

## NOVEMBER 2009

**Nov 4<sup>th</sup>** – The traps produced yet another **Long-eared Owl**. Still a fair few thrushes around (c1,000 counted) and new in were three **European Whitefronted Geese**, a **Barnacle Goose** and an adult **Iceland Gull**.

**Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>** – More **Long-eared Owls** (2) in the traps! Fairly quiet otherwise – three **Short-eared Owls** were also seen and the male **Sparrowhawk**, **Goldfinch** and **Black Redstart** all remain.

**Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Windy once again. The three **Woodlarks** remain and a **Goldfinch** was the only new thing of note.

**Nov 1<sup>st</sup>** – The new month opened with a real surprise – there were now **THREE Woodlarks** at Neder Taft. Many of the **thrushes** had departed but a couple of **Mistle Thrushes** were found and a **Moorhen** and a male **Sparrowhawk** were new.

## October

**Oct 31<sup>st</sup>** – Another **Long-eared Owl** was trapped. Lots of thrushes and over 100 **Woodcock** again. A couple of **Barred Warblers** and a **Common Rosefinch** were a good sign. The **Woodlark** and **Shorelark** both remain.

**Oct 30<sup>th</sup>** – Yet more **thrushes** (over 3,000 in total) and a further influx of **Woodcock** with 119 flushed (so the actual number on the isle must be much, much more). A **Long-eared Owl** (trapped), **Red-breasted Merganser** and **Yellowhammer** were all new whilst the **Woodlark** and **Shorelark** both remain.

**Oct 29<sup>th</sup>** – FOG!

**Oct 28<sup>th</sup>** – Even more thrushes (eg 1,500 **Fieldfare**, 800 **Redwing** and 600 **Blackbird**), the **Woodlark** still whilst a **Shorelark** at Wester Lothar was new.

**Oct 27<sup>th</sup>** – Pretty much as yesterday!

**Oct 26<sup>th</sup>** – Much calmer and drier with a cool, light N'ly breeze. Lots of thrushes (500 **Redwing**, 400 **Fieldfare**, 320 **Blackbird**, 30 **Song Thrush** and a lone **Ring Ouzel**) dominated but 15 **Woodcock**, 30 **Robin**, 8 **Chiffchaff**, 4 **Blackcap**, 4 **Grey Wagtail** and 6 **Reed Bunting** were also logged. The **Woodlark** remains at Neder Taft.

**Oct 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup>** – A return to SE/E'ly gales and rain! Horrible conditions for birding and hence no significant counts were made and no real finds although a small influx of **Reed Buntings** was noted with at least six birds seen.

**Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Slightly calmer today! A **Woodlark** at Neder Taft was the best find but **Shelduck**, **Stock Dove** and **Richard's Pipit** were also new in. Otherwise it was lots of thrushes (eg 1,000 each of **Redwing** & **Fieldfare**), many **Woodcock** (37+) and now ten **Jackdaw**. Yesterday's bunting was indeed a **Yellowhammer**!

**Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>** – The gale force SE'ly continues but with rain too! **Thrushes** again dominated census but a few **Woodcock**, a **Jackdaw** and a brief bunting (probably **Yellowhammer**) were seen.

**Oct 21<sup>st</sup>** – Gale force SE'ly winds made birding very difficult but other than **thrushes** there wasn't much of note but a **Firecrest** at Gunnawark provided a spark!

**Oct 20<sup>th</sup>** – More thrushes arrived today with 2,000+ **Redwings** logged plus a few hundred **Song Thrush**, **Blackbird** an **Fieldfare** and 6+ **Ring Ouzel**. Yesterday evenings warbler was confirmed as just a **Reed Warbler**.

**Oct 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>** – Much quieter with a few **Chiffchaffs** being the highlight and an **acrocephalus** warbler, probably Reed spotted at dusk in Neder Taft crop.

**Oct 17<sup>th</sup>** – The Lesser Whitethroat was still present at Burkle and it was trapped. Plumage and measurements put it closest to **Sylvia curruca minula** – **Desert Lesser Whitethroat!** One **Yellow-browed Warbler** was also present but thrush numbers have dropped and around a dozen 'eastern' **Chiffchaffs** were logged.



**Oct 16<sup>th</sup>** – The **Blackpoll Warbler** wasn't in the Plantation but it was eventually re-found at Skerryholm and later the South Harbour beach. Many of the highlights of last few days also remain. As the light was fast fading an interesting **Lesser Whitethroat** was discovered at Burkle – very small and pale and obviously of the Central Asian group.

**Blackpoll Warbler** *Photograph by Deryk Shaw*



**Oct 15<sup>th</sup>** – Just one bird worth mentioning today – a **BLACKPOLL WARBLER**, trapped in Vaadal late afternoon. Superb! After ringing it was released into the Plantation, in the hope it will stay.

**Blackpoll**  
*Photograph by Deryk Shaw*

**Warbler**

**&**

**Ythan**



**Rustic Bunting**

*Photograph by Deryk Shaw*



**Short-toed Lark**

*Photograph by Deryk Shaw*

**Oct 14<sup>th</sup>** – A couple of nice arrivals today; a **Short-toed Lark** on Meones and a **Rustic Bunting** at Stoneybrake. Two **Bluethroat** and a **Yellow-browed Warbler** were also seen.

**Oct 13<sup>th</sup>** – Lots of thrushes and a scattering of **Robins**, **Dunnocks** and **Bramblings** dominated counts. The **River Warbler** showed briefly as did a **Yellow-browed Warbler** and also a **Siberian Stonechat** - to just two lucky souls.

**Oct 12<sup>th</sup>** – The **River Warbler** and at least 2 **Little Buntings** and two **Yellow-browed Warblers** and two **Bluethroats** were the highlights. Three **owls** (two **Short-eared**, one **Long-eared**) were all roosting together in long grass near the School. An influx of eastern **Chiffchaffs** was noteworthy with 13 counted.



**Oct 11<sup>th</sup>** – Thrushes once again dominated the scene. The **White's Thrush** was reported near the mast and 2,300 **Redwing**, 170 **Song Thrush**, 170 **Blackbird**, 30 **Fieldfare** and 16 **Ring Ouzel** were logged. The **River Warbler** was also seen and now three **Little Bunting**, two **Grasshopper Warbler**, **Bluethroat** and **Yellow-browed Warbler** were added to the mix.

**Little Bunting** - *Photograph by Deryk Shaw*

**Oct 10<sup>th</sup>** – A large influx of thrushes! **Redwings** were very dominant with 4,600 logged but there were also 770 **Song Thrush**, 46 **Blackbird**, 37 **Fieldfare**, 15 **Ring Ouzel** and all topped off with a nice **White's Thrush**! The **River Warbler**, **Richard's Pipit** and **Little Bunting** were all still present and three **Bluethroats** were found.

**Oct 8<sup>th</sup>** – Very quiet! **Little Bunting**, **Richard's Pipit** and **Barred Warbler** all linger.

**Oct 7<sup>th</sup>** – The **River Warbler** was seen again briefly. There are now two **Little Buntings** (North Haven & Taft) and two **Bluethroats** (Obs/Havens) arrived. A **Barred Warbler** at Leogh was also new and a **Yellow-browed Warbler** at Easter Lother.



**Oct 6<sup>th</sup>** – Thrushes, in particular **Redwings** have arrived! Over 2,000 were logged with 200 **Song Thrush**, 50 **Blackbird** and five **Ring Ouzel** too! **Bramblings** too came in with 90 counted, including a flock of 60 at Quoy which was also harbouring a **Common Rosefinch**. Yesterday's **Little Bunting** was confirmed at North Haven. Finally, a **Yellow-browed Warbler** was at Klingers Geo.

**Oct 5<sup>th</sup>** – Bird of the day was a **Blyth's Reed Warbler** at Lower Stoneybrake, that was until a **River Warbler** hopped up onto the wall. It was characteristically elusive however and disappeared almost as quick as it appeared. The Blyth's Reed Warbler however was trapped and ringed. Reports of a **Citrine Wagtail** over Taft, **Little Bunting** at North Haven and a possible **Great Snipe** at Houll made for an exciting but frustrating day!

**Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>**: Fairly quiet but a few **thrushes** began to arrive bringing with them a couple of **Bluethroats**. An Arctic Redpoll was reported by one islander but could not be refound. All changed on 4<sup>th</sup> when a large unstreaked *Locustella* warbler was found in Da Water. It was very flighty so only distant views were possible but from upperpart colouration it appeared to be a River Warbler, but no breast streaking could be seen and the all-important undertail coverts were kept hidden! . Photographs examined later seemed to suggest it may be an eastern **Savis Warbler**.

