine's Hill on August 31st with a final single at SCP on October 7th. **Wheatear** numbered 75 at WHD on September 7th with many singles recorded right until the end of October. **Pied Flycatcher** were mostly singles save 20 at Ventnor Downs on August 17th and the final one was at Quarr Abbey on October 9th. **Yellow Wagtail** numbers peaked with 150 at SCP on August 31st and a final bird at the same site on October 7th. For a second year **Firecrest** successfully bred at a minimum of two localities. A **Richard's Pipit** was seen and heard over Shanklin on September 23rd. The final **Tree Pipit** was at Bonchurch Down on October 15th. Several singles of **Woodlark** began with one at Luccombe Down on September 21st and more latterly one at WHD on October 18th. The last

Sand Martin was at SCP on October 7th. The first **Brambling** over Culver Down on October 4th followed with low numbers at various coastal sites. A **Twite** was at Cranmore on October 10th. Carrying over from the previous period, **Crossbills** moved almost daily: most notable of which were counts of 123 at Haddon's Pits on October 13th and 105 at Bonchurch Down on October 17th. **Siskin** day counts were regularly in the 100s and peaked to 540 at Haddon's Pits on September 19th. A single **Lesser Redpoll** went over Bonchurch Down on September 13th followed by a notable 160 at Haddon's Pits on October 5th. **Lapland Bunting** singles were at Bonchurch Down on September 6th, Luccombe Down on September 21st, and Haddon's Pits on October 19th.

A Siskin Autumn 2020

By D J Hunnybun

The following data was extracted from the Going Birding website and covers the coastal movement of Siskin at St. Catherine's Point, Luccombe and Culver Down.

Aug 16-31	Sept 1-15	Sept 16-30	Oct 1-15	Oct 16-31	Nov 1-15	Total
53	4105	2220	1114	335	93	7920

The movement commenced in August with eight on 27th increasing to ten on 30th and 30 on 31st. Numbers increased rapidly during the first half of September with half of the overall total being noted including 470 on 4th, 505 on 5th, 930 on 6th and 673 on 12th. The highest day counts for the remainder of the month comprised 460 on 18th, 540 on 19th and 380 on 26th. Numbers reduced during the first half of October with 500 on 7th being the maximum. The movement concluded with 20 at SCP on November 5th.

It is possible the coverage was more thorough this year than in the past but the total is still well over twice that of the previous annual autumn high of 3052 in 2001. It is worthy of note that although West High Down was well covered this autumn numbers of this species was very small in comparison with the other sites.

Bird Report Editor's Update November 2020

By Martin Hunnybun

It was satisfying to close-out the task of pulling together the 2017 Bird Report earlier this summer. Many thanks to everyone who was involved in its production. You may have noticed that there was a last-minute change of front cover design, compared with the one included in the previous Newsletter, with a green background chosen to better show off the super shot of the Subalpine Warbler.

Many thanks to those of you who have provided feedback on the Bird Report. The inclusion of more photographs than in recent years has been well received and that is something I am keen to continue, while not allowing printing costs to escalate.

As noted in my previous update, work collating and editing material for the 2018 Bird Report continued in the summer. We are all keen to return to the annual production cycle as soon as we can. I'd like to thank the analysts for the species texts. Theirs was not an easy task with the absence of the final 2017 text to compare sightings with. I'd also like to thank Robin for his significant help in preparing a first draft of the 2018 report back in mid-August. I initially made steady progress editing that material, but it is not as advanced as I had hoped it would be by now. I'm now clear of time-consuming autumn work commitments so can push on to ensure the report is completed this year. We've not previously managed to publish two reports in the same calendar year and if we can this year it will show we're heading in the right direction to clear the backlog.

There were some exciting records in 2018 to formally document for future reference, including Eurasian Bittern breeding at Brading Marsh (the first record in modern times), two sightings of Great Shearwater (which are considered to be the first sufficiently documented records for the Island), the return of the Black Guillemot off east Wight, a notable influx of Iceland Gulls, and an impressive selection of showy buntings including Little, Ortolan, Snow and Lapland!

There were also the rather tantalising reports of a frigatebird species and a Snowy Owl that are being assessed by BBRC.

