

2007 - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER SIGHTINGS

2006 Report now out
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December 11th: Whilst taking the mist-net down for the winter, a **Long-eared Owl** was flushed from the Obs Plantation – it looks like the same dark bird that was in there in November.

December 8th: A cold, bright day with a light Easterly wind meant a thrash around the south was called for. Thrushes were still in evidence with counts of 50 **Blackbird**, 45 **Redwing** and 10 **Fieldfare**. Some late small stuff included 9 **Skylark**, 2 **Meadow Pipit**, a *tristis* **Chiffchaff** and a **Linnet**. A total of 57 **Snow Buntings** were also counted.

December 5th: A **Black-bellied Dipper** was discovered in Wirvie Burn.

November 29th: Four new **Greenfinches** have arrived in the garden.

November 26th: Four **Whooper Swans** have taken up residence. An increase in **Turnstones** (125) was noted whilst thrush numbers have remained stable, with the addition of a couple of **Song Thrush**. Also seen were the **Moorhen** at the Scrape, 10 **Jackdaw**, 2 *mealy* **Redpoll**, **Chaffinch**, **Yellowhammer** and a **Reed Bunting**.

November 23rd: A ramp around the south produced highlights of single **Moorhen**, **Common Scoter**, **Chiffchaff**, **Brambling** and **Yellowhammer** plus counts of 100 **Blackbird**, 100 **Redwing**, 40 **Fieldfare**, 9 **Jackdaw**, 6 **Siskin** and 48 **Snow Bunting**.

November 22nd: The **Wood Pigeon**, **Chaffinch**, **Greenfinch** and **Common Rosefinch** all remain at the Obs.

November 21st: The **Common Rosefinch**, **Chaffinch** and now 2 **Greenfinch** still occupy the Obs garden, with the **Wood Pigeon**.

November 20th: The **Wood Pigeon**, **Chaffinch**, **Greenfinch** and **Common Rosefinch** all remain at the Obs whilst a **Waxwing** was at Lower Stoneybrek. The *Good Shepherd* crossing produced a **Glaucous Gull**, **Razorbill** and 30+ **Little Auk** – but only one of these in Fair Isle waters!

November 19th: A **Wood Pigeon** has joined the **Chaffinch**, **Greenfinch** and **Common Rosefinch** in the garden. A tramp around the south produced counts of 20 **Skylark**, single **Meadow Pipit**, 50 **Blackbird**, 60 **Redwing**, 15 **Fieldfare**, single **Song Thrush**, a **Chiffchaff**, 6 **Jackdaw** and 26 **Snow Bunting**.

November 18th: A male **Chaffinch** and a very late **Common Rosefinch** arrived in the Obs garden. This is not our latest ever record however as there was one on 30th November 1991.

November 17th: An adult **Glaucous Gull** was



Snow Bunting Photograph by Deryk Shaw

amongst the 3,000 gulls resting on the isle. The **Jackdaw** count is still around 10 whilst 2 **mealy Redpolls** and a **Chiffchaff** were at the Haa.



Common Rosefinch Photograph by Deryk Shaw

November 14th: A glorious day with virtually **NO WIND!** This meant that the whole day was spent outside doing Atlas work, resulting in virtually complete coverage! There has been another influx of **Blackbirds** with 180 counted plus 41 **Redwing**, 6 **Fieldfare** and a couple of **Song Thrush**. Other arrivals included singles of **Waxwing**, **Black Redstart**, **Blackcap**, **Chiffchaff** and **Brambling**. Other counts included the 2 **Merlins**, 3 **Water Rail**, 6 **Woodcock**, **Long-eared Owl**, 20 **Siskin** and a **mealy Redpoll**. **Jackdaws** have decreased further, to 11, whilst **Snow Buntings** are up to 115. Even common resident birds such as **Rock Pipit** (70), **Starling** (400) and **House Sparrow** (80) were counted today.



Long-eared Owl Photograph by Deryk Shaw

November 13th: A female **Chaffinch** has arrived in the Obs garden, feeding with a male **Greenfinch**. Other highlights were seen from the *Good Shepherd* crossing; a **Bonxie** and 100+ **Little Auk**.



Black Redstart Photograph by Deryk Shaw

November 11th: Very little to report. Two **Merlins** together and 4 **Long-tailed Duck** in the Havens. A 30 minute sea watch produced just 2 **Kittiwake!!!!**

November 10th: The **Pine Bunting** was at Neder Taft today (with a **Yellowhammer**) whilst the **Long-eared Owl** stuck it out at the Obs. Little else of note, although 65 **Jackdaws** still remain, a **Mealy Redpoll**, 4 **Greenfinches** and 55 **Snow Buntings** were noted. Thrush numbers have dropped right away to less than 20 of each of the three commonest species but 15 **Skylarks** is quite good for the time of year.



Jackdaws Photograph by Deryk Shaw



Long-eared Owl
Photograph by Deryk Shaw

November 9th: Two **Glaucous Gulls** (adult & 1stW) were seen whilst the **Pine Bunting** was seen at Barkland and at Lower Stoneybrek today. The **Long-eared Owl** was showing well at the Obs.



Pine Bunting



Photographs by Deryk Shaw

November 8th: With 85mph winds, birding was impossible but, whilst tying things down around the outside of the building, the **Firecrest** was heard and the **Long-eared Owl** spotted in the Obs Plantation. An adult **Glaucous Gull** has joined the first-winter **Iceland Gull** in the gull flock on Vaasetter.

November 7th: The **Pine Bunting** is still in the crop at Lower Stoneybrek in the company of a **Yellowhammer**, whilst the **Firecrest** is still in the Obs Plantation, with a **Long-eared Owl**. A couple of **Little Auk** and many **Kittiwakes** were seen off South Light and a first-winter **Iceland Gull** on Vaasetter.

November 6th: A look off south light produced a **Great Northern Diver** and 3 **Little Auk**. A **Firecrest** in the Obs garden has presumably worked its way down from North Light in the preceding few days.

November 4th: The **Pine Bunting** was seen again in the company of 3 **Yellowhammer**. Four **Blackcap** were spotted plus a few finches; 6 **Brambling**, 8 **Greenfinch**, and 30 **Siskin** plus still 70 **Jackdaw**.



November 3rd: Two **Blackcap** and 70 **Jackdaw** linger.

November 2nd: Six **Waxwing** flew through.

November 1st: A better day for weather allowing a decent census to be carried out (the final one before my AWs leave!). The **Pine Bunting** was seen again at Lower Stoneybrek and the **Firecrest** is still on the cliffs near North Light. Two **Pochards** is a good record and there were 4 male **Long-tailed Ducks**. A late **Wheatear** and a **Blackcap** frequented the Obs environs whilst down-isle were 78 **Jackdaw**, 30 **Brambling**, 10 **Greenfinch**, 32 **Siskin**, 32 **Snow Bunting** and 3 **Yellowhammer**.

2007 - OCTOBER SIGHTINGS

October 30th: The **Bluethroat** remains at Setter. **Jackdaws** are still plentiful with 88 counted. Finches were the only other species of note with 60 **Brambling**, 22 **Greenfinch** and 67 **Siskin** plus 53 **Snow Bunting**.

October 29th: The **Pine Bunting** has moved to the bird crop at Lower Stoneybrek whilst the **Bluethroat** remains at Setter and the **Subalpine Warbler** at the Obs. Counts were dominated by thrushes with 355 **Blackbird**, 255 **Fieldfare** and 345 **Redwing** plus 195 **Greylag Goose**, 2 **White-fronted Goose**, 115 **Jackdaw**, a few finches (46 **Brambling**, 17 **Greenfinch**, 61 **Siskin** and 4 **Common Redpoll**) and 5 **Yellowhammer**. Other sightings included a **Little Auk**, a **Moorhen**, **Long-eared Owl**, 2 **Short-eared Owl** and a **Dunnock**.

October 28th: There was some **Whooper Swan** movement today with up to 142 birds counted. Also were 81 **Greylag** and 3 **Whitefronted Geese**. Elsewhere, the **Pine Bunting** remained at Barkland, **Bluethroat** at Setter and the **Subalpine Warbler** was seen again at the Obs. A small **Crake sp.** was flushed near Stackhoull but disappeared before it could be identified. Frustrating! Three **Peregrines** were seen together and a **Long-eared Owl** at the Obs. Two **Black Redstarts** were claimed in Easter Lother and a **Ring Ouzel** also in the north. Finches, with 35 **Brambling**, 20 **Greenfinch** and 50 **Siskin** dominated other sightings.

October 27th: The **Pine Bunting** was still present at Barkland and the **Bluethroat** at Setter. An exhausted and bedraggled **Blyth's Pipit** was found near Stackhoull – it predictably died a short while later. Counts included 5 **Whooper Swan**, 2 **Short-eared Owl**, **Long-eared Owl**, **Black Redstart**, 3 **Ring Ouzel**, 82 **Jackdaw**, 2 **Chaffinch**, 57 **Brambling**, 25 **Greenfinch**, 110 **Siskin** and 3 **Yellowhammer**. There was a report of a small **Crake sp.** at Walli Burn!!



Blyth's Pipit

Photographs by Mark Breaks

October 25th: The **Pine Bunting** wandered into the Barkland heligoland trap and was brought to the Obs to be ringed. On examination it was found to have a tiny bit of yellow on the underwing at the carpal, so possibly has some ancestral Yellowhammer genes, but had it not been trapped this would never have been seen.

Jackdaws are still much in evidence with around 90 counted today. An increase in thrushes was noted with 600 **Blackbird**, 430 **Fieldfare** and 420 **Redwing** logged. An influx of **Woodcock** produced 120 for the log whilst finches also arrived in numbers with 56 **Brambling**, 3 **Chaffinch**, 20 **Greenfinch**, 24 **Siskin**, 57 **Twite** and 3 **Common Redpoll** counted. Two **Yellowhammer** were also seen. The **Subalpine Warbler** was seen again briefly at the Obs and the **Bluethroat** remains at Setter.



Pine Bunting Photograph by Deryk Shaw



Pine Bunting Photographs by Deryk Shaw



showing small amounts of yellow along some primary edges and on underwing

October 25th: Star arrival today was a male **Pine Bunting** at Barkland. It appears to have faint yellowish edges to the bases of some of the primaries but has no other characteristics to suggest a hybrid origin. A similar bird was seen here in 1995. If accepted it will be our 9th record. The other talking point was the number of **Jackdaws**, which has now reached 114. Many have particularly pale grey napes (one had a very distinct white collar) indicating Scandinavian origin. The **Firecrest** remains on the cliffs near North Light and the **Bluethroat** at Setter. Other counts included 40 **Woodcock**, 162 **Turnstone**, 350 **Redwing**, 430 **Fieldfare**, 210 **Blackbird** and a **Mistle Thrush** plus 2 each of **Long-eared** and **Short-eared Owl** and a 5 **Common Redpolls**.



Pine Bunting Photograph by Mark Breaks

October 24th: A **Firecrest** on the cliffs near North Light, whilst not a national rarity, was only our 4th record and first since 1992. Whilst searching for the Firecrest, a **Little Bunting** made a brief appearance at the same place!! The **Dusky Warbler** was reported again at the Haa, the **Subalpine Warbler** was on the cliffs at Furse and the **Bluethroat** remained at Setter. The main arrival today was that of 85 **Jackdaw** – the largest influx since 1979, when 270 were recorded. A **Yellowhammer** and 3 **Reed Bunting** were also seen.



Firecrest Photograph by Mark Breaks

October 23rd: Today was supposed to be the day of THE BIGGIE!! Sadly it never materialised – its obviously going to be later this year!?! The highlight of the day was a late **Swallow**!! Four **Great Northern Divers** and a **Sooty Shearwater** were seen on seawatches. The **Bluethroat** and a **Richards Pipit** remain whilst 8 species of finch included 70 **Siskin** and 20 **Brambling**.