**Oct 1<sup>st</sup>** – The month started cold with a chilly Northerly breeze. Highlight of the day was the **Pechora Pipit** in the Warden's garden at Burkle where it was trapped. The **Richard's Pipit** and two **Common Rosefinch** were also there. A **Barred Warbler** was also trapped. Elsewhere there were at least six **Jack Snipe** and single **Blackbird**, **Song Thrush** and **Redwing**.



**Pechora Pipit** Photographs by Deryk Shaw



## September



**Sept 30<sup>th</sup>** – A rarity at last!!! A nice **Pechora Pipit** was discovered in the Kenaby tattie rig. Another **Common Rosefinch** was also seen and the **Richard's Pipit** showed well.

**Pechora Pipit** *Photograph by Deryk Shaw*

**Sept 29<sup>th</sup>** – A **Short-eared Owl** and a **Pintail** are new and the **Richard's Pipit** remains. Best however was a **Common Rosefinch** at Schoolton, trapped later that evening at the Obs.

**Sept 28<sup>th</sup>** - Three **Redwings** and three **Common Redpolls** were new in today as were two 'female' **Tufted Ducks** whilst **Snow Buntings** now exceed 40.

**Sept 27<sup>th</sup>** – **Geese** have been the main focus of the past few days with over 1400 **Pink-footed** counted on the isle at once today as birds head south for the winter. Smaller numbers of **Greylags** have been with them and two **Barnacles** and two **Whooper Swans** today. A small influx of **Chaffinches** has begun with 16 counted.

A 'dark-rumped **Petrel**' was reported from the *Good Shepherd* just a few miles north of the isle. The given description seems to fit Bulwers Petrel better than Swinhoes!!!

**Sept 25<sup>th</sup>** – The weather remains the same, as does the birding. A **Sooty Shearwater** was spotted from South Light and 14 **Whooper Swans** alighted for a while as did a male **Tufted Duck**.

**Sept 24<sup>th</sup>** – The strong, but mild, WSW'ly wind continues. Nothing exciting was noted but one or two new things included an *abietinus* **Chiffchaff**, a 'northwestern' **Redpoll** and six **Linnets**. Also new was a **Robin** at the Mast – where the Warden this time last year found a Brown Flycatcher!! The **Richard's Pipit** was seen again at Quoy and possibly another was at Utra.

**Sept 23<sup>rd</sup>** – The **Richard's Pipit** was seen at Quoy. A **Chaffinch** was new and a few more **Lapland & Snow Buntings** were noted.

**Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Yet another strong SW'ly-wind-filled day. A **Song Thrush** was new at the Obs whilst 2 **Sand Martins** somehow battled to get here. **Pink-footed Geese** totalled 265 and the sea produced 3 **Red-throated Diver** and a **Manx Shearwater**.

**Sept 21<sup>st</sup>** – The **Richard's Pipit** is still present whilst a new (unringed) **Little Bunting** was found at the Havens. Parties of **Pink-footed Geese** began to pass through from the afternoon, flying into a strong SW'ly wind.

**Sept 20<sup>th</sup>** – Very quiet today with just a handful of common warblers and a **Richard's Pipit** to report.

**Sept 19<sup>th</sup>** – Little movement again today, though a new **Little Bunting** was trapped in Vaadal and a nice **Lapland Bunting** was tape-lured and netted at Chalet.

**Sept 18<sup>th</sup>** – Much the same again today plus a **Richard's Pipit**.

**Sept 17<sup>th</sup>** – The **Arctic Warbler** was at Kenaby and Busta. Single **Yellow-browed Warbler** and **Common Rosefinch** were also seen plus a handful of common **warblers** and a couple of **Whinchats**.



**Arctic Warbler**  
*Photograph by Deryk Shaw*



**Yellow-browed Warbler**  
*Photograph by Deryk Shaw*

**Sept 16<sup>th</sup>** – A brisk NW'ly wind didn't prevent birds from arriving! An **Arctic Warbler** at Burkle first thing was followed an hour later by a **Yellow-browed Warbler** at Shirva. By the end of the day, **Bluethroat**, **Red-backed Shrike**, 2+ **Barred Warblers** and **Common Rosefinch** had all been logged.



**Sept 15<sup>th</sup>** – Quiet again although the **Little Bunting** and was trapped and ringed. **Barred Warbler** and **Common Rosefinch** were also seen.

**Little Bunting** *Photograph by Deryk Shaw*

**Sept 14<sup>th</sup>** – A much better day! A light NNE'ly later moved round to SE. First off was a **Little Bunting** at Setter, followed shortly after by a **Bluethroat** at Schoolton and then a **Red-backed Shrike** at the Obs. By the end of the day at least one more **Bluethroat** had been found and a **Common Rosefinch**. Other arrivals and counts included 385 Meadow Pipit, 251 Skylark, 70 Wheatear, 24 Willow Warbler, 17 Grey Heron, 15 Cormorant, 7 Lesser Whitethroat, 4 Lapland Bunting, 2 Sand Martin and singles of Pied Flycatcher, **Barred Warbler**, Dunnock, Linnet, Siskin and Reed Bunting.

**Sept 13<sup>th</sup>** – A couple of new birds in today with a juvenile **Dotterel** over Ward Hill and a **Marsh Harrier** over Hoini. There were two **Barred Warblers** at Leogh and a **Common Rosefinch** at Meadow Burn. A **Chiffchaff** and six **Pink-footed Geese** were also new.

**Sept 12<sup>th</sup>** – Still quiet with highlights of a **Ruff**, a **Sand Martin**, two **Lesser Whitethroats** plus a **Common Whitethroat**.

**Sept 11<sup>th</sup>** – Fairly quiet yet again with highlights confined to a Merlin and reported Lesser Whitethroat with single Snow and Lapland Buntings also present.

**Sept 10<sup>th</sup>** – Little new again today although there are now *two* **Snow Buntings** on Hoini but just one Lapland Bunting put in an appearance. A handful of Willow Warblers, single Blackcap and **Barred Warbler** and two **Common Rosefinch** was the best the south had to offer.

**Sept 9<sup>th</sup>** – The wind had abated somewhat and a rush up to the Obs site found it all still intact. On the bird front, the first **Snow Bunting** of the autumn was the highlight whilst the two **Lapland Buntings** were seen again and 34 Teal, a Common Redstart and 4 Whinchat were also seen.

**Sept 8<sup>th</sup>** – Near gale force SW'ly winds meant that birds were keeping their heads down. The ringed **Barred Warbler** remains whilst a **Greylag Goose** and the first **Lapland Buntings** (2) of the autumn arrived. The wind moved round to the west later and picked up to Force 9, raising fears for the new Obs!!

**Sept 7<sup>th</sup>** – A breezy day with a strong but warm SW'y wind. Not much change in birds with 2 **Barred Warblers** still and 2 **Common Rosefinch** the best.

**Sept 6<sup>th</sup>** – Highlights today were 3 **Barred Warblers**, 3 **Common Rosefinch**, an **Icterine Warbler** and a **Wryneck**. Counts included 33 Willow Warbler, 7 Garden Warbler, 3 Tree Pipit and 4 Common Crossbill.

**Sept 5<sup>th</sup>** – Little new in today though still a fair few Willow Warblers around and a scattering of other common warblers. A Spotted Flycatcher was at North Light and still 9 Sanderling on North Haven beach. The **Barred Warbler** remains in Bulls Park.



**4th**– A flock of 17 Teal, a single Sooty Shearwater and Cormorant, 4 Grey Herons, 17 Ringed Plovers, a single Golden Plover and Knot, 11 Sanderling, 6 Dunlin, 27 Snipe, 2 Curlews, 2 Ruff, 18 Redshank, a Green Sandpiper, 15 Turnstone, 7 Black-Headed Gulls, **4 Wrynecks**, 3 Swallows, 3 Tree Pipits, 265 Meadow Pipits, 16 White Wagtails, 7 Redstarts, 7 Whinchats, 2 Sedge Warblers, **Barred Warbler**, 10 Garden Warbler, 3 Blackcap and Lesser Whitethroat, 44 Willow Warbler, 3 Pied Flycatchers and 6 Crossbill.

**Wryneck**

*Photograph by Jack Ashton-Booth*

**3rd**– Highlight of the day was a **Greenish Warbler**, trapped in the Plantation by the Warden, which was a nice ringing tick for Assistant Warden, Simon Davies. However, lowlight of the day (for the Warden anyway) was the 2<sup>nd</sup> year **Pomarine Skua** (found at the mast by said AW) that moved on moments before the unlucky warden arrived at the airstrip!! Aaaargh! Elsewhere were; 2 Wigeon, a Teal, 5 Pintail, a Cormorant, 3 Ringed Plovers, a Golden Plover, 2 Lapwings, 4 Whimbrel, 19 Redshank, a Sanderling, 5 Dunlin, 12 Turnstone, 4 Black-headed Gulls, 2 Whinchat, 2 Sedge Warblers, a **Barred Warbler**, 13 Willow Warblers, Pied Flycatcher, 5 Crossbill.