With plenty of scarce species on offer, the photographers have again been busy. Many thanks to those who have provided images for potential publication. If you've not yet done so and would like to submit any please let me know (martinhbun@hotmail.com). I'm currently in two minds whether the front cover should be this little gem of a Pallas's Warbler among foliage – the very essence of autumn birding – from Mark Buckley...



...or this super shot of a Lapland Bunting from Luccombe Down, which can be a tricky species to get good views of (let alone a good photo of!) from Andy Butler.



Maybe it is time to also make use of the back cover for a colour photograph....

British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) News

Volunteer counter wanted for the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS)

Many of you will already know about, or take part in the monthly WeBS counts on the Island. These counts are one of the most important data gathering exercises which conservationists can do. They provide a year-in, year-out run of data on our massive wintering waterbird populations around the UK, which conservation organisations use to help protect our most important wetland sites.

An opportunity has arisen for a new counter to join our team. Ideally you will have a very good knowledge of identifying common waterbirds but training can be given if required. As a new counter, you could also spend a while shadowing some experienced counters on their actual counts, to help you build up ID and counting skills before you felt confident to tackle the counts on your own. The counts take place on a set Sunday, or as near to the date, over the high tide period, once per month. It is preferable that the site is covered throughout the year although the main survey period is between September and March.

If you are interested please contact me for further details (contact details at the end of this article). You can also find out more about the survey at <https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/wetland-bird-survey/taking-part>

BirdTrack

A good way to add value to the sightings you record in BirdTrack (<https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/birdtrack>) is to add details such as breeding evidence during the summer months. Adding plumage and age details can also be quite useful information for further research, as well as to county recorders.

The menu to add these details can be accessed through the 'Optional' submenu online and then clicking on 'Plumage'.

It is also included in the BirdTrack app, and can be found by tapping on the added species (iOS devices) or tapping on the “>” icon (Android) on the species list.

House Martin Survey results

Over a two year period, volunteer surveyors across the UK were asked to help monitor the breeding behaviour of House Martins. The House Martin is a summer visitor to the UK that spends the winter months in sub-Saharan Africa, returning to build their cup-shaped nests under the eaves of buildings during April and May. During the last 25 years the House Martin has declined by 39% and is amber-listed as a bird of conservation concern but it is unclear what the drivers behind the decline might be.

By asking members of the public to provide information on the House Martins that were nesting on their properties or on nearby public buildings, scientists at the BTO hoped to gain some insights to how this delightful relative of the Swallow is faring in different parts of the country and whether breeding success differed in different parts of the UK.

Their findings were very interesting. House Martins arrived earlier in the east and began breeding earlier than birds in the west, possibly a benefit of drier weather in the east. Birds that used old nests from previous years or artificial nests had greater breeding success than those that built from scratch. Substrate was also important. Birds that built nests on PVC as opposed to brick, concrete or wood had much lower breeding success – perhaps because nests were more likely to collapse on the PVC substrate.

Breeding House Martins did better in suburban settings and with the presence of freshwater. Although the amount of agricultural land had no influence, more young were produced by birds that bred close to livestock. Interestingly, there was no evidence of more young being produced in the north than in the south, despite the national trend showing a greater decline in House Martins in the south.

The study also reported the first triple brood attempts in the UK, three nesting attempts in a single summer had been previously reported further south in Europe.

Dr Esther Kettel, lead author on the paper, said, “Thanks to the effort of the thousands of volunteers that took part in the BTO House Martin survey we now have a much better picture of what helps House Martins breed successfully, but there is still work to do.”

She added, "From our findings it is clear that one of the simplest ways to help House Martins in the short-term is to provide artificial nesting cups – this can save around ten days of nest building time, giving the martins that use them a head start on the breeding season."

The BTO House Martin Survey was possible thanks to the generosity of members of the public who donated to the BTO House Martin Appeal.

I would also like to add my thanks to all of the observers and surveyors who took part on the Island.