October 22nd: The **Subalpine Warbler** remains at the Obs and the **Bluethroat** at Setter. A **Dusky Warbler** (our 13th record) was found in Walli Burn mid-morning. One **Richards Pipit** was seen plus 20 **Woodcock**, 220 **Blackbird**, 135 **Fieldfare**, 210 **Redwing**, the 2 **Jackdaw**, a **Rook** and 45 **Siskin**. A brief seawatch produced a **Sooty Shearwater** and a **Little Auk**.

October 21st: The **Subalpine Warbler** remains at the Obs and the **Bluethroat** at Setter. New in were a **Little Grebe** in Furse, 2 **Waxwing**, 2 **Jackdaw** and a couple of **Little Auk** past. Two each of **Goldfinch** and **Linnet** were seen plus 8 **Siskin** and 4 **Common Redpoll**.

October 20th: Some movement today with a male **Subalpine Warbler** at the Obs the highlight. A **Barred Warbler** was also present here. Another **Richards Pipit** arrived making **three** in total whilst some finch passage included 33 **Siskin** and 5 **Goldfinch**. Five **Whooper Swan**, the **Bluethroat** and a **Yellow-browed Warbler** were also noted.



Subalpine Warbler
Photographs by Mark Breaks



Subalpine Warbler

At sea, whilst small numbers of **Guillemots** are often seen at this time of year it is unusual to also record (as we have this autumn) similar numbers of **Razorbill** and even the occasional **Puffin**. More symptoms of a troubled marine ecosystem?

October 19th: A quiet day with 2 **Richards Pipit**, the **Bluethroat** and a **Yellow-browed Warbler**. Nine **Long-tailed Duck** and a **Common Scoter** in South harbour were nice.

Four **Harbour Porpoise** were seen off Bunes.

Common Scoter Photograph by Mark Breaks



October 18th: **Richards Pipits**, **Little Bunting** and **Bluethroat** were all seen again. A **Common Scoter**, a **Hen Harrier**, a **Dunnock** and a **Tree Sparrow** were all new.

October 17th: **Richards Pipits**, **Little Bunting** and **Bluethroat** were all seen again. Seawatching produced **Red-throated Diver**, 4 **Great Northern Diver**, **Slavonian Grebe**, **Sooty Shearwater** and **Little Auk**. Two each of **Greenfinch** and **Goldfinch** were seen.

October 16th: Two **Richards Pipits**, **Little Bunting**, **Bluethroat** and a **Yellow-browed Warbler** remain. The sea produced 2 **Red-throated Diver**, 2 **Great Northern Diver**, **Arctic Skua**, 2 **Arctic Tern**, a **Little Auk** and an unidentified **Phalarope sp**. A few finches arrived with **Greenfinch**, 2 **Goldfinch** and 3 **Siskin** noted.

October 15th: Two **Richards Pipits**, **Little Bunting**, **Bluethroat** and 2 **Yellow-browed Warblers** remain. A **Little Auk** was seen offshore. A female **Sparrowhawk** has joined the throng of raptors, already consisting of **Kestrel**, 4 **Merlin**, **Peregrine**, **Long-eared Owl** and **Short-eared Owl**. Thrush counts were; 150 **Blackbird**, 300 **Fieldfare**, 300 **Redwing** and 20 **Song Thrush**.

October 14th: A **Barred Warbler** at Easter Lothar was the most significant new arrival. Two **Richards Pipits**, **Little Bunting**, **Bluethroat** and 3 **Yellow-browed Warblers** remain. Four **Merlin**, **Peregrine**, 4 **Short-eared Owl** and 3 **Water Rail** were logged. A 'northwestern' **Common Redpoll** was also noted.



Barnacle Geese Photograph by Mark Breaks



Water Rail Photograph by Mark Breaks



Common Redpoll Photograph by Mark Breaks

October 13th: Little change. The **Short-toed Lark**, 2 **Richards Pipit**, 3 **Yellow-browed Warblers**, 2 **Bluethroat** and **Little Bunting** remain. Two **Shoveler**, **Long-eared owl** and 4 **Short-eared Owl** were new and 800 each of **Fieldfare** and **Redwing** were logged.

October 12th: A few new things in including 2 **Goldeneye**, 9 **Cormorant**, a **Long-eared Owl** and 9 **Tree Sparrow**. Pride of place went to an **Olive-backed Pipit** at Wirvie. The **Short-toed Lark**, **Richards Pipit** and **Little Bunting** remain. Four **Yellow-browed Warblers**, 2 **Bluethroat**, **Tree Pipit**, 3 *abietinus* **Chiffchaff** and 2 'northwestern' **Redpolls** were also logged. A suite of raptors terrorised them all with 2 **Peregrines**, 4 **Merlins** and a **Kestrel** around.

October 11th: A quieter day for birds, no doubt due to the strong westerly winds, with the only things of note being lingering **Short-toed Lark**, **Richards Pipit**, **Bluethroat** and 3 **Yellow-browed Warbler**. There was a report from an islander that his cat had just eaten a **Great Grey Shrike!** He has retained its head – the shrike's that is!

The **Minke Whale** was again in Hesswalls.

Snow Bunting Photograph by Rebecca Nason



October 10th: Much the same stuff as the previous few days with **Little Bunting**, **Short-toed Lark**, 2 **Richards Pipit**, 2 **Bluethroat**, 10 **Yellow-browed Warbler** and **Common Rosefinch** the highlights. Ten **Whooper Swans** went through and 200 **Greylag** and 387 **Barnacle Geese** were logged. A late **Arctic Tern** floated through the Havens. Thrushes were still evident with 5 **Ring Ouzel**, 400 **Blackbird**, 1400 **Fieldfare**, 100 **Song Thrush** and 2,700 **Redwing**. Four **Woodcock**, 6 **Chiffchaff** (3 *abietinus*, 3 *collybita*), 60 **Brambling**, 7 **Siskin** and a **mealy Redpoll** were also noted.



A showy **Minke Whale** was in Hesswalls.

Richards Pipit Photograph by Mark Breaks



Minke Whale
Photographs by Mark Breaks



October 9th: The **Little Bunting** remained in Boini Mire. Two **Whooper Swan** flew through and 140 **Barnacle Geese** arrived. A **Long-tailed Duck**, **Sooty Shearwater**, **Pomarine Skua** and **Arctic Tern** were spotted offshore. A **Short-toed Lark** was at Pund and 5 **Yellow-browed Warblers** were scattered around the south with 2 **Richards Pipit**, 3 **Bluethroat**, 3 **Chiffchaff**, 6 **Siskin** and 2 **Common Rosefinch**. More thrushes arrived with 106 **Blackbird**, 600 **Fieldfare** and 1,000 **Redwing** logged.

Two **White-sided Dolphin** were seen off South Light.

October 8th: A **Little Bunting** in Boini Mire may be the Skadan bird from yesterday. A **Greenfinch** was new but thrushes had dropped and other counts were 2 each of **Kestrel**, **Merlin** and **Peregrine**, 10 **Jack Snipe**, 2 **Woodcock**, 2 **Short-eared Owl**, 3 **Richards Pipit**, 2 **Tree Pipit**, 2 **Bluethroat**, 33 **Wheatear**, 2 **Yellow-browed Warbler**, 3 *abietinus* **Chiffchaff**, 24 **Brambling** and 3 **Common Rosefinch**. The sea produced single **Goldeneye**, **Great Northern Diver**, **Red-throated Diver** and 3 **Cormorant**.

October 7th: The **BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT** remained on Vaasetter. An extra **Richards Pipit** and **Bluethroat** were logged with 4 **Tufted Duck** and a **Scaup**, which was new for the year. Highlight was a **Little Bunting** in the Skadan crop. Elsewhere the **Barred Warbler** was taken by a cat, 3 **Yellow-browed Warblers** and 2 **Common Rosefinch** remain with 1000 **Redwing** and c200 other thrushes



Little Bunting *Photograph by Mark Breaks*

October 6th: The **BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT** remained on Vaasetter. Elsewhere it was much the same stuff as yesterday with **Short-toed Lark**, 2 **Richards Pipits**, 2 **Bluethroats**, **Marsh Warbler**, **Barred Warbler**, 7 **Yellow-browed Warblers** and 3 **Common Rosefinch**. More thrushes arrived with 440 **Fieldfare** and 3200 **Redwing** logged. A **Minke Whale** was spotted off the east coast.



Buff-bellied Pipit

Photograph by Rebecca Nason



Buff-bellied Pipit

Photograph by Mark Breaks

October 5th: The **BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT** remained on Vaassetter. Other lingerers included **Pochard**, **Short-toed Lark**, 2 **Richards Pipits**, 2 **Bluethroats**, **Marsh Warbler**, **Barred Warbler**, 12+ **Yellow-browed Warblers** and 2 **Common Rosefinch**. Thrushes continue to pass through with counts of 7 **Ring Ouzel**, 80 **Blackbird**, 80 **Fieldfare**, 70 **Song Thrush** and 1200 **Redwing**. Raptors were in evidence with **Kestrel**, **Merlin** and 2 **Peregrines** keeping the thrushes on their toes. Other arrivals included a **Ruff**, 4 **Tree Pipit**, **Blue-headed wagtail**, 2 *abietinus* **Chiffchaff** and a **Pied Flycatcher**.



Buff-bellied Pipit *Photograph by Mark Breaks*

October 4th: The **BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT** remained on Vaassetter. A few geese were on the move with 326 **Pink-feet**, 2 **Greenland Whitefronts**, 26 **Greylags** and 11 **Barnacles** noted. There was also an influx of thrushes with 7 **Ring Ouzel**, 55 **Blackbird**, 50 **Fieldfare**, 45 **Song Thrush**, 560 **Redwing** and a single **Mistle Thrush** logged. A few scarce migrants included a **Corncrake**, adult **Glaucous Gull**, a **Short-toed Lark**, 2 **Richards Pipits**, the 2 **Bluethroats**, **Barred Warbler**, **Marsh Warbler**, 10+ **Yellow-browed Warblers** and 2 **Common Rosefinch**. Other sightings included 2 **Short-eared Owls**, 10 **Jack Snipe**, 73 **Wheatear**, **Grasshopper Warbler**, **Reed Warbler**, 15 **Blackcap**, *abietinus* **Chiffchaff**, 104 **Goldcrest**, 90 **Brambling**, 4 **Chaffinch**, 3 **Siskin** and 82 **Snow Bunting**.

October 3rd: The **BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT** remained on Vaassetter. The **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was seen again around the south. Two **Lanceolated Warblers** included one new bird at Meadow Burn and the bird from Pund, which is now at Upper Stoneybrake. Two **Bluethroats** are also probably both lingerers as is the **Richards Pipit** at Pund. A **Wryneck** at Midway was however new and **eastern flava wagtail** added interest. Two each of **Barred** and **Yellow-browed Warblers** were seen (amongst a total of 20 warblers of 9 species). A **Sooty Shearwater** passed Bunes and the **Pochard** was seen again. An influx of **Redwing** (140) was noted and a couple of **Common Rosefinch** rounds things off.

October 2nd: The **BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT** was still present on Vaassetter, but went missing for periods – much to the annoyance of the day-tripping twitchers from Shetland!!! The **Lanceolated Warbler** trapped in the Gully was scant reward! The **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** remained on Meones whilst a **White-rumped Sandpiper** was found at South Light. A **Marsh Warbler** foraged on the cliffs at North Haven and around the same time, news broke of a fresh **Peregrine** kill near Kenaby – a **WHITES THRUSH!!** Elsewhere were two **Greenland Whitefronted Geese**, two **Peregrines**, two **Swallows**, the Quoy **Bluethroat**, around 100 **Wheatear**, 60 **Thrushes**, **Barred Warbler**, 3 **Yellow-browed Warbler**, 18 **Brambling**, **Common Rosefinch**.