**Greenish Warbler**

*Photograph by Deryk Shaw*



**2nd– Two Corncrakes** were reported from Bull's Park, 6 Ringed Plovers, 18 Golden Plovers, 3 Lapwings, a lonesome Knot, 15 Dunlin, 4 Curlews, 35 Redshank, 6 Turnstone, 6 Black-Headed Gulls, 3 Sand Martins, 8 White Wagtails, 3 Whinchats, 6 Garden Warbler, a single Sedge Warbler, **Icterine Warbler**, **Barred Warbler** and Whitethroat, 12 Willow Warbler and 10 Crossbills.

**Barred warbler**

*Photograph by Jack Ashton-Booth*

**1st–** A single Wigeon, 13 Teal, 2 Manx Shearwaters, a Peregrine, 9 Ringed Plovers, 13 Golden Plovers, 3 Knot, 11 Dunlin, 24 Redshank, 10 Turnstone were the big stuff. Passerines consisted of 3 Sand Martins, 9 Swallows, 26 White Wagtails, 2 Tree Pipits, 3 Whinchats, a single Grasshopper Warbler, Reed Warbler, Marsh Warbler and 2 Garden Warbler, 2 Whitethroats, 23 Willow Warblers and 15 Crossbills.

## August July June

### **AUGUST**

**Aug 31st–** New migrants could still be found amongst the lingering birds by the months end and day totals for the 31<sup>st</sup> included a flock of 5 Teal, 22 Ringed Plovers, 25 Golden Plovers, 4 Knot, a Sanderling, 10 Dunlin, 7 Curlew, 25 Redshank, 2 Turnstone, 3 Black-Headed Gulls, 8 White Wagtails, 3 Whinchats, 4 Reed Warblers, 3 Whitethroats, 2 Garden Warblers, 7 Willow Warblers and 5 Crossbill

**Aug 30th–** Birds seen on census comprised; a single Wigeon, 4 Teal, 2 Peregrine, 20 Golden Plovers, a Knot, 2 Sanderling, a Purple Sandpiper, 11 Dunlin, 31 Redshank, 20 Turnstone, 12 Black-Headed Gulls, 20 Common Gulls, an Arctic Tern, a single Swallow, 9 White Wagtails, 11 Willow Warblers, 2 Reed Warblers, 2 Whinchat, a single Sedge Warbler, and Whitethroat as well as 5 Crossbill

**Aug 29th–** Wildfowl continue to build with a flock of 19 Teal in the South and other birds of note include a Cormorant, 8 Golden Plovers, a Knot, 2 Sanderling, 3 Dunlin, 2 Ruff, 13 Redshank, 2 Turnstone, 2 Black-Headed Gulls, 35 Common gulls, 7 White Wagtails, 3 Whinchats, a Grasshopper Warbler, a Reed Warbler and 6 Willow Warblers

**Aug 28th–** It was hard to decipher whether emigration was outweighing immigration on the island on this date or vice-versa as new birds were appearing at the same time as birds were leaving. Birds seen include a single Wigeon, 7 Teal, a Peregrine, 25 Ringed Plovers, 10 Golden Plovers, a single Knot, 5 Sanderling, 11 Dunlin, 6 Curlews, 17 Redshank, a Green Sandpiper, 35 Turnstone, 6 Black-Headed Gulls, 10 Common Gulls, a Swift, **2 Wrynecks**, 4 Swallows, 50 White Wagtails, 3 Whinchats, a Grasshopper Warbler, 2 Reed Warblers, an **Icterine Warbler**, a **Barred Warbler**, 5 Whitethroats, 2 Garden Warblers, 20 Willow Warblers, 3 Pied Flycatchers and 25 Crossbills

**Aug 27th–** 8 new Wigeon had joined the 2 lingering drakes as well as 2 Teal. A Peregrine was seen in the south and other notable species included 18 Golden Plovers, 5 Knot, 2 Sanderling, 13 Dunlin, a



Ruff, 2 Whimbrel, 27 Redshank, 3 Greenshank, a Green Sandpiper, 25 Turnstone, 7 Black-Headed Gulls, 47 Common Gulls, 3 Lesser Black-Backed Gulls, a Tree Pipit, a **Wryneck**, 64 White wagtails, 10 Whinchats, 2 Sedge Warblers, 4 Reed Warblers, an **Icterine Warbler**, a single **Barred Warbler**, 4 Whitethroats, 13 Garden Warblers, 25 Willow Warblers, a Pied Flycatcher and 23 Crossbills

**Aug 26th**– Birds had clearly arrived on top of the few migrants that remained and birds noted included 3 Teal, 19 Golden Plovers, 18 Lapwings, 4 Knot, 10 Dunlin, a single Ruff, 4 Curlews, 14 Redshank, 5 Turnstone, 8 Black-headed Gulls, 190 Common Gulls, 22 Lesser Black-backed Gulls. Passerines comprised of a single Sand Martin, 177 Meadow Pipits, 2 Tree Pipits, 66 White Wagtails, 10 Whinchats, a Sedge Warbler, 4 Reed Warblers, an **Icterine Warbler**, **4 Barred Warblers**, 2 Whitethroats, 8 Garden Warblers, 43 Willow Warblers, a Pied Flycatcher, 13 Crossbills and a very mobile **Greenish Warbler** that was found by one lucky observer who had come to Fair Isle in the hope of finding this stunning little *phylloscopus* warbler.

**Aug 25th**–2 Wigeon, 2 Teal, a Grey Heron, 18 Ringed Plover, 12 Golden Plover, 7 Dunlin, one each of Whimbrel and Curlew, 16 Redshank, a Green Sandpiper and a juvenile Bar-tailed Godwit, 4 Swallows, 25 White Wagtails, 4 Whinchats, 2 Reed Warblers, a **Barred Warbler**, 2 Whitethroats, 5 Garden Warblers, 10 Willow Warblers and 4 Crossbill

**Aug 24th**–9 Golden Plovers, 14 Lapwing, 2 Knot, 2 Dunlin, 7 Curlews, 21 Redshank, 2 Common Sandpipers, a lone Turnstone and Bar-Tailed Godwit, 2 Whitethroat, a Lesser Whitethroat, 2 Garden Warbler, a Single Redstart and Whinchat, 14 Willow Warblers and a Crossbill

**Aug 23rd**– A quieter day today in comparison to yesterday with birds of note being 2 Wigeon, 2 Teal, 5 Grey Herons, 13 Golden Plovers, a Sanderling, 4 Dunlin, a Greenshank, a single Lesser-Black Backed Gull, a swift, 2 Mallard, 24 White Wagtails and a Willow Warbler.

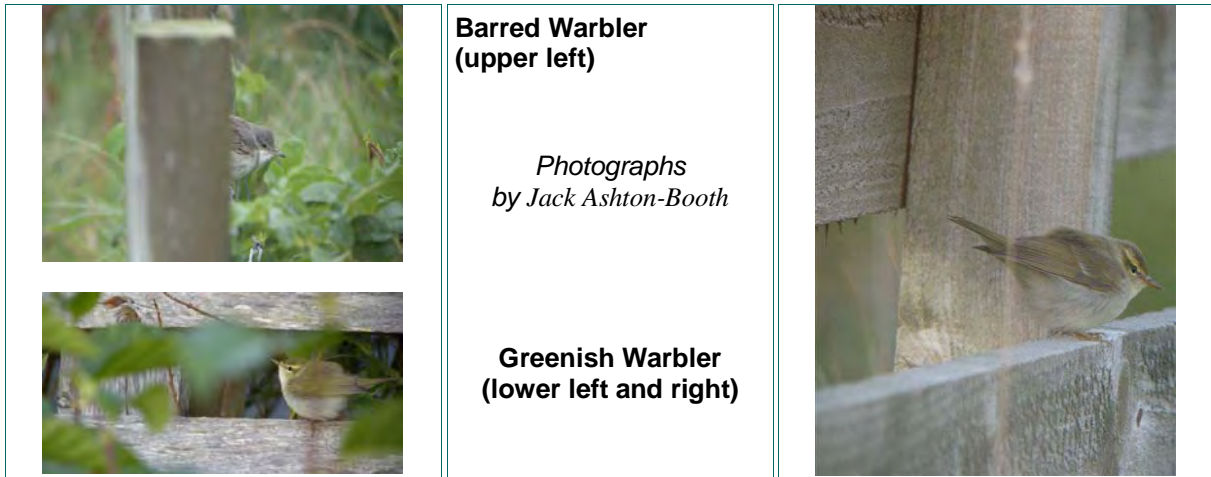
**Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Highlights today were singles of **Icterine Warbler**, **Barred Warbler** and **Common Rosefinch**. Also were the autumn's first Lesser Whitethroat, a couple of Reed Warblers and a notable increase in *alba* Wagtails.