The full paper can be accessed at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ibi.12888>

Graham Appleton

Congratulations to Graham Appleton, the worthy recipient of the BTO's 2020 Dilys Breese Medal, in recognition of the role that WaderTales plays in the dissemination of BTO science relating to waders. WaderTales is a brilliant blog for anyone interested in waders and can be found at <https://wadertales.wordpress.com/>

Finally, you can keep up to date with the latest BTO news, including an interview with our new CEO Juliet Vickery, and migration blog at <https://www.bto.org/community/bto-blog>

Contact details: **Jim Baldwin (BTO Regional Representative)**

Tel. (01983)721137 (home), 07528 586683 (mobile), email: wightbto@hotmail.com

New Members

We Welcome:

Annette Harn - Shanklin

David Thearle - Shanklin

The Joint Local Rarities Committee (JLRC) – Purpose and Process

By Robin Attrill

I thought it would be useful to write an article on the Joint Local Rarities Committee (JLRC), explaining its purpose and how it works, partly for general information but also to dispel any

misconceptions that may exist. The purpose of the committee is to review reports of birds on the Isle of Wight local rarities list, that is birds which are not rare enough to merit British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) review at a national level, but which really need to be documented and reviewed to ensure that the contents of the annual bird report, and the local record database, are credible, both now and when subject to future scrutiny.

The Local Rarities list

The local Rarities list consists of a combination of a number of species which have in the past been reviewed by BBRC but are no longer (*e.g.* Woodchat Shrike), together with a number of others which, while nationally not particularly rare, (*e.g.* Dipper, Whooper Swan etc.), are sufficiently scarce locally to merit attention. This combined list is then categorised into two groups of species:-

- Asterisked species. Records in this category (which are *mainly* of species with, on average, less than two local records per year) are formally reviewed, and either accepted or not accepted, by the JLRC. To support the review process detailed notes should be taken and, if possible, the bird(s) photographed/videoed. A completed local rarities form and/or unequivocal photographic evidence should then be submitted to JLRC as soon as possible after the sighting along with any other supporting materials for the review process.
- Non-asterisked species. Records in this category (which are *mainly* of species with, on average, two or more records per year) are not routinely formally reviewed by the JLRC. However, field notes should ideally be taken and kept by the observer. These *may* be requested at the end of the year, *by exception*, at the discretion of the bird recorder, particularly if the record involves a species observed outside of typical occurrence patterns, or exhibiting unusual behaviour, or if it was not photographed. A very small proportion of the records of non-asterisked species are subject to this review process.

- The JLRC will also, very occasionally, review records of some races and other species that are not on the list, which fall outside of typical occurrence patterns, at the discretion of the Bird Recorder.

A rarities form submission template can be obtained from the Bird Recorder, and is preferred, but an ad-hoc detailed submission is acceptable in lieu of this. The value of photographic supporting material, and also, for certain species, *e.g.* the rarer *Acrocephalus* warblers, sound recordings, cannot be overstated. These submissions with unequivocal visual/audio recordings are typically fast-tracked.

The local rarity list (see appendix below) appears at the back of each issue of the annual bird report, and is reviewed periodically to reflect additions/removals to/from the BBRC list, and changes in local occurrence frequency. A good example is Little Egret which has moved from being a BBRC list species to a JLRC list species, and then to a non-list species over the course of a few decades as its status has changed from being a national rarity to a common sight on the island.

The Committee

The committee is drawn from membership of both IWNHAS and IWOOG to support the production of the single island annual bird report, and record repository, both of which draw upon both organisations. The current membership, all of whom are experienced birders, is as follows

- Chair – Robin Attrill (IWOOG/IWNHAS Bird Recorder)
- IWNHAS reps – Caroline Dudley, Daphne Watson
- IWOOG reps – Iain Outlaw, Jon Sparshott
- Simon Linington

Most of the above will be known to most of you, possibly with the exception of Simon who is originally from the island but now resides in Sussex

The Review Process

When submissions are received for review the following process, based upon common sense, is followed.

- The chair receives submissions. (If not forthcoming the chair will encourage the observer(s) to submit the record!).

- The chair circulates the submitted record to individual committee members. As stated above, unambiguous photographs/videos can be used in place of a written submission.
- Individual committee members review the submission. As part of this process the committee members can consult with whoever they so wish to help them formulate their view as to whether a record would be accepted or not, but, when that is done, they should give their individual view as to acceptability. To recommend acceptance of a record the committee member should be sure, *beyond reasonable doubt*, that it is correct. If they feel that detail is missing or lacking they can ask the bird recorder to go back to the submitter and request an updated submission to assist this process.
- Once reviewed, the committee members give their verdicts to the chair.
- The chair collates the votes. For a record to be accepted no more than one member of the committee must have rejected it. (This aligns quite closely with the 80% minimum accepting requirement of BBRC, and, so far as I am aware, is similar to what other counties do).
- The chair informs the submitter, the committee and the bird report editor of the outcome.