October 1st: The month opened with a **BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT** in Homisdale/Vaassetter. From brief views it was thought to possibly be a different bird to the one a week ago!! Later, a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was found on Meones! Other good sightings included the **Lanceolated Warbler**, which has now relocated to Charlie's Trees, a single **Bluethroat**, two **Barred Warblers**, 4 **Yellow-browed Warblers** and a **Common Rosefinch**. Also were a **Woodcock**, **Short-eared Owl**, two **House Martin** and a *flava* **Wagtail**.



Yellow-browed warbler
Photograph by Rebecca Nason



Buff-breasted sandpiper
Photograph by Rebecca Nason



Yellow-browed warbler
Photograph by Rebecca Nason

2007 - SEPTEMBER SIGHTINGS

September 30th: The day started well with a **Blyths Reed Warbler** trapped at Barkland, followed by a **Marsh Warbler** in Homisdale. The Pund **Lanceolated Warbler** was still present as were two **Bluethroats**, **Common Rosefinch** and **Richards Pipit**. A **Barred Warbler** may have been new and counts of 12 **Jack Snipe**, 3 **Woodcock**, 70 **Wheatear**, 3 **Ring Ouzel** and 60 **Goldcrest** were made. The best however was discovered mid-afternoon near the west end of Hill Dyke.....a **GREY-CHEEKED THRUSH**. It showed well until dusk, when it dropped into Gunnawark. It is the third island record – the previous two were the 1st & 2nd British records, back in the 1950s!



Lanceolated warbler
Photograph by Rebecca Nason





Grey-cheeked Thrush
Four photographs by Rebecca Nason

September 29th: The superb birding continues.....A new **Lanceolated Warbler** was discovered at Pund. A **Red-throated Pipit** flew over Barkland but could not be refound whilst two **Richards Pipits** showed well but distantly. There were also two **Bluethroats**, two **Barred Warblers**, 11 **Yellow-browed Warblers** and a **Common Rosefinch**. A **Hen Harrier** drifted through whilst a **Corncrake** was flushed from ditches at Pund. Other counts and sightings included the **Pintail** and **Pochard**, **Moorhen**, 9 **Jack Snipe**, 96 **Common Snipe**, a **Woodcock**, two **Short-eared Owl**, **Tree Pipit**, 85 **Thrushes** (54 **Redwing**), 85 **Goldcrest**, 10 **Lapland Bunting** and 58 **Snow Bunting**.



Lanceolated warbler
Photograph by Rebecca Nason



Lanceolated Warbler
Photograph by Mark Breaks



Yellow-browed Warbler
Photograph by Mark Breaks



Bluethroat

Photographs by Mark Breaks



Grey-cheeked Thrush

Photograph by Deryk Shaw



Grey-cheeked Thrush

Photograph by Deryk Shaw



Grey-cheeked Thrush

Photograph by Deryk Shaw

September 28th: Another cracking days birding!! The day started well with an **Icterine Warbler** trapped after breakfast. One **Lanceolated Warbler** remains in the Skadan crop and nearby a **Thrush Nightingale** was discovered at Utra. Another fine scattering of common migrants with totals of one **Woodcock**, 3 **Wood Pigeon**, single **Long-eared** and **Short-eared owls**, 2 **Tree Pipits**, 25 **Robins**, 3 **Bluethroat**, 4 **Common Redstart**, 5 **Whinchat**, 6 **Blackbird**, 44 **Fieldfare**, 56 **Song Thrush**, 280 **Redwing**, 2 **Grasshopper Warbler**, 2 **Sedge Warbler**, 3 **Barred Warbler**, 16 **Lesser Whitethroat**, 8 **Garden Warbler**, 9 **Blackcap**, 12 **Yellow-browed Warbler**, 9 **Chiffchaff**, 9 **Willow warbler**, 210 **Goldcrest**, 3 **Pied Flycatcher**, 16 **Chaffinch**, 46 **Brambling**, 6 **Linnet**, 8 **Greenland Redpoll**, 2 **Common Rosefinch**, 19 **Lapland Bunting**, 43 **Snow Bunting** and 3 **Reed Bunting**. Phew!

The best waited until late afternoon when a **PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** was trapped in the Plantation by Will Miles, Lachlan Shaw & Rebecca Nason. SUPERB!!



Thrush Nightingale *Photograph by Mark Breaks*

(Right & below)

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler
Photograph by Deryk Shaw



Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler
Photograph by Deryk Shaw



September 27th: A cracking days birding!! There was a good scattering of common migrants plus a few scarcies and rarities. Top of the pile were **two Lanceolated Warblers**, with birds in the Skadan crop and another trapped in the Plantation. There were also **two Citrine Wagtails** together at Da Water. The first **Barnacle Geese** (10) went through with 7 **Pinkfeet** and 21 **Greylags**. The wet grassy areas and ditches were well covered and turned up totals of 77 **Common Snipe** and 12 **Jack Snipe** plus a **Corncrake**. A **Turtle Dove** was a good find. However, it was passerines that seemed to be popping everywhere with a great variety logged; **Skylarks** (240) and **Meadow Pipits** (291) dominated but there were also 3 **Dunnock**, 12 **Robins**, a **Bluethroat**, 5 **Common Redstart**, 4 **Whinchat**, 5 **Ring Ouzel**, 6 **Blackbird**, 8 **Fieldfare**, 50 **Song Thrush**, 100 **Redwing**, 5 **Barred Warbler**, 18 **Lesser Whitethroat**, 4 **Garden Warbler**, 2 **Blackcap**, 2 **Yellow-browed Warbler**, 7 **Chiffchaff**, 6 **Willow warbler**, 18 **Goldcrest**, **Spotted Flycatcher**, 2 **Pied Flycatcher**, 2 **Chaffinch**, 18 **Brambling**, a **Siskin**, 8 **Linnet**, 10 **Greenland Redpoll**, 2 **Common Rosefinch**, 12 **Lapland Bunting**, 57 **Snow Bunting** and a **Reed Bunting**. Phew!

Another highlight was a treat for the gathered congregation at the Lancy twitch – magnificent views of a pod of 5 **Orcas** as they cruised past South Harbour and South Lighthouse.

September 26th: Four **Whooper Swans** flew past and there were 20 **Pink-footed** and 22 **Greylag Geese**. Duck highlights were a **Pintail** and the **Pochard**. On the passerine front it was quiet with a **Tree Pipit**, **Spotted Flycatcher**, 2 **Common Rosefinch**, 7 **Common (Greenland) Redpoll** and 38 **Snow Bunting**.

September 25th: The **Buff-bellied Pipit** was missing for a lot of the day but turned up back in Suka Mire in the afternoon. A variety of wildfowl were on show today with 15 **Pink-footed Geese**, 45 **Greylag Geese**, 51 **Wigeon**, 30 **Teal** plus singles of **Shoveler**, **Pochard**, **Goldeneye** and **Red-breasted Merganser**. The sea produced two **Red-throated Diver** and 9 **Sooty Shearwater**. The **Moorhen** was seen again at the scrape and a **Stock Dove** at Springfield. Single **Fieldfare** and **Redwing** were logged plus a few warblers; single **Sedge Warbler**, 3 **Barred Warbler**, 3 **Blackcap**, 2 **Garden Warbler** and finches included 2 **Linnet**, 10 **Common Redpoll** and a **Common Rosefinch**. **Snow Buntings** totalled 40 and **Lapland Bunting** 8.

A **Rissos Dolphin** and 3 **Harbour Porpoise** were spotted off Bunes.



Above and below, five more pictures of the **Buff-bellied Pipit**
Photographs by Deryk Shaw



Buff-bellied Pipit with Meadow Pipit
Photograph by Deryk Shaw



Photograph by Mark Breaks



Photograph by Deryk Shaw

September 24th: The **Buff-bellied Pipit** was still present in Suka Mire for most of the day but ranged further in the afternoon and, in poor conditions, could not be found late on. Wildfowl dominated other sightings with 50 **Pink-footed Geese**, 47 **Wigeon** and 35 **Teal** logged. A **Sooty Shearwater** and an adult **Pomarine Skua** were seen from the *Good Shepherd*. An adult **Glaucous Gull** was seen. Passerine arrivals included singles of **Tree Pipit**, **Song Thrush**, **Goldcrest**, **Spotted Flycatcher** and **Linnet**. Other sightings were **Barred Warbler**, 6 **Common Redpolls** and 2 **Lapland Bunting**.



Photograph by Deryk Shaw

Above, right and below 5 images of the **Buff-bellied Pipit**
(Photographer as credited)



Buff-bellied Pipit Photograph by Deryk Shaw



Photograph by Mark Breaks

September 23rd: The constant W/NW winds finally paid dividends today. A **BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT** was found late afternoon in Suka Mire! It showed reasonably well to all Obs visitors in the fading light and was even heard to call. This is the second Fair Isle record, but the first was as long ago as September 1953!

Elsewhere there were 5 **Pinkfooted Geese**, a **Common Scoter**, 2 **Swallow**, **Grey Wagtail**, **Redwing**, 2 **Barred Warbler**, 5 **Common Redpoll**, **Common Rosefinch**, 6 **Lapland Bunting** and 27 **Snow Bunting**.

September 22nd: A better day today kicked off with a **Moorhen** near the scrape! Other new birds included eight Greylag Geese, two **Jack Snipe**, a **Redwing**, two **Barred Warblers**, a **Garden Warbler**, four **Linnets** and 40 **Snow Buntings**. Other increased counts included 219 **Skylark**, 364 **Meadow Pipits**, 36 **Wheatear** and ten **Lapland Buntings**. Also seen were a **Puffin**, **Grey Wagtail**, two **Lesser Whitethroat**, 118 **Twite** and the **Common Rosefinch**.

September 21st: Still pretty quiet although a juvenile **Dotterel** was discovered on Hoini and a **Jack Snipe** at Pund. **Barred Warbler**, **Red-backed Shrike** and **Common Rosefinch** all remain as do at least four 'northwestern' **Common Redpolls** with nine **Lapland Buntings**.

September 20th: The westerly winds and rarity drought continues! A **Grey Wagtail** was new but everything else was the same with 2 **Peregrine**, **Barred Warbler**, **Red-backed Shrike**, **Common Rosefinch**, 6 'northwestern' **Redpoll**, 11 **Lapland Bunting** and 13 **Snow Bunting** counted.

September 19th: A little movement today dominated by 159 **Pink-footed Geese** passing through plus 6 **Teal**, **Red-breasted Merganser**, a new **Barred Warbler** (plus yesterday's bird) and 36 **Snow Bunting**. Seven each of **Common 'northwestern' Redpoll** and **Lapland Bunting** were logged.

September 18th: Similar fare to yesterday with 4 **Pink-footed Geese**, the adult **Glaucous Gull**, the **Red-backed Shrike**, **Barred Warbler** and 5 'northwestern' **Redpolls**, 6 **Lapland Bunting** and 3 **Snow Bunting**. New in however were the first **Jack Snipe** of the autumn plus a pair of **Peregrine** and 2 **Common Rosefinch**. **Skylarks** were up to 208.