**Aug 21<sup>st</sup>** – A rather wet mild morning with a brisk south-westerly wind cleared in the afternoon to blue skies and sunshine. There was a small arrival including the first **Blackcap** of the autumn and an **Icterine Warbler**. Other warbler counts were; 13 Willows, 3 Reed and 2 Garden Warbler. On the wader front, 15 Golden Plover, 6 Knot, 3 Ruff, 9 Dunlin and a Whimbrel were counted. Also, were 2 Wigeon, Teal, Peregrine, 4 Whinchat and 18 **Common Crossbill**.

**Aug 20<sup>th</sup>** – A continuing warm strong southerly but a bit drier today. Birds were hard to come by but there was a **Barred Warbler** at the Obs, Reed Warbler at Quoy, 10 **Crossbills** at the Mills, 4 Greylag Geese and a couple of Sanderlings.

**Aug 19<sup>th</sup>** – Although fairly mild with a brisk southerly wind, it was pretty wet today. The **Greenish Warbler** remains but 3 Willows and a Garden were the only other warblers logged. Waders included 3 Golden Plover, 2 Greenshank, single Whimbrel, Knot and Sanderling.

**Aug 18<sup>th</sup>** – At least 14 Grey Herons were counted along with 3 Whimbrel, 3 Redshank, 16 Turnstone, a Golden Plover, 3 Dunlin, and single Knot and Sanderling. Lurking inland were; a Reed Warbler, 2 Willow Warbler, the **2 Barred Warblers** and the **Greenish Warbler** remains in the vicinity of Stackhoul and Vaila's Trees.

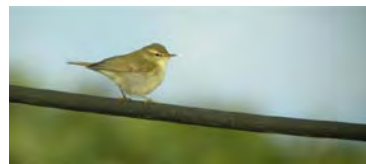


**Aug 17<sup>th</sup>** – Morning census produced a counts of a Greylag Goose, 2 Golden Plover, 15 Redshank, a Purple Sandpiper, 5 Dunlin, 8 Turnstone, 9 Pied Wagtail, 4 *alba* Wagtails, 2 Swallows, a Swift. A new **Barred Warbler** was at Leogh but best of all was a **Greenish Warbler** late in the afternoon at Stackhoull.

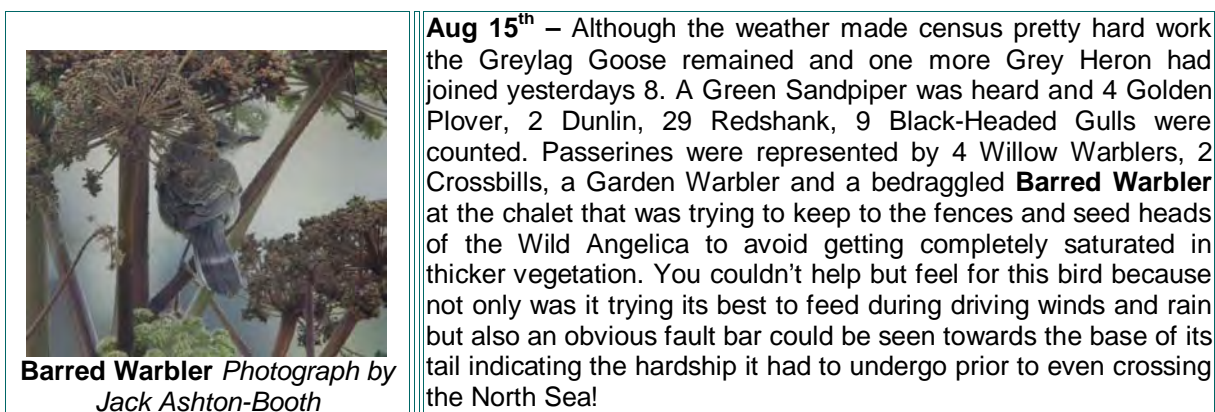


**Greenish Warbler**

*Photographs  
by  
Deryk Shaw (left)  
and  
Jack Ashton-Booth (right)*



**Aug 16<sup>th</sup>** – Little of note although yesterdays **Barred Warbler** was still present. A Sanderling and 2 Dunlin were the wader highlights whilst 5 Willow Warbler and 3 Garden Warblers were also seen.



**Aug 14<sup>th</sup>**– 8 Grey Herons were seen around the South Harbour and a Greylag Goose was seen grazing nearby

**Aug 13<sup>th</sup>** – Waders stole the show with a cracking adult and juvenile **Dotterel** seen in the North as well as Ruff.

**Aug 11/12<sup>th</sup>** – Autumn was beginning to get ever more apparent especially with the on set of light south easterly winds that had brought about 5 Willow Warblers (11th) and 16 Willow Warblers and 2 each of Whinchat and Garden Warbler (12th).

**Aug 10<sup>th</sup>** – A single Common Sandpiper was the only bird of note

**Aug 9<sup>th</sup>** – A small influx of passerines seemed to have occurred during the night of the 8<sup>th</sup> indicated by the presence of 2 Reed Warblers and 3 Garden Warblers. In the south 2 Knot, 170 Common Gull were counted.

Remarkable views of a 15ft Basking Shark were obtained from the Zodiac just offshore at South Light.

**Aug 7<sup>th</sup>** – A Single Swift and a Peregrine were noted

**Aug 6<sup>th</sup>** – A Lonesome Teal, Knot, and Green Sandpiper toured the island and passerines comprised of a Garden Warbler and 4 Crossbills (including a Juvenile bird).

**Aug 5<sup>th</sup>** – 3 Lapwing (within a flock of Common Gulls) and 3 Grey Herons were seen coming off the sea and 5 Sanderling, 2 Golden Plover, 4 Dunlin, a single Green Sandpiper, Greenshank and Bar-Tailed Godwit were seen on the land. 400 Common Gulls were in the south and warblers comprised of a Willow Warbler and a Sedge Warbler.

Also of note were 5 Small Tortoiseshell Butterflies that once again highlights how fantastic 2009 has been for Butterflies.

**Aug 4<sup>th</sup>** – Waders were represented by 29 Redshank, 2 Sanderling, 28 Turnstone, 10 Purple Sandpipers, and a Juvenile Golden Plover. A female Common Scoter was seen in the south along with, a Garden Warbler, 3 Swifts and 9 Crossbills.

**Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>** – 2 Cormorants, 2 Whimbrel, 2 Green Sandpipers, a single Ruff and Greenshank, 151 Common Gulls, 5 Swifts, 8 Crossbills and a Whitethroat were seen.

**Aug 2<sup>nd</sup>** – The Common Gull flock had increased to 350 birds but 20 Black-Headed Gulls, a Green Sandpiper and a Dunlin were noted.

**August 1<sup>st</sup>** – The start of the month saw the month's highest count of crossbills with a flock of 15 birds that continued to frequent the Oyster Plant in the south, 150 Common and 15 Black-Black Headed Gulls were also counted nearby.

### **July Highlights:**

The main talking point of the month was the continued arrival of **Common Crossbills** following the first influx in late June. The majority of birds were seen on the vast carpets of Thrift that adorn the cliff tops around the isle but birds could be heard almost anywhere on the island on a daily basis. Although these birds were not counted daily, flocks of around 30+ birds could be found regularly around Bunness and the Malcolm's Head/Lighthouse area throughout the month. However the turnover of birds was rather remarkable with 145 birds counted on the 4th, 123 on the 7th, 85 on the 9th, 99 on the 12th and 118 on the 18th with some individuals showing rather prominent wing-bars. Other birds that took refuge on the island alongside the crossbills in the first few days included a Whimbrel and Common Sandpiper (1st), a Green Sandpiper (2nd) and a Blackcap (3rd). On the 4<sup>th</sup> a Red-Throated Diver was seen on the sea in the south and nearby a Bar-Tailed Godwit, Grey Heron and Collared Dove were noted. A Great-Northern Diver had replaced the Red-Throated Diver on the 5<sup>th</sup> but was seen again on the 6<sup>th</sup> along with 4 Common Terns off the south coast. More interesting however was the arrival of a male **Red-Backed Shrike** on the 5th and a **Woodcock** trapped in the Plantation the following day. The south produced the birds once again on the 7<sup>th</sup> with a drake Teal, 3 Redshank, 2