Please note that individual committee members do not vote on records for which they personally are the sole observer, or where they are submitter for a multi-observer sighting. I would make the point here that each record is assessed solely on the merits of the submission received. A poor submission from an experienced birder will likely be rejected whereas a detailed submission from a layperson will have a very good chance of acceptance.

Summary

I hope the above is useful. I am happy to answer any questions, and also to advise on submissions if you need to ask. The latter also applies to BBRC submissions for rarer species.

Robin Attrill

17 Waterhouse Moor, Harlow, Essex, CM18 6BA, Tel. 07487 577 103, E: robinattrill@gmail.com

Appendix – the current JLRC list

Common Quail	*Iceland Gull	Wood Lark
Brent Goose (<i>nigricans</i>)	*Caspian Gull	Horned Lark
*Taiga Bean Goose	Roseate Tern	*Greater Short-toed Lark
*Pink-footed Goose	*White-winged Tern	*Red-rumped Swallow
*Tundra Bean Goose	*Long-tailed Skua	*Pallas's Leaf Warbler
*Bewick's Swan	*Black Guillemot	*Radde's Warbler
*Whooper Swan	*White-billed Diver	*Dusky Warbler
*American Wigeon	*Wilson's Storm-petrel	*Greenish Warbler
*Green-winged Teal	European Storm-petrel	*Arctic Warbler
Red-crested Pochard	*Leach's Storm-petrel	*Blyth's Reed Warbler
*Ring-necked Duck	*Cory's Shearwater	*Marsh Warbler
*Lesser Scaup	Sooty Shearwater	*Melodious Warbler
*Surf Scoter	*Great Shearwater	*Icterine Warbler
Long-tailed Duck	Balearic Shearwater	*Barred Warbler
Smew	White Stork	*Rosy Starling
Goosander	Glossy Ibis	*Bluethroat
Ruddy Duck	Eurasian Spoonbill	*Red-flanked Bluetail
*Alpine Swift	*Black-crowned Night Heron	*Red-breasted Flycatcher
*Corn Crane	Cattle Egret	*White-throated Dipper
*Spotted Crane	*Purple Heron	*Yellow Wagtail races
Common Crane	European Honey Buzzard	except <i>flavissima</i> and <i>flava</i>
Black-necked Grebe	*Northern Goshawk	*Citrine Wagtail
Eurasian Stone-curlew	*Montagu's Harrier (ringtail)	*Richard's Pipit
*Black-winged Stilt	*Black Kite	*Olive-backed Pipit
*American Golden Plover	*Rough-legged Buzzard	Water Pipit
*Kentish Plover	Tawny Owl	Hawfinch
Eurasian Dotterel	European Bee-eater	*Common Rosefinch
*Temminck's Stint	Eurasian Wryneck	*Twite
*White-rumped Sandpiper	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	*Parrot Crossbill
*Buff-breasted Sandpiper	*Red-footed Falcon	European Serin
*Pectoral Sandpiper	Red-backed Shrike	Lapland Bunting
*Red-necked Phalarope	Great Grey Shrike	Snow Bunting
Grey Phalarope	*Woodchat Shrike	*Ortolan Bunting
*Lesser Yellowlegs	Eurasian Golden Oriole	*Cirl Bunting
Sabine's Gull	*Red-billed Chough	*Little Bunting
*Ring-billed Gull	*Willow Tit	
Glaucous Gull	*Penduline Tit	

IWOG GARDEN BIRD SURVEY

Summer 2020

Hobby hunting Swallows

Feral Pigeon new nester

A total of **only** 43 completed forms were returned recording a total of 58 species. Compared to previous years this is quite a reduction in participants - completed forms: 2018 51, 2019 50.