September 17th: A bit of excitement today with a few nice arrivals. A **Barred Warbler** was found at Pund after breakfast. This was followed shortly after by 2 **Common Rosefinch** ant Barkland. Then, an unstreaked 'acro' at Skadan mid-morning was trapped and discovered to be just a **Reed Warbler**. In the afternoon, a **Corncrake** was flushed at Midway and a wader flushed first from Rippack and later Mire o' Vatnagard was re-found at the latter site and confirmed as a **Pectoral Sandpiper**. Other sightings and counts included 24 **Pink-footed** and a single **Greylag Goose**, an adult **Glaucous Gull**, the **Red-backed Shrike** and 5 'northwestern' **Redpolls**, 10 **Lapland Bunting** and 12 **Snow Bunting**.



Pectoral Sandpiper Photo by Mark Breaks



Barred Warbler Photo by Deryk Shaw

September 16th: A **Slavonian Grebe** was off Bunes and a **Tufted Duck** in the Havens. Single **Peregrine** and **Kestrel** were seen and 2 **Lesser Whitethroat** may be new. Other than that it was the same stuff with **Red-backed Shrike**, 6 **Lapland Bunting**, 12 **Snow Bunting**, 4+ 'northwestern' **Redpolls**.

September 15th: Best arrivals today were 5 'northwestern' Redpolls. Four were considered *rostrata* whilst a paler individual may have been *islandica* but there is much confusion and debate about the origins and taxonomy of the Redpolls visiting Shetland in recent autumns (hence the 'northwestern' title that has been adopted) that we should be cautious about '(sub)specific' labels. Other arrivals and sightings included a **Collared Dove**, 35 **Cormorant**, **Common Tern**, **Red-backed Shrike**, 8 **Lapland Bunting** and 15 **Snow Bunting**. Higher counts included 202 **Skylark** and 288 **Meadow Pipit** plus 16 **Hooded Crow** and 6 **Carrion Crow**.



'northwestern' Redpolls by Mark Breaks



September 14th: Galeforce westerly winds meant that seawatching was once again the order of the day with totals of just 11 **Sooty Shearwater**, one **Manx Shearwater** and one **Storm Petrel**. In-land there were a **Kestrel**, 98 **Turnstone**, eight **Swallow**, a **Sedge Warbler**, a **Goldcrest**, the **Common Rosefinch**, the **Snow Bunting** and six **Lapland Bunting**.

September 13th: New migrants were a **Common Redstart**, **Sedge Warbler**, six **Swallow**, **Greylag Goose** and up to eight **Lapland Buntings**. A seawatch produced seven **Sooty Shearwater**, two **Storm Petrel**, one **Arctic Tern**, 14 **Cormorant** and a **Red-breasted Merganser**. The **Glaucous Gull**, **Red-backed Shrike** and **Common Rosefinch** all remain.

September 12th: Many hours were spent sea-watching today with the highlight being two distant 'large' **Shearwaters**. Totals were five **Red-throated Diver**, 38 **Sooty Shearwater**, three **Storm Petrel**, 79 **Cormorant** (a record count), two **Arctic Skua**, 35 **Kittiwake**, four **Arctic Tern** and a **Puffin**. Census produced an increase in **Skylark** (132), **Meadow Pipits** (330) and new arrivals were a **Snow Bunting**, **Red-backed Shrike** and an adult **Glaucous Gull** whilst the **Common Rosefinch** remains.

September 11th: Both **Citrine Wagtails** were seen today plus one **Sooty Shearwater** and a **Lesser Whitethroat** and a **Common Rosefinch** was new in.

September 10th: **Citrine Wagtail** was only thing of note on another very misty day today!

September 9th: Wet and misty! A **Red-throated Diver** and three **Arctic Skuas** were offshore. A **Garden Warbler** was trapped and five **Lapland Buntings** were counted.

September 8th: A very slight improvement with one **Citrine Wagtail** seen again today plus 3 **Lapland Buntings**, a **Lesser Whitethroat** and **Kestrel**, **Merlin** and **Peregrine** all present. At sea were a **Pomarine Skua**, four **Storm Petrels** and a couple of **Sooty Shearwaters** – all seen from the Good Shepherd crossing.

September 7th: Still quiet. A couple of **Sooty Shearwaters**, a ‘mealy’ **Common Redpoll** and two **Lapland Buntings** to report.

September 6th: Two **Citrine Wagtails** again today and 3 **Lapland Buntings**.

September 5th: The **Citrine Wagtail** remains at the scrape and the ringed Easter Lother bird has re-appeared! A **Kestrel** and **Common Sandpiper** were the only new arrivals.

September 4th: Another quiet day with the **Citrine Wagtail** still at the scrape but a first-winter **Iceland Gull** in North Haven provided a bit of interest. An increase in **Meadow Pipits** (162) was noted.

September 3rd: The **Citrine Wagtail** remains at the scrape.

September 2nd: The only thing of note in continuing strong NW'ly winds is the **Citrine Wagtail** at the scrape.

September 1st: The month started very quietly with the only new birds being a **Jackdaw** and an increase in **Turnstones** to 120. A **Manx Shearwater** flew past South Light and 11 **Cormorants** were counted. The only warblers were three **Willow Warbler**. The **Citrine Wagtail** remains at the scrape.

2007 - AUGUST SIGHTINGS

August 31st: The **Hudsonian Whimbrel** remained settled in North Haven/Finniequoy Bay for much of the day before flying north along the east cliffs. May we find it again? The **Short-eared Owl**, **Robin** and **Barred Warbler** were all seen again whilst a **Common Sandpiper**, **Tree Pipit** and the first **Lapland Bunting** of the autumn were all new.

Lapland Bunting *Photo by Mark Breaks*



August 30th: The **Hudsonian Whimbrel** was (thankfully) re-found when it flew over the shop calling! It settled along the east coast of the isle but kept very much to the rocky cliff face or small offshore skerries, so could be hard to find. A single **Sooty Shearwater** was seen offshore and the Shetland twitchers reported another from the *Good Shepherd*. Arrivals today consisted of **Short-eared Owl** and **House Martin**. A **Barred Warbler** was trapped at Barkland.



Barred Warbler Photo by Mark Breaks



Citrine Wagtail Photo by Mark Breaks



Hudsonian Whimbrel Photo by Deryk Shaw



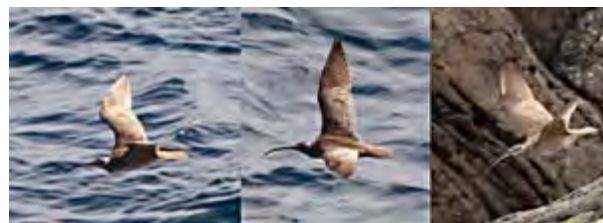
Hudsonian Whimbrel Photo by Deryk Shaw



Hudsonian Whimbrel Photo by Mark Breaks



Hudsonian Whimbrel Photo by Deryk Shaw



Hudsonian Whimbrel Photo by Mark Breaks

August 29th: A few waders around included a couple of **Ruff** and up to two **Spotted Redshank**. One **Citrine Wagtail** remains with c 45 *alba* wagtails. A **Barred Warbler**, two **Garden Warblers**, mealy **Redpoll** and two **Common Rosefinch** are all lingerers. Another attempt at a shearwater seawatch

before tea actually paid off (but not with any shearwaters) when a pale Whimbrel with a striking head pattern and dark rump was spotted flying along Buness – a **HUDSONIAN WHIMBREL**. This is the North American race of our Whimbrel, but a good candidate to be given full species status. It is our second record – Ken Williamson and Valerie Thom discovered the first British record here in 1955. Unfortunately it could not be refound after tea but a search tomorrow will hopefully relocate it.

August 28th: An attempt to cash-in on the movement of large shearwaters past North Ronaldsay was made. It produced 6 **Sooty Shearwaters**, 28 **Cormorant** and a few **Arctic Terns** and **Kittiwakes**. Rubbish! Highlight was in fact 9 **White-beaked Dolphins**. In-land we had a few bird of note; a **Barred Warbler** (at last!), 2+ **Citrine Wagtails**, the **Marsh Warbler** again, a **Song Thrush** and a **mealy Redpoll**. On the warbler front were 3 each of **Lesser Whitethroat** and **Garden Warbler** plus 4 **Willow Warbler** and the 2 summering **Chiffchaffs**. A **Merlin** and **Peregrine** were seen and a late-nesting **Puffin** carrying fish at North Light. In the evening one of the **Citrine Wagtails** was trapped when it came in to roost at the Obs with c40 **alba wagtails**.



Citrine Wagtail Photo by Deryk Shaw

August 27th: There now appears to be at least **two** (possibly **three**) **Citrine Wagtails** with birds at Setter, Utra Scrape and Easter Lothar. Photos show that at least two are different. A **mealy Redpoll** is new, a **Merlin** was trapped in Vaadal and 3 **Common Rosefinch** were seen. A seawatch produced a couple of **Sooty Shearwaters**, 5 **Arctic Skua** and 26 **Arctic Tern**.

August 26th : A strong NNW wind (and reports of Great Shearwaters from a fishing boat 17m west of here) encouraged us to try sea-watching! Several hours of this gave a combined total of 4 **Sooty** and one **Manx Shearwater** plus a handful of **Puffins**, single **Razorbill** and **Arctic Skua** and a dozen **Kittiwakes**. Little of note on land but 13 **Wigeon** arrived on the scrape whilst **Red-backed Shrike** and at least one **Common Rosefinch** remain.

August 25th: A pleasant day with a few new birds in but nothing outstanding.....A **Marsh Warbler** was at Utra and the **Citrine Wagtail** moved to easter Lothar. Counts included 15 **Cormorant**, 3 **Peregrine** and a **Kestrel**, 13 **Willow Warbler**, two each of **Lesser Whitethroat** and **Common Rosefinch** and singles of **Ruff**, **Whinchat**, **Sedge Warbler**, **Pied Flycatcher** and **Red-backed Shrike**.

August 24th: A fairly quiet day. The **Citrine Wagtail** remains at Setter. **Meadow Pipits** increased to 116. Eight **Cormorants** flew by and a **Redwing** arrived with two **Pied Flycatcher**, two **Common Rosefinch** and the **Red-backed Shrike** also seen.

Eight **Harbour Porpoise** were spotted off Buness.

August 23rd: New in today were a **Tree Pipit**, a **flava Wagtail**, a **Wood Warbler** and two **Common Rosefinches** (joining the bird still present). A **Redstart** and **Pied Flycatcher** may be birds from previous days. One **Red-backed Shrike** remains, as does the **Citrine Wagtail**.

August 22nd: Highlights today were a flyover **Wood Sandpiper** and the arrival of a second **Red-backed Shrike**. Other fly-throughs included 5 **Greylag Geese**, 17 **Cormorant** and 61 **Golden Plover**. Waders were in evidence today with 23 **Curlew**, 38 **Redshank**, 42 **Turnstone**, 4 **Ruff** and a **Common Sandpiper**. Other passerines of note included 11 **Swallow**, 2 **Whinchat**, 7 **Garden Warbler**, 17 **Willow Warbler**, a **Grasshopper Warbler** and a **Spotted Flycatcher** whilst the **Citrine Wagtail** and **Common Rosefinch** remain.

Three distant **Dolphins** were spotted offshore.

August 21st: The **Greenish Warbler** was roosted overnight and released early this morning. The **Citrine Wagtail** was still in the Setter area whilst the **Red-backed Shrike** and **Common Rosefinch** also remain. Arrivals included the first **Redstart** and **Whinchat** of the autumn with two **Ruff**, single **Common Sandpiper** and counts of 19 **Knot** and 18 **Willow Warbler** also of note. A **Sooty Shearwater** and three **Storm Petrels** were seen in Fair Isle waters from the Good Shepherd. Eleven 'Stormies' were trapped later that night.