Whimbrel, a single Bar-tailed Godwit and **Black-Tailed Godwit** (until 11th), a Dunlin and **37 1<sup>st</sup> Summer Arctic terns**. A single Green Sandpiper arrived with a 2<sup>nd</sup> Bar-Tailed Godwit, a Whimbrel, a Cormorant and a Woodpigeon on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 2 Great Northern Divers along with a **Manx Shearwater** were seen on the sea on the same date. The next new arrival wasn't until the 12th but did however take the form of another cracking male **Red-Backed Shrike** that happily fed around the Chalet garden much to the appreciation of the Assistant Wardens. Two Grey Herons, 6 Golden Plover and a single Knot were noted on the 13th and a **Blackcap** arrived on the 14<sup>th</sup>. By the 15<sup>th</sup> it finally seemed like a line could finally be drawn under spring 2009 with the departure of the Red-Backed Shrike but this wasn't to be with arrival of a **Great Reed Warbler** at Schoolton Croft. Not only did the arrival of this bird represent the 2<sup>nd</sup> record of this species on the island this year but once again highlights how the once defined period between spring and autumn passage appears to be getting that little bit hazier. A drake Wigeon, 3 Whimbrel, 30 Redshank, a Green Sandpiper, a Blackcap, 2 Swifts and a Mealy Redpoll were also recorded on the 15<sup>th</sup>. The 16<sup>th</sup> saw a **3rd Summer Glaucous Gull** as well as an **adult Iceland Gull**, 8 Swifts and a Swallow and 2 Golden Plover and a single Knot were recorded on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Waders were even more evident by the 18<sup>th</sup> with an adult **Wood Sandpiper**, **4 Green Sandpipers**, a Dunlin, 18 Lapwing, and 2 Whimbrel that arrived alongside 4 Grey Herons. Wader movements continued for the next few days with 5 Whimbrel, 4 Turnstone (19th) 7 Golden Plover, 5 Green and a single Common Sandpiper joining the Wood Sandpiper on the scrape (20th). Common Gull numbers were also increasing steadily with regular additions to the resident population coming in off the sea in small flocks that would gather around the freshly cut hay crops. At least 125 individuals were counted on the 19<sup>th</sup> and by about the 22<sup>nd</sup> there were no less than 350 birds. The latter part of July wasn't all about the quantity of birds however and quality soon made an appearance on the 23<sup>rd</sup> with a stunning male **Two-Barred Crossbill** (23rd until the 24th) and a female **Common Rosefinch** (23rd until the 25th). The **Great-Reed Warbler** was again seen at Lower Leogh briefly on the 24<sup>th</sup> and then gave exceptional views on the 25<sup>th</sup> after being undetected for nearly 10 Days. Birds on the 26<sup>th</sup> were represented by a drake Tufted Duck that was seen flying south over the island, a **Storm Petrel** that was trapped and a **Leach's Petrel** that was seen circling the net, also noted were 25 Redshank, 5 Purple Sandpiper, 7 Knot, 12 Turnstone, a single Green and Common Sandpiper, a Whimbrel, a Sanderling, a Dunlin and a Swallow. By the 27th the single Green Sandpiper had been joined by two more, 3 juvenile Dunlin and a stunning juvenile **Ruff** that remained until the 28<sup>th</sup>. Activity was still predominantly in the south by the end of the month with a female Teal and a Green Sandpiper flushed of the scrape, a Cormorant, 44 Redshank, 12 Turnstone, 3 Whimbrel, 9 Dunlin, 6 Swallows and 6 mobile Golden Plover (30th) and a group of 3 Knot (31st).

*Four photographs (below) by Jack Ashton-Booth*

**28th July - Ruff**



**Common Rosefinch**



**24th July - Two-barred Crossbill**



23th July -



Two-barred Crossbill at South Light. The start of another influx?  
*Photo by Deryk Shaw*

**15th July** - Our second Great Reed Warbler of the year!



**Great Reed Warbler**  
*Photographs by Deryk Shaw*



**11th July**

Wing-barred Common Crossbills - part of a flock of 35 birds currently on Buness.



**June Summary:** The month started off nicely with the continual south easterly airstream which saw the arrival of a Black Redstart, Marsh Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Common Whitethroat and a single Mealy Redpoll and Siskin (1st). New arrivals the following day were; 6 House Martins, a Bluethroat, a Black Redstart, a Sedge Warbler, a Marsh Warbler, an Icterine Warbler, 2 Whitethroats, 3 Garden Warblers, 2 Blackcaps, 5 Chiffchaffs, 2 Willow Warblers, 3 Spotted Flycatchers, 2 Linnets, a **Red-Backed Shrike** and a **Common Rosefinch**. A Common Scoter was noted (4th) and 2 Redwing, a single Pied Flycatcher, Red-backed Shrike, Marsh Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat were all new in

(6th) as were 4 Chiffchaffs (7th). Two Common Terns, 8 Swallows, 2 House Martins, a Spotted Flycatcher, a Redstart and a Willow Warbler (8th) were new immigrants as was a cracking male **Red-Breasted Flycatcher**, **Corn bunting** (only 5<sup>th</sup> record since 1970's), a Marsh Warbler, a Lesser Whitethroat, a Garden Warbler and 2 Chiffchaffs (9th). Another Lesser Whitethroat and 2 Chiffchaffs were new in on the 10th as was a Marsh Warbler (11th), a female **Red-Breasted Flycatcher**, 2 Whimbrel, a Swift, a Swallow, a Garden Warbler, a Reed Warbler and 2 more Chiffchaffs on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Two first-summer Arctic Terns were seen as were 2 Common Terns and a new Marsh Warbler (13th). Four drake Wigeon were over the sea in the north and a Lesser Whitethroat was the only grounded migrant (14th) whereas a Spotted Flycatcher, a Garden Warbler and a Yellowhammer were all new in on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Four Golden Plover were noted on the 16<sup>th</sup> as was a Cormorant. A **Canada Goose** was a good island record as were the two Sandwich Terns on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Four Swifts, a Marsh Warbler and a **Red-backed Shrike** were new arrivals on the 18<sup>th</sup> as were three more Swifts, a Garden Warbler and a Spotted Flycatcher (19th). The 21<sup>st</sup> was undoubtedly the red-letter day in June though with an **Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** that arrived alongside a **Bluethroat**, a Whitethroat, a Tree Sparrow, a Sanderling and a Red-Breasted Merganser. Four more Sandwich Terns were recorded on the 24<sup>th</sup> as was another female **Red-Breasted Flycatcher**, a Sedge Warbler, a Garden Warbler and the first Common Crossbill of the summer's influx. A total of 13 first-summer Arctic Terns was an extraordinary count (25<sup>th</sup>) and a Quail plus four Common Crossbills arrived (26<sup>th</sup>). At least 20 Common Crossbills were recorded on the 27<sup>th</sup> along with Red-Throated Diver, a Garden Warbler, a Spotted Flycatcher and a Siskin. A minimum 47 Common Crossbills on the 28<sup>th</sup> was followed with 34 on the 29<sup>th</sup> on the same day as a drake Tufted Duck, 2 Swifts and a Marsh Warbler. The month ended on a high note with a late **Icterine Warbler**, 2 Marsh Warblers and 27 Crossbills (30th).



21st June Eastern Olivaceous Warbler, the second for Fair Isle.



10th June 3 Peregrine chicks in old Raven nest on west cliffs





9th June A cracking male Red-breasted Flycatcher.

*Photographs by Deryk Shaw*

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>:** A male **Red-backed Shrike** and a female **Bluethroat** plus a lingering **Marsh Warbler** is all there was to report.

**June 1<sup>st</sup>:** A quiet start to the month with a **Red-backed Shrike** and a **Marsh Warbler** all there was of note.

## MAY

**May 31<sup>st</sup>:** The final day of the month brought in yet another rarity. A **River Warbler** in Vaila's Trees – no doubt the first of many good birds for this newly planted area, in memory of Vaila Harvey. An approachable **Hobby** was at Leogh, which is more than can be said for the **Great Reed Warbler** that was also there. At least four **Marsh Warblers** were the third new species for the year.

Photographs by Deryk Shaw



Hobby





Great Reed Warbler



River Warbler

**May 30<sup>th</sup>:** Another quiet day was considerably enlivened when a **Great Reed Warbler** was discovered at Lower Leogh. A **Common Rosefinch** at Schoolton was also new.