From these a league table has been produced. Initially bird species were ordered according to the number of gardens they were reported in. In the case of tied positions a further ordering was done according to the total number of months recorded. Equally placed species are put in Voous order.

league position	Species	Number of gardens	league position	Species	Number of gardens
1	Woodpigeon	43	30	Bullfinch	12
2	Blackbird	43	31	Pheasant	9
3	Robin	43	32	Stock Dove	6
4	Blue Tit	43	33	Feral Pigeon	6
5	Dunnock	42	34	Mallard	5
6	Great Tit	41	35	Moorhen	5
7	Goldfinch	39	36	Swallow	4
8	Jackdaw	39	37	Whitethroat	4
9	Magpie	39	38	Grey Heron	4
10	Wren	38	39=	Goldcrest	3
11	House Sparrow	37	39=	Linnet	3
12	Collared Dove	37	41	Buzzard	3
13	Starling	35	42	Kestrel	2
14	Greenfinch	35	42=	Red-legged Partridge	2
15	Carrion Crow	32	42=	Pied Wagtail	2
16	Long-tailed Tit	32	42=	Grey Wagtail	2
17	Sparrowhawk	29	46	Barn Owl	1
18	Rook	26	47=	Common Gull	1
19	Chaffinch	26	47=	Yellowhammer	1
20	Great Spotted Woodpecker	24	48=	Hobby	1
21	Chiffchaff	24	48=	Lesser Black-backed Gull	1
22	Herring Gull	23	48=	Kingfisher	1
23	Jay	22	48=	Mistle Thrush	1
24	Blackcap	22	48=	House Martin	1
25	Coal Tit	19	48=	Redstart	1
26	Green Woodpecker	19	48=	Garden Warbler	1
27	Black-headed Gull	18	48=	Spotted Flycatcher	1
28	Song Thrush	16	48=	Pied Flycatcher	1
29	Willow Warbler	14	48=	Treecreeper	1

Absence of Finches (Except Goldfinch)

Several observers noted an absence or severe reduction in the numbers of Chaffinch and Greenfinch. Along with the national trend Goldfinch appears to be on the increase.

Sparrowhawk appears to be more widely observed this summer with this species recorded in 67% of gardens as compared to 2018 39% and 2019 44%. This may be a result of more consistent garden observations during Covid lockdown.

Selected Migrants

A **Pied Flycatcher** was seen by Roger & Jenny Burgess in Freshwater on 3rd and 9th of September.

A **Spotted Flycatcher** was present in the Cowes garden of John Lucas on August 18th.

A **Garden Warbler** was in the Cowes garden of Andrew Twyman in August.

A **Redstart** was seen in the Bonchurch garden of Tony Sztypulijak in September.

Garden Nesting

Breeding, involving 22 species, was recorded in 36 gardens. Five observers recorded that no birds nested in their garden.

The following table shows the number of gardens in which breeding for each species was recorded.

Blackbird	20	Jackdaw	5	Collared Dove	1
Blue Tit	19	Goldfinch	3	Coal Tit	1
Robin	17	Starling	3	Chaffinch	1
Woodpigeon	15	Magpie	2	Greenfinch	1
Dunnock	10	Mallard	1	Rook	1
Great Tit	9	Moorhen	1	Carrion Crow	1
Wren	8	Herring Gull	1		
House Sparrow	7	Feral Pigeon	1		

A new nesting record, **Feral Pigeon**. It involved a bird nesting under the solar panels on the roof of my house. They have been nesting on the same location on the adjoining property for several years.

Coal Tit. David Hunnybun records that Coal Tits nested successfully in a nest box constructed from a hollowed out Silver Birch log. More behavioural observations on this pair below.

Observer Notes

“26th & 27th May Coal Tit burying sunflower seeds in lawn, have witnessed this in previous years. 1st June both adults burying seeds at c 6/7 per minute.” Dave Hunnybun.

“Mid August we had a Hobby hunting the Swallows over the garden and surrounding area.” Gill Fruin.

“30/04/20 Seven Stock Doves under the bird feeders early this morning” Fiona and Chuck Eccleston.

“Trecreeper climbing large oak tree on my garden fence line. Not sure if this qualifies.” Rodney Wednes.

I see no problem accepting this record!

Mammals

Number of gardens visited:

Red Squirrel 19, Fox 16, Badger 15 and Hedgehog 2.

Stoat was added to the list of mammals visiting the gardens of Jillian Williams and Ken Welfare.

Gill Fruin reported “On three occasions Dormice were in the bird feeders early morning. One was so sleepy we had to pop it in a bird box!”

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J. Gloyn