Greenish Warbler
Photo by Mark Breaks

August 20th: Arrivals today included a **Pied Flycatcher** and a **Red-backed Shrike** with **Willow Warblers** up to nine and *alba* **wagtails** to 60 (with the **Citrine Wagtail**). An increase in waders was also noted with 40 **Ringed Plover**, 8 **Knot**, 3 **Sanderling**, 10 **Dunlin**, 4 **Ruff**, 37 **Turnstone** and a **Common Sandpiper**. Best waited til last with a **Greenish Warbler** trapped in the Plantation last thing.

August 19th: A **Merlin**, 3 **Ruff** and a **Common Sandpiper** were new whilst **Wheatears** increased to 130 and **Willow Warblers** to eight. The **Common Rosefinch** remains.

August 18th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike** is hanging on and the **Citrine Wagtail** put in a re-appearance. A small arrival today included a couple of **Greylag Geese**, a **Sparrowhawk**, 98 **Wheatear** and a scattering of warblers (**Sedge**, **Lesser Whitethroat**, **Garden** (40) and **Willow** (3)) plus the summering Willow and **Chiffchaff**. The **Common Rosefinch** was seen again.

August 17th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike**, following two wet & windy days, is now looking decidedly worse for wear. Two **Goldeneye** arrived, hinting that the summer is now over whilst 67 **Wheatears** were counted.

August 16th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike** remains and a **Common Rosefinch** was trapped.



Common Rosefinch
Photo by Mark Breaks

August 15th: A **Wigeon** was the only new arrival on a blustery day. **Lesser Grey Shrike**, **Citrine Wagtail** and **Wryneck** all remain.

August 14th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike** is still present. The **Citrine Wagtail** is also still here and came in to roost at the Chalet with a dozen or so '**alba**' wagtails (with another dozen at the Obs Plantation). The **Icterine Warbler** remains at Schoolton where there was also a **Wryneck**. A scattering of waders included the three **godwits** and the first **Common Sandpiper** of the autumn. Warblers are still thin on the ground with just 3 **Willow**, 3 **Sedge** and 2 **Garden** seen plus the summering **Chiffchaff**.

August 13th: An early **Citrine Wagtail** was discovered at Setter and a distant calling (presumed) **Spotted Redshank** simultaneously flew over. The **Icterine Warbler** remains at Schoolton and the **Fieldfare** at Field. Single **Sedge**, **Garden** and **Willow Warblers** were the only migrants.

August 12th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike** is still present. Still very few migrants but the **Icterine Warbler** remains at Schoolton and the **Common Rosefinch** was at Leogh.

August 11th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike** is still present. Still very few migrants but scarcities are starting to appear with a male **Common Rosefinch** trapped at Barkland first thing, followed with a **Wryneck** at Leogh and an **Icterine Warbler** at Schoolton. A **Wryneck** was trapped at the Obs in the afternoon.

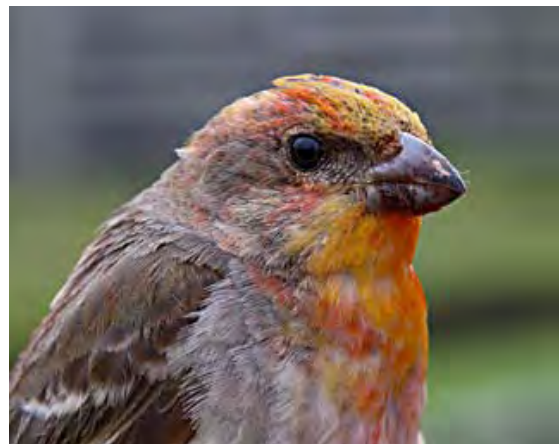
August 10th: Single **Sedge**, **Garden** and **Willow Warblers** were noted plus a flock of 6 **Grey Heron** and 2 **Cormorant**. The **Lesser Grey Shrike** is still present.



Citrine Wagtail Photos by Mark Breaks



Common Rosefinch
Photos Mark Breaks



August 9th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike** is still present. Three **Ruff**, 5 **Whimbrel** and a **Greenshank** arrived. **Wheatears** reached 158 and the **Fieldfare** remains. Ten **Storm Petrels** were trapped at night.

August 8th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike** is still present. The first warblers of the autumn appeared with single **Grasshopper**, **Sedge** and **Garden** seen. An early **Fieldfare** also arrived. Counts of 8 **Teal**, 4 **Grey Heron**, 100 **Wheatear** and 89 **Twite** were of note.

August 7th: Much the same as yesterday but with 5 **Green Sandpipers** and a **Bar-tailed Godwit** thrown in but a **Sand Martin** was new whilst gulls increased dramatically with 22 **Black-headed Gulls** and 830 **Common Gulls** counted.



Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits Photo Mark Breaks

August 6th: Waders were the main features with 34 **Golden Plover**, 11 **Sanderling**, 4 **Ruff** and 2 **Black-tailed Godwit**. An increase in **Common Gulls** (82) was noted whilst the **Lesser Grey Shrike** is still present.

August 5th: An afternoon seawatch off Bunes produced 3 **Manx Shearwaters** and 50 **Dunlin**. Other new arrivals recorded included a male **Peregrine**, 4 **Grey Herons** and now up to three **Green Sandpipers**.

August 4th: The winds changed from westerly to south easterly over night and resulted in a **Sedge Warbler** on morning trap round and **Swift** over plantation



Pectoral Sandpiper Photos Mark Breaks

August 3rd: Very similar to yesterday's totals with the addition of a **Whimbrel**, 4 **Swallows** and a very showy adult **Pectoral Sandpiper** found on small pools at Mire o' Vatnagard. 36 **Storm Petrels** were trapped in the evening.

August 1st-2nd: First day of the autumn census proper produced only one new arrival in the form of a **Kestrel**. Wader numbers remained similar with 4 **Ruff**, **Greenshank**, **Green Sand**, 21 **Redshank** and 9 **Golden Plover**. **Green Sandpipers** increased to two on the 2nd and 4 **Dunlin** were recorded.

2007 - JULY SIGHTINGS



Arctic Redpoll Photos Deryk Shaw



July: A very quiet month for migrants but the highlight was a totally unexpected **Arctic Redpoll** trapped in the Vaadal on the 19th. The **Lesser Grey Shrike** remained resident at Barkland throughout the month. The **Marsh Warbler** stayed until the 17th and Reed Warbler until 10th. An **Iceland Gull** in the South (1st) and singing **Quail** at Schoolton was last heard on the 2nd. A few scarce migrants included Lesser Redpoll (9th), Black Redstart (15th), Turtle Dove (18th-27th) and a Sandwich Tern past Bunes (20th). The first returning waders on the 16th included **Sanderling**, **Bar-tailed Godwit**, **Purple Sandpiper** and the 1st **Ruff** of the year on the 24th had increased to three on the 31st. Also present was a **Greenshank** (24th-31st), two **Green Sandpipers**, eight **Golden Plovers** (25th) and upto 43 **Turnstones** (30th).

2007 - JUNE SIGHTINGS

June 25th-30th: A female **Red-backed Shrike** was present on the 30th, **Marsh Warbler** remained at the Obs and was joined by a **Reed Warbler** on the 29th. 21 **Storm Petrels** were seen off the North Lighthouse and the **Lesser Grey Shrike** remained throughout the month.

June 24th: The **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. The **Quail** was heard singing again and the **Marsh Warbler** was trapped, along with a fresh juvenile **Stonechat** (presumably bred in Orkney or Mainland Shetland).

June 23rd: The **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. Singing **Quail** and **Siskin** were around Schoolton.

Marsh Warbler Photo by Mark Breaks



June 22nd: The **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. A male **Tufted Duck** was on Golden Water. A **Marsh Warbler** was at Pund and 2 **Blackcap**, **Chiffchaff** and **Willow Warbler** were around the traps.

June 21st: The **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. A **Wood Pigeon**, **Common Whitethroat**, **Pied Flycatcher** and 'mealy' **Common Redpoll** were all new.

An increase in **Painted Lady** (30) and **Red Admiral** (10) butterflies was noted.

June 20th: The **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. The **flava wagtail** was still present.

June 19th: The **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. A male **Blackcap** and female 'flava ssp' **Wagtail** were new.

June 18th: The **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. Single **Merlin** and **Swift** were seen plus 2 **Garden Warblers**.

June 17th: The **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. A north-bound **Osprey** flew through in the morning and 5 **Garden Warblers** were counted along with two **Chiffchaff** and a **House Martin**. The **Common Scoter** was seen again as was the female **Red-backed Shrike** and a **Corn Bunting** may have been the bird last seen on 6th!!

June 16th: The **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. A male **Common Scoter**, a **Cuckoo**, a **Swift** and a female **Red-backed Shrike** were all new.

June 15th: Two **Barnacle Geese** arrived (staying until 19th) and a **Marsh Warbler** was trapped. Other arrivals were a **Common Sandpiper**, a **Black Redstart** and a **Spotted Flycatcher** whilst the **Iceland Gull** and **Lesser Grey Shrike** remain. The first **Eider ducklings** were noted.

June 14th: No sign of the Terek Sandpiper but the **Lesser Grey Shrike** is still here, as are two **Red-backed Shrikes**, including a female which was ringed two weeks ago!

June 13th: The run of quality June birds continues with a **Terek Sandpiper** in South Harbour – the first for the isle and fourth for Shetland! A **Short-toed Lark** was on Vaasetter whilst the **Lesser Grey** and **Red-backed Shrikes** remain.



Terek Sandpiper Photo Mark Breaks



Terek Sandpiper Photo Mark Breaks



Short-toed Lark Photo Deryk Shaw



Terek Sandpiper Photo Deryk Shaw

June 12th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike** remains around Schoolton/Midway area. Two **Red-backed Shrikes** were also seen and a similar number of **Cuckoos**, plus singles of **Common Scoter**, **Ring Ouzel** and **Common Rosefinch**.



Lesser Grey Shrike Photo Deryk Shaw



Lesser Grey Shrike Photo Deryk Shaw



River Warbler Photo by Deryk Shaw



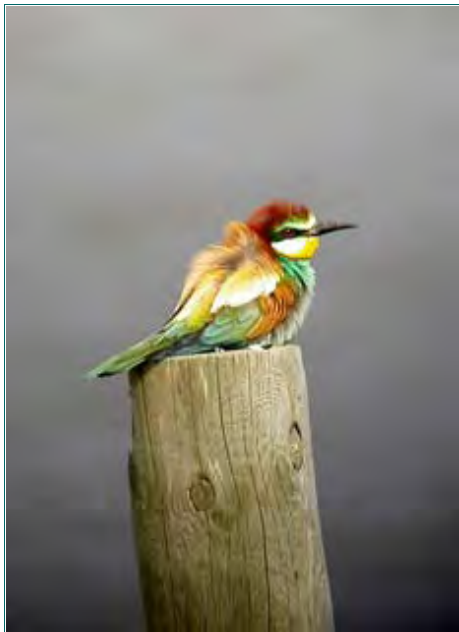
River Warbler Photo by Deryk Shaw

June 11th: Two **Sandwich Terns** flying over the isle early on were well beaten into second place by a **River Warbler** at the Observatory mid-morning – our 12th record!! A few other new things in included a **Cuckoo**, **Icterine Warbler**, four **Red-backed Shrike** and a **Common Rosefinch**. The **Lesser Grey Shrike** remains and the first fledged **Pied Wagtails** were noted.