**May 29<sup>th</sup>:** Its been a quiet few days but a **Turtle Dove** today was an addition to the yearlist whilst an **Icterine Warbler** was a lingering bird, originally ringed on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**May 26<sup>th</sup>:** Migrants again pretty thin on the ground but a nice **Rustic Bunting** was discovered at Wirvie and later moving to near Vaadal/Plantation. Two **Icterine Warblers** and a male **Grey-headed Wagtail** were other notables. A freshly killed **Long-eared Owl** was a sad find whilst **Arctic Terns** seeming to be at least attempting to breed with c350 on Bunes and smaller numbers at Bullock Holes, Horsti Brekkers and Shalstane.

**May 25<sup>th</sup>:** A much quieter day with just the **Bluethroat** lingering at Setter. A **Dunnock** was new, as was a **Woodcock** flushed from the Gully and a couple of mealy **Redpolls** were seen. Just a handful of common warblers now remain.



Stone Curlew Photograph by Deryk Shaw

**May 24<sup>th</sup>:** Star bird today was the **Stone Curlew** spotted by a visiting birder on Meoness. It flew shortly after and was relocated on the Rippack but disappeared again an hour later. This was the eighth island record but the first since 1995. A male **Red-backed Shrike**, **Bluethroat** and a pair of **Common Rosefinch** were colourful entries to the log. Finally, a **Quail** was flushed from the pony field near Kenaby.

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>:** A brisk easterly with plenty of cloud cover but still a mild, bright day. Two firsts for the year were both male – a **Red-backed Shrike** trapped in the Vaadal and a **Common Rosefinch** singing in Chalet garden. A **Common Nightingale** at the mast looked as though it could have been the same bird that was at Leogh on 21<sup>st</sup>.

**May 22<sup>nd</sup>:** More glorious weather and hardly a breath of wind. A **European Nightjar** was flushed from the Gully on morning trap round whilst **Icterine warbler** and **Bluethroat** were spotted near the Ringing hut. At sea, a **Sandwich Tern** flew past North Light whilst a summer plumaged **Great Northern Diver** was also new for the year. Best of all however was the **European Bee-eater**, which unfortunately only stayed long enough for the two Assistant wardens to see it near their garden at the Chalet.



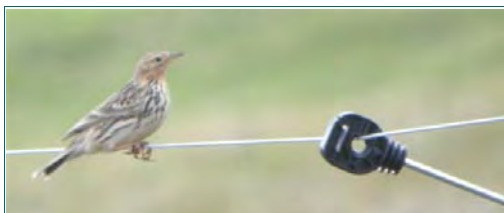
**Subalpine warbler**

*Photo by Jack Ashton-Booth*

**May 21<sup>st</sup>:** The glorious weather continues, as does the light SE'ly wind. However, the numbers of migrant birds dropped still further with only single figure counts of many and no remaining scarcities. Three nice arrivals went a long way to make up for this though with a **Subalpine Warbler** at Skerryholm/Haa first thing, followed with a cracking bright **Common Nightingale** at Leogh mid-morning and late afternoon a **Honey Buzzard** arrived to upset the breeding gulls, skuas, ravens etc.

**May 20<sup>th</sup>:** Another glorious day of weather but there has been a large clearout of birds. There was still a fair scattering of common migrants but in much less numbers. A **Quail** at the Obs and two **Icterine Warblers** were the highlights.

**May 19<sup>th</sup>:** A glorious day of weather with just a light SE'ly wind. Birds were still very much in evident with all the common migrant species of the past few days present in similarly good numbers. A turnover of birds is indicated by the fact we are catching few retraps in the heligolands and that new species are being found. In fact, there were four additions to the year list today with an **Osprey** travelling north-east at lunchtime, two **Common Terns** in the Havens, a **Quail** flushed from Schoolton Ditch and a **Tree Sparrow** at Auld Haa, then Burkle late afternoon.



**Red-throated Pipit**

*Photo by Jack Ashton-Booth*

**May 18<sup>th</sup>:** The day started well with a male **Nightjar** trapped in the Gully before breakfast. Common migrants were in very similar number to the previous day although **Willow Warblers** broke one hundred (112 logged) and a dozen **Chiffchaff** was also an increase. Of the scarcities, **Bluethroats** numbered 7, whilst **Icterine Warblers** increased to 3 and the 2 **Wood Sandpipers** remained. Finally, a **Red-throated Pipit** was a nice afternoon find!

**May 17<sup>th</sup>:** A slightly less strong easterly today but still the majority of migrants were to be found along the west cliffs. As yesterday, leading the totals were 98 **Willow Warblers** but others were in slightly fewer numbers; 46 **Common Redstarts**, 21 **Whinchats**, 17 **Common Whitethroats**, 9 **Lesser Whitethroats**, 8 **Garden Warblers**, 17 **Pied** and 13 **Spotted Flycatchers**. Highlights included a fine male **Golden Oriole**, an adult **Long-tailed Skua**, at least 11 **Bluethroat**, an **Icterine Warbler**, 2 **Wood Sandpiper** and the first **Reed Warbler** of the year.

The **Peregrines** on the west cliffs have hatched!

**May 16<sup>th</sup>:** An easterly gale meant that the majority of migrants on the isle were sheltering down the west cliffs.....and what a lot of them there were! Leading the totals were the 84 **Willow Warblers** but the chasing pack included 50 **Common Redstarts**, 30 **Whinchats**, 26 **Common Whitethroats**, 16 **Lesser Whitethroats**, 12 **Garden Warblers**, 25 **Pied** and 20 **Spotted Flycatchers**. Highlights included at least 15 **Bluethroat**, 2 **Icterine Warblers** and the first **Wood Sandpiper** and **Cuckoo** of the year.



**Bluethroat**



**Wood Warbler**



**Richards Pipit from 10th**

*Photos by Jack Ashton-Booth*

8<sup>th</sup> May: **BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD** - Fair Isle does it again with another first (2nd record for Britain)!

Remained here all day Saturday 9th May.

Video (no sound on this version) of **Brown-headed Cowbird** by Liz Musser, Auld Haa, Fair Isle

## APRIL

**April 30<sup>th</sup>:** Another good day to end a good month with two new birds being added to the year list including a **Sanderling** and a **Jackdaw**. Other notable species seen on this clear but breezy day were 6 Greylag Geese, 4 teal, 6 golden plover, 1 Whimbrel, a Greenshank, a Common Sandpiper, 3 Purple Sandpiper and 3 Dunlin. The Stock Dove remains in the vicinity of Pund and 5 Woodpigeon were seen around the Meadow. Also noted were 5 Swallow, 3 Tree pipits, 2 Yellow, 5 White and 2 Pied Wagtails, a couple of new Robins, 2 Redstarts, 4 Whinchats, 3 Chiffchaff, 7 Willow Warbler, 2 Brambling, 2 Siskin and a single Goldfinch.

**April 29<sup>th</sup>:** The Pink-Footed Goose and Greenland White-Fronted Goose remain with just 13 Greylag Geese and 5 Teal are the only other notable wildfowl species. A Grey Heron and a female Merlin were seen on the wing in the south and waders comprised of 8 Golden Plover and a single Dunlin, Whimbrel and Common Sandpiper. Pigeons were represented by a **Stock Dove**, 3 Woodpigeon and a Collared Dove. A Short-Eared Owl was also encountered as were 13 Swallows, a single Goldcrest, Robin and Reed Bunting, 3 Tree Pipits, 3 Yellow Wagtails, a Grey Wagtail, 5 Pied Wagtails and a

single White Wagtail. Newly arrived chats included a male and female **Redstart**, and 2 stunning male Whinchats. Warblers comprised of 2 **Grasshopper Warblers**, 4 Blackcaps, 5 Chiffchaff and 6 Willow Warblers. Finches were rather thin on the ground with just a single Goldfinch, Brambling, Linnet and Mealy Redpoll feeding with 2 Siskin at Auld Haa.

**April 28<sup>th</sup>**: Another good late April day with a **Common Shelduck** on Da Water with a group of 4 Teal, however there was no sign of their Nearctic equivalent. The 1<sup>st</sup> 2 **Manx Shearwater** of the year were reported by the crew of the *Good Shepherd* and the **Marsh Harrier** continues its stint with us, as does the male Sparrowhawk that was trapped in the Gully early in the morning. Waders included a flock of 16 Golden Plover on Setter, 2 Whimbrel and 2 cracking summer plumaged Dunlin in the south along with 3 Common Sandpipers. Skuas were very evident today with 112 Great Skuas around the island and 10 Arctic Skuas that were beginning to re-establish their territories. Continuing with that arctic theme was a fly over 1st summer **Glaucous Gull** and the 1<sup>st</sup> **Arctic Tern** of the year. The 2 Collared Doves were again seen and the Wood pigeons on the island continue to fluctuate with a flock of 10 birds counted. The elusive **Great-Spotted Woodpecker** was again seen briefly by the island nurse this time on the mast, much to the disappointment of a certain seabird warden who I can assure now knows the precise locations of all the islands birdfeeders like the back of his hand. An obvious influx of migratory passerines was evident with 25 Swallows, 2 House martin, 3 Tree Pipits as well as a count of **139 Wheatears** - the highest count so far this year. It is also the first time this year that 4 different Wagtails have been noted which included the 1<sup>st</sup> of the years **Yellow Wagtails** (*Ssp.flavissima*) with 3 individuals in the south alongside 6 Pied, 4 Whites and a Grey Wagtail. Other migrants that arrived as part of this afternoon arrival included the 1<sup>st</sup> **Whinchat** of the year, a **Black Redstart** and a **Grasshopper Warbler** in Vaila's Trees. Sylvia's comprised of 2 Lesser Whitethroats, the male Whitethroat and 5 Blackcaps. Spring was well and truly in the air with 12 Chiffchaffs noted including a singing bird and 3 Willow Warblers. Finches comprised of 4 Siskin, 3 Chaffinches, 2 Linnets, 5 Mealy Redpoll, a Brambling and a Goldfinch caught at the Chalet. Three bunting species were noted consisting of 2 Snow Buntings, a single Yellowhammer and a Reed Bunting.

**27<sup>th</sup> April**: The **Green-Winged Teal** continues its stay amongst a flock 4 Teal on Da Water and a drake Red-Breasted Merganser was seen flying over the north east of the island but best of all was a female **Great-Spotted Woodpecker** seen at the chalet feeders in the morning. Either the very naïve or very brave **Marsh Harrier** continues its island tour, amidst an ever increasing minefield of Great Skuas territories, whilst other raptors on the island include a male and female **Sparrowhawk**. The 1<sup>st</sup> **Common Sandpiper** was heard and then seen around South Harbour and 24 Golden Plover, 2 Whimbrel and a single Dunlin were other notable wader species. Notable passerine species consisted of 8 Swallows, 2 Tree pipits, 3 Pied, 8 White and a Grey Wagtail. Also noted was a second wave of **Wheatears** with 122 being counted (roughly twice as many as the past week) comprising mainly of males much to the dislike of the breeding males that have already established their territories. Sylvia's comprised of a Lesser Whitethroat, a Blackcap and Whitethroat. Also there were 7 Chiffchaffs, a single Willow Warbler and Goldcrest, 4 Siskin, 2 Linnets, a single Chaffinch, Goldfinch and Brambling as well as 2 Mealy Redpolls, 7 Snow Buntings and a Reed Bunting.

**26<sup>th</sup> April**: The drake **Green-Winged Teal** is here for its second day, along with 10 Teal and 2 Wigeon. The second **Cormorant** of the year was noted as was the female **Marsh Harrier**, 36 Golden Plover, a single Dunlin, 2 Whimbrel, 6 Swallow, 1 House Martin, 2 Pied and 4 White Wagtails. Sylvia's comprised of 3 Lesser Whitethroats, 2 Blackcaps and the Whitethroat again. 3 Chiffchaffs and 2 Willow Warblers were the only other warbler species noted today in the company of a single **Goldcrest** a few Chaffinches, 2 Linnets, 2 Mealy Redpolls, a single Snow Bunting and 3 Reed Bunting.

**25<sup>th</sup> April**: Unquestionable highlight of the day has to be the drake **GREEN-WINGED TEAL** found amongst the 8 Teal on Da Water which represents the First record of this long overdue species for Fair Isle. The **Marsh Harrier** continued its tour of the isle as did a flock of 22 Golden Plover, a Whimbrel, 2 Collared Doves, 22 Swallows and 2 House Martins. The 1<sup>st</sup> **Tree Pipit** of the year was recorded as were 3 Pied and 4 White Wagtails, as well as 2 Robins, a Dunnock and a Black Redstart. Sylvia's comprised of 3 Lesser Whitethroats and 2 Blackcaps. Phyllosc's were well represented by 19 Chiffchaffs and 3 Willow Warblers. Granivorous species comprised of 3 Chaffinches, 2 Linnets, 4 Mealy Redpolls, 2 Yellowhammers and a Reed Bunting.

**24<sup>th</sup> April:** The second **Marsh Harrier** of the month toured the island today; although a cream crown the bird was a lot more adult like in its appearance compared to the bird earlier on in the month and was also missing some primaries in its right wing. Also noted were 21 **Golden Plover**, 2 **Whimbrel**, 9 **Woodpigeon**, a **House Martin** amongst 7 **Swallows**, 2 **Pied** and 1 **White Wagtail**, 2 **Dunnocks**, 2 **Robins**, 2 **Black Redstarts** as well as 7 **Chiffchaffs**. Sylvia's comprised a single **Lesser Whitethroat**, **Common Whitethroat** and **Blackcap**. Finches included 4 **Chaffinch**, 3 **Mealy Redpolls** and a single **Goldfinch** and the only buntings seen were the 2 **Yellowhammer** that continued their stay at Burkle.

**23<sup>rd</sup> April:** The single **Greenland White-Fronted Goose** and a **single Pink-Footed Goose** remain but the **Dark bellied Brent Goose** that spent most of the winter with us hasn't been seen for some time and has presumably left with the migratory **Greylag Geese**. A nice surprise today and a good spring record was a pair of **Gadwall** that took off from the scrape along with a **Black Tailed-Godwit**. Other notable species was a female **Merlin**, 15 **Golden Plover**, a **Whimbrel**, 14 **Woodpigeon**, 5 **Swallows**, 1 **White** and 3 **Pied Wagtails**, 2 **Dunnocks** and 2 **Robins**. Warblers comprised of a male **Blackcap**, the lingering male **Whitethroat** and 7 **Chiffchaffs**. Finches included a single **Brambling**, **Chaffinch** and **Siskin** as well as 3 **Mealy Redpolls**. There were also 3 **Snow Buntings** in the south and 2 **Yellowhammers** at Burkle's newly created avian Shangri la.

**22<sup>nd</sup> April:** Yesterdays **Yellowhammer** was joined by another at Kennaby and its arrival coincided with the arrival of two **Goldfinches** and 62 **Fieldfare**. Other good counts of birds continued with 63 Greats Skuas, 6 Lesser Black-Backed Gulls and 87 Wheatears. An Arctic Skua and Short-Eared Owl were seen as well as the lingering Whitethroat and Lesser Whitethroat. A Ring Ouzel, 9 Swallows and 4 White Wagtails were also noted as were 3 Dunnock, 2 Robins, 2 Black Redstarts, a Reed Bunting and 7 Chiffchaff. Finches were represented by 5 Chaffinches, 4 Brambling, 4 Siskin and the cracking male Mealy Redpoll.

**21<sup>st</sup> April:** A **Yellowhammer** brightened up an otherwise dull day. However a single Woodcock, Whimbrel, Arctic Skua and White Wagtail were recorded as were 6 Chiffchaffs, 4 Dunnocks, 6 Robin, 3 Chaffinch, 2 Linnets, 2 mealy Redpolls (including a stunning male), a Reed Bunting as well as the male Ring Ouzel and Whitethroat that continue to put in brief appearances.

**20<sup>th</sup> April:** Undoubtedly the highlight of today was the evening arrival of a **Red-Rumped Swallow** and more importantly the arrival of Adam who found it. Had he not arrived to study wheatears it is more than likely the bird would have simply drifted through undetected. All that can be said is thank goodness he did because the bird gave outstanding views as it hawked the cliff tops by south light and stalled just inches in front of all the memorised observers. Other good birds of note included the 1<sup>st</sup> **Lesser Whitethroat** and **Cormorant** of the year, 2 **Stock Dove**, 22 **Wood Pigeons**, 3 **Whimbrel**, a **Woodcock** and 14 **Chiffchaffs** including one bird singing in the gully. Other species include a male Ring Ouzel and Whitethroat, 3 Dunnocks, 4 Robins, 2 Chaffinches, 5 Brambling, 3 Siskin and a single Linnets, Mealy Redpoll and Reed Bunting.

**19<sup>th</sup> April:** Flat calm conditions enabled the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year's Black Guillemot counts to be conducted. Not surprisingly, a number of birds were also noted offshore with a single **Wigeon**, a drake **Tufted Duck** and **Red-Breasted Merganser**, 3 **Red-Throated Divers**, an **Arctic Skua** and a noteworthy 1<sup>st</sup> summer **Kittiwake**. The calm conditions also induced passage over the island and migrants included 2 **Kestrels**, an immature female **Peregrine** that kept upsetting the resident Peregrine pair, 2 **Whimbrel**, 41 **Black-Headed Gulls**, 200 **Common Gulls**, a **Short-Eared Owl** and 9 **Swallows**. The stillness in the air had clearly brought about a small afternoon arrival with 3 **Blackcaps**, 12 **Chiffchaffs**, 18 **Brambling**, 5 **Chaffinches** and 6 **mealy Redpolls** noted. Other birds of note were 2 **White Wagtails**, 3 **Dunnocks**, 5 **Robins**, a **Willow Warbler**, 7 **Siskin**, 3 **Linnets**, a male **Reed Bunting** and yesterday's **Black Redstarts** and **Ring Ouzel**.