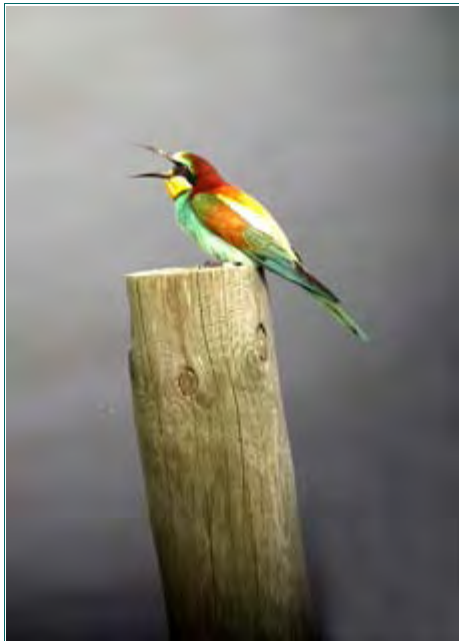
A scattering of **Red Admiral** (15 logged) and **Painted Lady** (30) butterflies was nice and possibly eclipsing even the River Warbler was the sight of three **Killer Whales** actually *in* North Haven – right against the pier!!!!



Killer Whale Photo by Mark Breaks



Bee-eater Photo by Deryk Shaw



June 1st-10th: A new month started with a new bird for the year, but its identity left us puzzled - a female **Red/Black-headed Bunting** frequented rough grassland in the Quoy/ Burkle area until 7th.

Bunting showing features of both Black-headed and Red-headed.

Photo by Mark Breaks

Any informed comment would be welcome!

More of Mark's pictures can be seen on his website:
breakspics.mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/



The **Whooper Swan** remained throughout with the occasional **Greylag Goose**. Five **Shelduck** on 2nd was a great count, with a single until 5th. A handful of other ducks (**Wigeon**, **Teal**, **Tufted Duck** & **Red-breasted Merganser**) were also seen during the first week. The first **Storm Petrel** of the year was seen from the *Good Shepherd* crossing, when a stunning **European Bee-eater** arrived, staying

until 6th. A lingering **Peregrine** was seen on and off, as was the **Rosy Starling** from late May. On the wader front, a flock of 12 **Lapwings** on 3rd was an indication that the first failed breeders are already heading south whilst late migrants included a few **Dunlin** and **Whimbrel**. Six **Common Sandpipers** were present on 1st and a **Green Sandpiper** on 2nd-3rd. The long-staying **Iceland Gull** was present throughout and was joined by another first-summer from 6th-10th. **Arctic Tern** numbers fluctuated and, after prospecting for several weeks, most colonies were finally deserted, but c200 birds have settled on Bunes and c50 at Shalstane near South Light. **Cuckoos** were noted on 3rd & 9th and a few **Swifts** overhead peaked at 18 on 7th. A **Short-toed Lark** on 5th was a welcome addition to the year list. Hirundines were ever-present with peaks of 40 **Swallows** (4th) and 17 **House Martins** (1st). the last **Tree Pipit** of the spring was noted on 5th and the first few days of the month also saw 1-2 **Grey-headed Wagtails**. Other late migrants included the odd Black Redstart, **Common Redstart**, **Whinchat**, **Ring Ouzel**, **Redwing** and a scattering of all the common warblers with a **Marsh Warbler** (7th), **Reed Warbler** (7th), up to four **Icterine Warblers** and a **Paddyfield Warbler** (9th) thrown in for good measure!



Marsh Warbler Photo by Mark Breaks



Marsh Warbler Photo by Mark Breaks



Paddyfield Warbler Photo by Mark Breaks



Paddyfield Warbler Photo by Mark Breaks

There were daily sightings of **Red-backed Shrike** (peak of 6 on 5th), to the annoyance of the lingering **Lesser Grey Shrike**, with at least 12 birds involved. Single **Common Rosefinches** were seen on 1st & 3rd and a **Corn Bunting** on 6th whilst the **Rustic Bunting** from late May stayed until 4th.

2007 - MAY SIGHTINGS

May 31st: A light to moderate easterly with hazy low cloud resulted in the best day of the spring....so far!

Although no official BBRC rares were in evidence, a fair scattering of scarce migrants made up for it. It started with an **Icterine Warbler** in the Havens.

Two more were later found (at Leogh & Hesti Geo). An **Osprey** flew over at North Light (and was flushed from the cliffs there in the afternoon). **A**

Common Rosefinch at Pund was followed by another at Haa. The Walli Burn produced a **Marsh Warbler** and, moments later, a male **Rustic Bunting**. The Marsh Warbler was seen to be sporting a ring and efforts were therefore made to trap it. It had been ringed in Norway! A male **Red-backed Shrike** shared the fences at Midway with the **Lesser Grey Shrike**.

As everyone arrived back at the Obs for lunch, a **Golden Oriole** flew into the Obs Plantation! A thin scattering of common migrants (**Spotted Flycatcher, Pied Flycatcher, Redstart, Sedge, Garden & Willow Warbler**) was noted. One Sedge Warbler was trapped bearing a French ring! The afternoon produced a Cruiseship carrying 120 Americans, but no new ornithological migrants!



Rustic Bunting Photos by Mark Breaks



Golden Oriole Photo by Mark Breaks

May 30th: The wind finally switched from NE'ly to E'ly mid-afternoon, with instant results.....a few migrants were caught in the traps and this spurred everyone to get out there. As the wind swung round to SE'ly and picked up to near gale force, birding became difficult and most birds were sheltering down the cliffs. Nevertheless some good totals (for this spring!!) were made. Three each of **Icterine Warbler and Red-backed Shrike** were supported by totals of 14 **Spotted Flycatcher**, 10 **Garden Warbler**, 7 **Willow Warbler**, 4 **Redstart**, 3 **Tree Pipit** plus a **Grey-headed Wagtail** and a **Stonechat**. The **Lesser Grey Shrike** was seen again and a **Peregrine**, 3 **Tufted Duck** and a **Common Scoter**.



Icterine Warbler Photo by Mark Breaks



Icterine Warbler Photo by Mark Breaks

May 29th: Another quiet day although the **Lesser Grey Shrike** remains and showed very well. New in were a **Garden Warbler** and a **Whinchat**. The **Saker Falcon** was seen briefly as was the **Turtle Dove**.

May 28th: The **Lesser Grey Shrike** remains and a first-summer **Rosy Starling** was found at Wirvie. Also new in are a couple of **Barnacle Geese**, three **Golden Plover** and a **Black Redstart**. **Arctic Terns** have risen back to 100. Single **Turtle Dove** and **Ring Ouzel** are still present.

A **Small Tortoiseshell** butterfly was seen.



Rosy Starling Photo by Mark Breaks



Lesser Grey Shrike Photo Mark Breaks



Lesser Grey Shrike Photo by Paul Baxter



Lesser Grey Shrike Photo by Mark Breaks



Lesser Grey Shrike Photo by Paul Baxter

May 27th: New in were a **Grey Heron**, two **Swift**, 50 **Swallows**, two **Whitethroat** and a mealy **Common Redpoll** but pride of place went to a superb **LESSER GREY SHRIKE**. Initially at the Chalet, it was very mobile and wandered as far as Hill Dyke and Houll.



Red-backed Shrike Photo Mark Breaks



Red-backed Shrike Photo Mark Breaks

May 26th: A **Peregrine** was present but a much larger raptor, thought to be a **Saker** was also seen briefly. A female **Bluethroat** was seen in the Parks whilst a fine male was trapped in Vaadal. The female **Red-backed Shrike**, female **Ring Ouzel** and **Turtle Dove** all remain. Counts included just 26 **Arctic Tern**, 41 **Lesser Black-backed Gull** and nine **Sedge Warbler**.

May 25th: Another quiet day with virtually nothing new although some nice birds were still to be seen. The **Surf Scoter**, **Red-backed Shrike**, **Bluethroat** and **Turtle Dove** all remain. A **Sparrowhawk**, **Swift** and **Ring Ouzel** were the only other things of note. The first brood of **Meadow Pipits** were ringed.

May 24th: All of yesterday's birds remain plus a smart male **Bluethroat** near Bullock Holes.



Bluethroat Photo by Mark Breaks

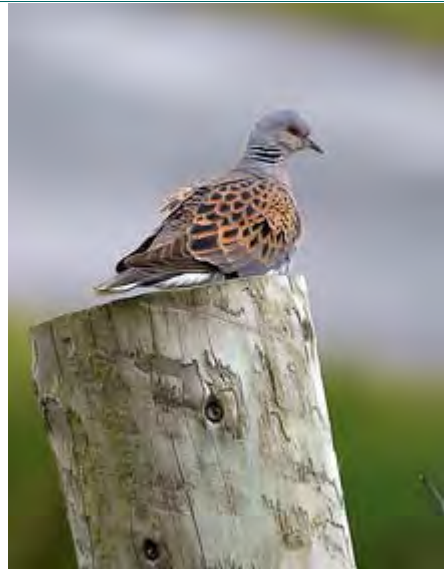




Bluethroat
Photos by Mark Breaks



Siskin *Photo by Paul Baxter*



Turtle Dove *Photo by Paul Baxter*

May 23rd: Much the same birds as yesterday with the **Surf Scoter** in North Haven, **Red-backed Shrike** at Midway and the three escaped **Bar-headed Geese** near Shirva. However, new birds included a **Turtle Dove** at Barkland, a **Grey-headed (Yellow) Wagtail** at Springfield and a **Subalpine Warbler** at Schoolton.



Subalpine Warbler *Photo by Paul Baxter*



Subalpine Warbler
Photo by Paul Baxter



Subalpine Warbler Photo by Mark Breaks



Grey-headed Wagtail Photo by Mark Breaks



Surf Scoter Photos by Mark Breaks



May 22nd: Hooray! Our first **Red-backed Shrike** of the year – a female trapped in the Vaadal!! Also, a **Swift** was new for the year, a **Black-tailed Godwit** on the scrape was nice as were the three escaped **Bar-headed Geese** at the same place! A count of 15 **Sedge Warblers** was good plus a few **Tree Pipits**, two **Ring Ouzels** and an unidentified large falcon thought to possibly be a Saker! The female **Surf Scoter** was showing well in North Haven

Red-backed Shrike Photo by Mark Breaks



May 21st: A pretty quiet day was brightened up enormously by the discovery of a female **Surf Scoter** in Furse – the first confirmed record for the isle!! At least one **Grasshopper Warbler** was seen and ten **Sedge Warblers**. Hirundines were in evidence with 80 **Swallows**, 25 **House Martins** and two **Sand Martins** logged. The two **Bar-headed Geese** have increased to three!



Surf Scoter Photos by Mark Breaks

May 20th: The male **Common Scoter** had relocated from Swartz Geo to South harbour. A handful of common warblers were noted and single **Spotted Flycatcher** and **Black Redstart**. The pair of **Snow Buntings** remain. We were visited by two **Bar-headed Geese** in the evening!

May 19th: The most notable (only) increase was that of **Swallows**, with a count of 71 plus a single **Sand Martin**. A number of birds from previous days were seen including **Green Sandpiper** and **Iceland Gull** but new in were a male **Common Scoter**, **Grasshopper Warbler** and a **Goldfinch**.

May 15th - May 18th: Very few migrants even with southeasterly winds for the last couple of days. Highlights for the 15th were the ringed **Icterine Warbler**, which reappeared in Sma' Trinket Geo and a **Spotted Flycatcher**. New in on the 16th were a flyover of 3 redhead **Goosanders** and a **Mealy Redpoll**. A **Barnacle Goose** was seen flying around on the 18th, also present **Green Sandpiper**, 2 **Grey Wagtails** and **Dunlin** increased to 6. The **Stock Dove** remained until the 16th.



Snow Bunting Photo Mark Breaks

A pod of five **Orcas** showed well off North Lighthouse on the 17th.

May 14th: Much quieter than yesterday but there were now 3 **Sedge Warblers**, 3 **Pied Flycatchers** and at least 3 **Cuckoos** present. Also seen were a **Sparrowhawk**, 3 **Common Terns** and 2 **Ring Ouzels**.



Icterine Warbler
Photo Mark Breaks



Thrush Nightingale
Photo Mark Breaks

May 13th: The best day of the spring so far, with no less than seven year ticks.....A **Spotted Flycatcher** and **Common Whitethroat** outside the Obs first thing was a good sign. An **Icterine Warbler** was trapped in Double Dyke on the way out to census after breakfast. Two more each of Spotted Flycatcher and Common Whitethroat were seen. **Redstarts** on the west cliffs and at Setter were followed with a **Stock Dove** at Barkland and a **Wood Warbler** at Klingers Geo. The bird of the day was then discovered at North Shirva – a classic-looking, but elusive **Thrush Nightingale**. It gave only brief views as it ranged between Shirva and Lower Stoneybrek. The last addition to the year list was an **Osprey** that flew north in the evening!

Census also produced a pair of **Peregrines**, three **Sanderling**, three **Dunlin**, ten **Whimbrel**, two **Common Tern**, 180 **Arctic Tern**, three **Tree Pipit**, six **Whinchat**, 195 **Wheatear**, ten **Willow Warbler**, five **Chiffchaff**, two *mealy* **Redpoll** and two **Snow Bunting** plus single **Pied Flycatcher**, **Grasshopper Warbler** and **Garden Warbler**. A good day!!!

A **Small Tortoiseshell** butterfly was also seen.

May 12th: New in today were a **Knot**, 4 **Tree Pipit** and a male **Pintail**. An **Icterine Warbler** was also seen near the Planation in the afternoon and another (very tired individual) was found at Schoolton Ditch in the evening.

These were eclipsed by a superb pod of five **Orca** which hugged the shores of Bunes at lunchtime before heading north.

May 11th: The **Brent Goose** and **Iceland Gull** remain. A **Red-throated Diver** flew past as did a couple of **Cormorant**. New in were a **Common Sandpiper**, 4 **Teal** and an increased number (65) of **Arctic Terns**.

Two **Orca** cruised past.

Orca photographs by Mark Breaks



May 8th – 10th: The dark-bellied **Brent Goose** and **Iceland Gull** remain. The **Corncrake** was seen again on 8th. A **Common Scoter**, also on 8th was a first for the year. The 9th was a quiet apart from a **Great Northern Diver** in Furse and a new **Goldfinch** in the Plantation. A cool easterly wind on 10th brought in a **Cuckoo**, a **Ring Ouzel**, a late **Snow Bunting** and a **Green Sandpiper**, which was a rare capture - in the Vaadal.

Green Sandpiper
Photo by Mark Breaks



May 7th: A **Corncrake** ran across the road in front of the Obs van at Leogh. A **Wryneck** was discovered near the Puffinn. A dark-bellied **Brent Goose** joined the six lingering Greylags. An early **Garden Warbler** was spotted near South Harbour. A 1st summer **Iceland Gull** lingers and just a handful of common **warblers**.

Best of all though had to be the pod of five **Orcas** seen at various points around the coastline during the afternoon and evening!!



Orcas



Photos by Mark Breaks

May 6th: A generally wet and blustery day resulting in a few resorting to seawatching! This proved surprisingly effective with a **Manx Shearwater** and up to four **Common Terns** logged – both species new for the year!

May 5th: A **Sanderling** was new for the year whilst the blue-headed **Yellow Wagtail**, a **Grasshopper Warbler** and **Pied Flycatcher** were all likely to be from previous days. A mealy **Common Redpoll** was caught on the early trapround and a couple of **Siskins** were seen.



Common Redpoll and Siskin Photo by Mark Breaks

May 4th: Two more year ticks today – a male *flava* **Yellow Wagtail** and a **Pied Flycatcher**. A female **Hen Harrier** and a **Green Sandpiper** were new. Pretty quiet otherwise; a total of seven thrushes of four species, a couple each of **Blackcap**, **Willow Warbler** and **Chiffchaff** and the lingering **Whooper Swan**.

Two **Minke Whales** were seen.

May 3rd: The first **Cuckoos** (2) of the Spring arrived today! The only other sightings of note were cetaceans in the very calm sea.....

A total of five **Minke Whales** (a three and two singles) were spotted but best of all were the two **Pilot Whales** (female and calf) seen from a boat half a mile off North Lighthouse.



Minke whale Photo by Mark Breaks

May 2nd: The fine dry spell of weather continues and although migrants were still thin on the ground, a nice **Wryneck** was found in South Raeva during morning census and a smart male **Hawfinch** entertained children in the playpark for a while before relocating to Barkland. Two **Short-eared Owls**, a **Tree Pipit** and the *rubicola* **Common Stonechat** were the best of the rest.



Hawfinch Photo by Mark Breaks



Hawfinch Photo by Mark Breaks



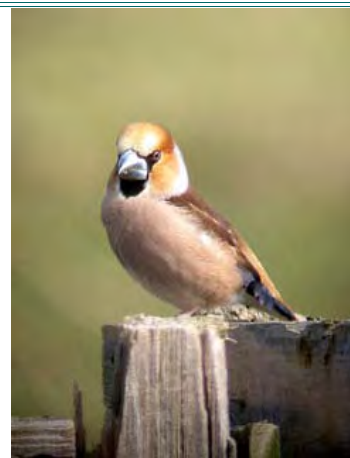
Wryneck Photo by Mark Breaks



Wryneck Photo by Mark Breaks



Hawfinch Photo by Deryk Shaw



Hawfinch Photo by Deryk Shaw

The dead **Minke Whale** was towed out to sea and sunk!



Quail Photos by Paul Baxter

May 1st: The month opened with a **Quail** at Chalet & Barkland and a pair of **Tufted Duck** on Easter Lother. **Black-tailed Godwit**, *rubicola* **Stonechat** and **Whinchat** remain.

Two live **Minke Whales** were spotted off Hjukni Geo!

2007 - APRIL SIGHTINGS

April 30th: Bird of the day was not found until the evening - a smart **Little Bunting** at Barkland. A probable *rubicola* male **Stonechat** toured the south end and spent some time in the company of a male **Whinchat**. A **Grasshopper warbler** remains at the Obs and a **Black-tailed Godwit** near the shop. Three **Lesser Whitethroats** and a male **Blackcap** arrived with the first **Goldcrest** for a fortnight. A long-dead **Minke Whale** (c5m long) floated into South Harbour.



Little Bunting Photo by Paul Baxter

Little Bunting Photo by Mark Breaks



Grasshopper Warbler Photo by Paul Baxter



Grasshopper Warbler
Photo by Paul Baxter

April 29th: A quiet day with a light but cool ESE wind. Highlight was the male **Whinchat** in Field Ditch whilst three **Grasshopper Warblers** included at least one new. A couple of **Ring Ouzels** were seen.

April 28th: A **Short-eared Owl** was new in and of two **Iceland Gulls**, at least one was a new bird. Three **Grasshopper Warblers** were spotted whilst **Wheatears** reached 190! Three (of six) **Siskins** were trapped.

April 27th: Another **Grasshopper Warbler** was trapped, the two **Goldfinch** remain. A total of 175 **Wheatear** were counted, with many *leucorhoa* race noted. A count of four **Peregrines** (three together) is impressive, as was a flock of 45 **Swallows** with a few **House Martins** and at least one **Sand Martin**. A **Linnet** was new whilst the **Siberian Chiffchaff** remains.

Grasshopper Warbler
Photo Mark Breaks



Siberian Chiffchaff Photo by Mark Breaks



Siberian Chiffchaff Photo by Mark Breaks

April 26th: Three year ticks today; a **Sedge Warbler** and **Goldfinch** were trapped first thing. Another **Goldfinch** arrived in the afternoon, when a **Grasshopper Warbler** was found at Charlie's trees! A **Shelduck** flying south was the best of the rest.

April 25th: A quiet day but the **Garganey** was seen again, in Boini Mire.

April 24th: A male **Garganey** narrowly missed being caught in the Gully trap. An influx of hirundines saw 24 **Swallows**, 14 **House Martin** and a **Sand Martin** logged. **Wheatears** topped 100, including several of the larger *leucorhoa* race. A handful of **Willow Warblers** and **Chiffchaffs** (including a cracking **Siberian Chiffchaff**), **Ring Ouzel** and **Iceland Gull** were other highlights.



Siberian Chiffchaff Photo Deryk Shaw



Siberian Chiffchaff
Photo by Mark Breaks



Siberian Chiffchaff Photo Deryk Shaw

April 23rd: A cracking days birding in a (predominantly) light south easterly and near blue skies. Pride of place goes to the 1stW female **Black-throated Thrush** near Linni Geo – our 11th record but only 2nd in Spring. A cracking summer-plumaged **Slavonian Grebe** frequented Hesti Geo. Several other firsts for the year put in an appearance with single **Sand Martin**, **Tree Pipit**, **Lesser Whitethroat** and **Blackcap** plus a good count of three **Sandwich Tern** also.



Black-throated Thrush



Photos Mark Breaks



Slavonian Grebe
Photo Deryk Shaw

April 22nd: A **Common Sandpiper** in South harbour was new for the year, whilst **Fieldfares** topped the 100 mark.

April 21st: Morning census produced very little but the **Little Gull** was still present – at Lower Leogh. However, an arrival of thrushes in the afternoon brought in the first **Ring Ouzels** of the year – a total of 18 were seen, including an amazing flock of 16 in the Kirn o' Scrool!

April 20th: A 1st S **Little Gull** was in Furse in the morning and South Harbour in the afternoon. This is the 20th individual to visit the isle and the first since one in October 2004. Elsewhere, an adult **Whooper Swan** arrived and four species of **geese** remain.

April 17th: The first **Arctic Skua** – a dark morph – in the morning was followed by the second – a light morph – in the evening. Two **Barnacle Geese** were flushed from Suka Mire and re-settled by Walli Burn. There was little else of note, but the first **Guillemot** egg was found – predated!

April 16th: The first **Willow Warbler** on the early morning trapround was followed with 2 cracking **Black-tailed Godwits** before lunch.



Black-tailed Godwits *Photo Mark Breaks*



Black-tailed Godwit *Photo Mark Breaks*

April 15th: New birds today were **Greenshank**, **Whimbrel** and **House Martin**. Long-stayers include **Greenland Whitefronted & Pink-footed Geese**, **Shoveler** and 2 **Iceland Gulls**.



Greenland Whitefronted Goose Photo Mark Breaks



Sparrowhawk Photo Mark Breaks

April 14th: A lone **Whooper swan** flew through whilst **Bar-tailed Godwit** was added to the year list. **Bonxies** have risen to 26 and **Wheatears** to over 30. Two **Swallows** were seen and the female **Sparrowhawk** and **Jackdaw** remain. A cracking male **Lapland Bunting** frequented Eas Brecks.

April 13th: A **Green Sandpiper** was flushed from Easter Lother. Two **Collared Doves**, 20 **Wheatears**, a **Rook**, 2 **Linnet**, **Siskin** and **Yellowhammer** also arrived.

April 12th: Three **Shelduck** flew past early morning. A small fall was noted with 200 **Skylark**, 12 **Wheatear**, 20 **Golden Plover**, 25 **Black-headed Gull**, up to 10 **Bonxies** and an increase in thrushes. Single female **Sparrowhawk** and male **Merlin** were also new. Best of all though was the first **Swallow**, past the Obs at teatime! Our first French-ringed **Chiffchaff** was trapped at Barkland.



Wheatear Photo Mark Breaks

April 11th: Now 3 **Brambling** at the Obs plus the **Jackdaw** and 50 **Redwing** plus a male **Snow Bunting**. **Iceland Gulls** increased to 3 amid an arrival of 16 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**.

April 10th: A male **Sparrowhawk** is new and 2 **Brambling** at the Obs. A lone **Bonxie** frequents the North.

April 9th: The same birds as yesterday plus a **Reed Bunting** and an influx of **Redwings** (150).

April 8th: At last – our first **Wheatear** has arrived! A **Jackdaw** is new whilst **Great Tit**, **Iceland Gull** and **Grey Wagtail** remain.



Snow bunting Photo Mark Breaks



Iceland Gull *Photo Mark Breaks*



Iceland Gull *Photo Mark Breaks*

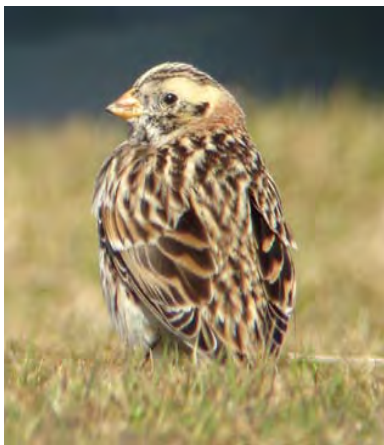
April 7th: Three **Great Northern Divers** are in Hesswalls. The **Lapland Bunting** lingers.

April 6th: **Great Tit** still here. The male **Lapland Bunting** was trapped at Barkland. Some arrivals included a 1st W **Glaucous Gull**, 14 **Raven**, 2 **Rook**, 4 **Chaffinch** and 3 **Brambling**.

April 5th: **Great Tit** still at the Obs. A **Great Northern Diver** in Hesswalls was the only new bird.

April 4th: The **Great Tit** remains at the Obs and a **Lapland Bunting** at Springfield may be different. Two **Grey Wagtails**, 3 **Snow Bunting** and one of the **Iceland Gulls** were also seen.

April 3rd: The female **Great Tit** remained in the Obs garden and was joined there in the afternoon by a female **Brambling** and a male **Lapland Bunting**. A ringtail **Hen Harrier** floated around but other than that there appeared to be little new.



Lapland Bunting *photo by Mark Breaks*

April 2nd: Of two male **Stonechats** present today, one was trapped in Single Dyke – a less than annual occurrence!

Stonechat
photo by Deryk Shaw



April 1st: Yet another day of virtually no wind!!! The female **Great Tit** had migrated to the Obs, whereupon it was trapped. The traps had a good day with a **Grey Wagtail** and a **Black Redstart** also caught. Three **Bonxies** were seen in the North, along with a **Kestrel** and a **Woodcock**. Elsewhere, a **Lapland Bunting**, 6 **Chiffchaff**, 8 **Goldcrest** and a **Reed Bunting** were logged. In the evening, 120 **Puffins** had gathered in Finniequoy – the first birds ashore must be imminent!

Great Tit
photo by Deryk Shaw



Grey Wagtail
photo by Deryk Shaw



Black Redstart
photo by Deryk Shaw

Deryk Shaw

2007 - MARCH SIGHTINGS

March 31st: Best sighting today was found (and identified) by Brian Wilson outside his house at Houll – a **Great Tit!** A **Linnet** at Barkland was also new in whilst **Bonxie**, **Woodcock**, **Merlin** and **Stonechat** were other highlights.

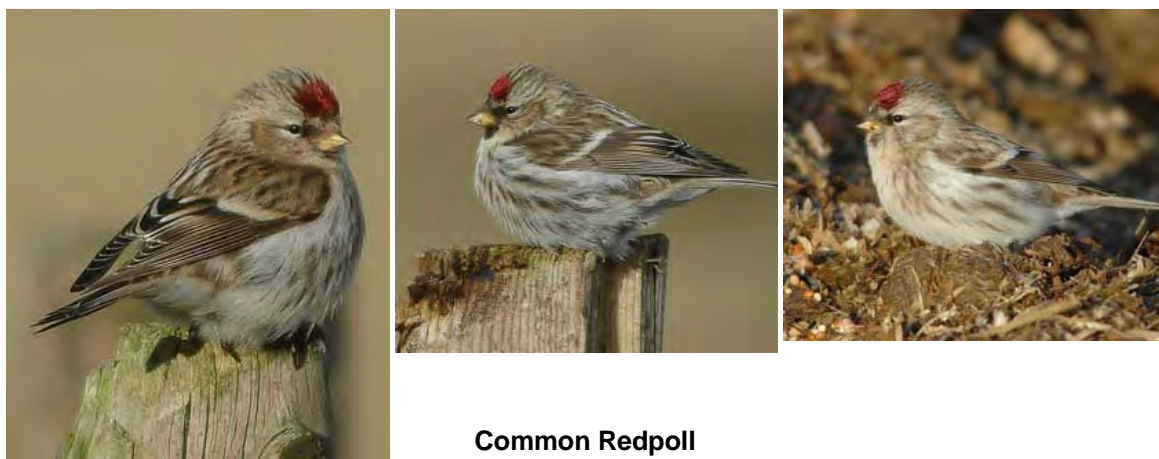
March 30th: Nice weather but not a lot of bird movement although a **Pink-footed Goose** has joined the (55 strong) **Greylag** flock and single **Greenland White-fronted Goose**. Six **Teal** was the highest count so far!

March 29th: Highlight was the welcome sight (at least amongst Obs staff!!) of the first **Bonxie** of the year!! Three **Grey Heron** and a **Puffin** were in Mavers Geo. A wander around the south produced 60 **Purple Sandpiper**, 40 **Meadow Pipit**, 250 **Skylark**, 4 **Pied Wagtail**, 2 **Grey Wagtail**, 2 **Black Redstart**, 4 **Chiffchaff**, 4 **Goldcrest**, 2 **Siskin** and a **Chaffinch**.

March 28th: A female **Peregrine** spent the day spooking everything. The **Jackdaw** and **Black Redstart** were seen.

March 15th – 27th: Three **Wigeon** on 17th, were followed the next day by 3 **Teal** plus a **Red-throated Diver**, **Cormorant** and a **Dunlin**. Highlight of 19th was the unexpected arrival of an adult **Mute Swan** in South Haven – only our 8th record. It was still present the following day when a flock of 21 **Curlew** arrived and a party of 30 **Snow Buntings**. A **Mistle Thrush** at North Light and the first **Puffin** offshore at South Light on 21st were welcome additions. The 22nd dawned calm, bright sunny and warm, the best day of the year so far, and commenced with a report of 3 **Killer Whales** off South Light. There were lots of **Guillemots & Razorbills** ashore plus the first few **Kittiwakes** back on ledges. Nine **Whooper Swan** flew past and counts included 24 **Lapwing**, 95 **Snipe**, 130 **Turnstone**, 42 **Ringed Plover**, 75 **Greylag Geese** (plus the **Greenland Whitefront**), 7 **Wood Pigeon**, 280 **Skylark**, a **Rook** and 53 **Snow Bunting**. A sole **Pied Wagtail** was the best of 23rd and the following day the first **Goldcrests** (4) arrived plus 4 **Golden Plover**, a pair of **Stonechat**, a **Jack Snipe** and **Skylarks** reached 330. New on 25th was a **Grey Wagtail** and increased numbers of **Skylark** (380), **Pied Wagtail** (3), **Meadow Pipit** (16) and **Blackbird** (25) were logged. There were two highlights on 26th, with the first **Chiffchaffs** (2) seen and a male **Hen Harrier** floating through.. The following day saw another two additions to the year list with a cracking male **Lapland Bunting** and the first northbound **Brambling**. Five **Chiffchaffs** were counted and a few more **Robins** (10) were evident.

March 1st-14th: A first-winter **Glaucous Gull** opened the month whilst 'mealy' **Common Redpoll** numbers remained high with a flock of 40 frequenting the Havens area on 2nd, but began to dwindle from 4th and down to just 5 lingering around the Obs by 7th. A total of some 90 (including one **Lesser Redpoll**) have been ringed between the Obs and Barkland!!!



Common Redpoll
Photo by Paul Baxter

The first **Skylarks** were heard singing on 2nd amid a large movement of this species and there were also 100 **Lapwing**, 20 **Ringed Plover** and a couple each of **Pied Wagtail** and **Rook**. A flock of 21 **Rook** (third highest ever count) went through on 3rd whilst **Lapwings** increased to 180, **Ringed Plovers** to 24 and 6 **Stonechats** and the two first-winter **Iceland Gulls** were seen. Two first-winter **Glaucous Gulls** were the highlight of a stormy 5th, with one remaining the following day when a second-winter **Iceland Gull** was seen loafing in South Harbour, **Ringed Plovers** peaked at 47 and just a single **Stonechat** was logged.

The first Frogspawn was found in a ditch at Setter – also on 6th.

A count of 235 **Skylarks** was made on a pleasant 7th with 128 **Greylags**, 43 **Ringed Plover**, a small increase in **Song Thrush** (11 counted), 7 **Wood Pigeon** also noted. A quiet few days ensued until the first **Meadow Pipit** appeared on 11th, accompanied by 5 **Stonechat** and a **Teal**. The 12th produced 210 **Skylarks**, 180 **Turnstone**, 41 **Ringed Plover**, the 2 **Iceland Gulls**, 6 **Wood Pigeon**, 5 **Stonechat** and a **Chaffinch**. The wintering female **Shoveler** was present throughout.

Deryk Shaw

2007 - FEBRUARY SIGHTINGS

Fair Isle Summary February 2007

February 2007: Highlights: Two first-winter **Iceland Gulls** were present all month with a second-winter (1st-5th) and a first-winter **Glaucous Gull** (1st). An extraordinary influx of **Common Redpolls** began (22nd) with a peak count of 45 (25th) – however over 70 have been trapped and ringed. A **Long-eared Owl** was flushed from the Gully (17th).



Common Redpoll
Photo by Paul Baxter

Single **Pinkfooted** and **Greenland Whitefronted Geese** remained with the wintering **Greylag** flock (105). Some movement saw the latter peak at 131 (17th) when a **Whooper Swan** also flew through. Returning waders trickled through during the month but increased in the last week with peaks of 86 **Oystercatcher** (24th), 80 **Lapwing** (25th) and 34 **Ringed Plover** (28th). The wintering **Shoveler** and *borealis* **Northern Eider** were spotted occasionally. 'Spring' migration saw the first four **Skylarks** (13th), increasing to 21 (17th) and 120 by 25th – very good numbers so early in the year. Also, an early **Stonechat** (19th), increased to six by 25th and the first **Pied Wagtail** arrived (24th), when a **Siskin** was also seen. Finally, a **Wood Pigeon** was new for the year on 28th.

Deryk Shaw

2007 - JANUARY SIGHTINGS

Fair Isle Summary January 2007

Highlights: The '*borealis*' Northern Eider was seen on and off throughout. At least 3 Iceland Gulls throughout and a single Glaucous Gull (30th). A wintering Shoveler and 2 wintering Dunnocks were unusual with a mealy Common Redpoll (23rd).

Other sightings: Just over 100 Greylags included single Pinkfooted and Barnacle Geese. Up to 4 Water Rails were at Chalet Pond with another 2 at the Obs and a few others scattered around the croftland. A flock of 17 Lapwing increased to 25 (from 15th) and was joined by 1-2 Golden Plover (from 10th). The wintering Turnstone flock peaked at 195 (18th), Curlew at 8 (28th) but very few Purple Sandpipers were seen. During the last week Oystercatchers began to arrive (peak of 9 on 30th) and a Ringed Plover (30th). A couple of overwintering Merlins were seen regularly and a Peregrine (20th). Passerines of note included a Skylark (11th), thrushes (incl. 70 Fieldfare on 15th and 20-30 each of Blackbird & Redwing throughout), a couple of wintering Chaffinches, c15 Twite but only a peak of 9 Snow Bunting (23rd).

Deryk Shaw