**18<sup>th</sup> April:** A very different day from yesterday with the 1<sup>st</sup> **Whimbrel** of the year being seen in the form of one flock of 50 birds (second highest ever) flying high to the north east as well as 1<sup>st</sup> **Greenshank** of the year that toured the island before alighting to feed on Easter Lothar. There was a noticeable increase in **Wheatears** with 80 birds being counted along with 2 **Black Redstarts**, a male **Ring Ouzel** and the **Hawfinch** that remains. Apart from a small increase of 8 Chiffchaffs numbers of other species remained relatively constant with 2 Dunnocks, 4 Robins, a single Willow Warbler, Greenfinch and mealy Redpoll, 2 Chaffinch, 7 Brambling, 6 Siskin, 3 Linnets and 2 Reed Bunting.

**17<sup>th</sup> April:** Apart from a single **Greenfinch** that joined the **Hawfinch**, birds were rather thin on the ground and seemed to have cleared out. Birds that continued to linger however were 2 White Wagtails, 2 Dunnocks, 4 Robins, 1 Black Redstart, the male Whitethroat, 5 Chiffchaffs a single Willow Warbler, Chaffinch and mealy Redpoll, 6 Brambling and 9 Siskin.

**16<sup>th</sup> April:** New birds included a **Merlin**, 8 **Carrion Crows** and 3 **White Wagtails**. The **Hawfinch** and the 2 **Rooks** were again seen as was the **Sparrowhawk** with a very full crop and apart from one less redwing on the island other birds included a good count of 29 **Golden Plover**, 4 **Dunnocks**, 5 **Robins**, 1 **Black Redstart** and a male **Ring Ouzel**. The **Grasshopper Warbler** was caught in the Gully, **Chiffchaffs** had increased to 12 birds and small fluctuations in finch numbers produced 4 **Chaffinch**, 13 **Brambling**, 8 **Siskin**, 2 **Linnet**, 1 **Mealy Redpoll**.

**15<sup>th</sup> April:** The 1<sup>st</sup> **Common Whitethroat** of the year was seen today along with a cracking male **Redstart** and 2 **Rooks**. The female **Sparrowhawk** was caught in the Vadaal and the female **Marsh Harrier** from yesterday was seen coming in off the sea in the south after what appeared to be a failed attempt to cross the sea. Other birds of note were 3 **Dunnocks**, 4 **Robins**, 8 **Chiffchaffs**, 3 **Willow Warblers**, 6 **Chaffinches**, 11 **Brambling**, 5 **Siskin**, a single **Linnet** and **Mealy Redpoll** as well as 2 **Reed Bunting**.

**14<sup>th</sup> April:** What started off as a very quiet and unrewarding day was soon forgotten with the arrival of a female **Marsh Harrier** and a **Green Sandpiper**. The female **Sparrowhawk** was seen again as was the **White Wagtail** and 3 **Dunnocks**, 4 **Robins**, 4 **Chiffchaffs**, 2 **Willow Warblers**, 12 **Chaffinches**, 10 **Brambling**, 4 **Siskin**, 3 **Linnet** and a **Reed Bunting** were recorded.

**13<sup>th</sup> April:** Another great day with the 4 new birds added to the year list with a **Stock Dove**, **Shelduck**, **House Martin** and a pair of **Shoveler** being noted. Other new birds included a female **Sparrowhawk**, a **White Wagtail** and 7 **Pied Wagtails**. The **Hawfinch** and the **Grasshopper Warbler** remain and other birds noted include a **Dunnock**, 2 **Robins**, 3 **Chiffchaffs**, 5 **willow Warblers**, 13 **Chaffinch**, 6 **Brambling**, 5 **Siskin**, a **Linnet**, and 2 **Reed Buntings**.

**12<sup>th</sup> April:** Today's highlight had to be the **White-Tailed Eagle** that graced us with its present. First reported on North Ronaldsay the day before it obviously thought that Fair Isle would be its best bet to catch up with the elusive Easter bunny. After being kindly tipped off about the Eagle leaving high to the north from North Ron the bird was first picked up flying over Sheep Rock 40 minutes later. It then chose to sit on Ward Hill for 20 minutes before flying purposefully with its entourage of a Raven, Great-Blackbacked Gull and a female Peregrine out to sea towards Shetland where it was seen coming in 35 minutes later. Another new bird that also stood out like a sore thumb was a corking male **Hawfinch** that had found the newly erected bird feeders at the Chalet. Other notable species was a good count of 7 **Teal**, a **Woodcock**, 3 **Black Redstarts**, 6 **Goldcrests** and a male **Stonechat**. Warblers were represented by a male **Blackcap**, 5 **Chiffchaffs**, 5 **Willow Warblers** and yesterdays **Grasshopper Warbler**. Finches comprised of 5 **Chaffinch**, 4 **Brambling**, 5 **Siskin**, 4 **Linnet** and a single **Mealy Redpoll**.

**11<sup>th</sup> April:** New birds for the year today included a male **Kestrel**, 2 **Arctic Skuas**, a **Grasshopper Warbler** and a male **Redstart**. A small influx of thrushes occurred with 23 **Blackbirds**, 54 **Fieldfare**, 15 **Song Thrush** and 29 **Redwing**. Other birds of note include 23 **Woodpigeons**, 2 **White Wagtails**, 2 **Black Redstarts**, 10 **Chiffchaffs**, 6 **Willow Warblers** and 6 **Goldcrests**. Finches comprised of 9 **Chaffinch**, 4 **Brambling**, 11 **Siskin** and 2 **Linnet**. A male **Reed Bunting** and the yesterdays **Lapland Bunting** were also seen.

**10<sup>th</sup> April:** A miserable day with low cloud and periods of drizzle but the south-east wind persisted resulting in the first **Lapland Bunting** of the year, other grounded migrants included 150 **Skylarks**, a **Grey Wagtail**, a **Black Redstart**, the male **Stonechat**, a **Ring Ouzel**, 3 **Chiffchaff**, 3 **Willow Warbler**, a **Brambling** and 4 **Siskin**.

The single **White-fronted Goose** and **Brent Goose** are still lingering with the flock of 60 Greylags still on the island – its surely time for them to move back north? Also of note was the first mass arrival of **Puffins** back onto the cliff-top including many colour ringed birds at Roskilie.

**9<sup>th</sup> April:** The wind remained in the south-east but increased slightly which, when combined with some showers produced our first **Willow Warbler**, **Blackcap**, and 2 **Brambling** of the year. There were a few other new birds which included 10 **Black-headed Gulls**, 8 **Woodpigeon**, 2 **Short-eared Owl**, 2 **Swallows**, a **White Wagtail**, an increase to 9 **Robins**, 3 **Black Redstarts**, a male **Stonechat**, a big influx of 40 **Wheatear**, a male **Ring Ouzel**, 6 **Chiffchaff**, 5 **Goldcrest**, 7 **Chaffinch** and 14 **Snow Bunting**.

The male **Kestrel** remains and the drake **Long-tailed Duck** and female **Common Scoter** reappeared in Furse.

**8<sup>th</sup> April:** The wind veered easterly for a time with frequent showers which resulted in our first 2 **Ring Ouzels** of the year arriving as well as a small influx of waders which included 35 **Purple Sandpipers**, 36 **Redshank** and 89 **Turnstone**. Other new birds included a group of 7 **Pink-footed Geese**, a pair of **Wigeon**, 2 **Grey Wagtails**, a **Swallow**, 4 **Chiffchaff**, 3 **Siskin** and a **Reed Bunting**.

**7<sup>th</sup> April:** The brisk south-easterly wind continued but with clear skies it was a quiet day for grounded migrants as birds of note included a male **Kestrel**, a male **Merlin**, 10 **Golden Plover**, a **White Wagtail**, a **Black Redstart**, 2 **Chiffchaff**, 2 **Siskin** and the first **Mealy Redpoll** of the year.

**6<sup>th</sup> April:** A nice day with a light SE'ly which developed into a cool brisk SE'ly during the afternoon. A couple of **Siskins** were new for the year and there were also three **Greenfinches** and ten **Chaffinches**. Also in were two **Black Redstarts**, two **Grey Wagtail**, a **Goldcrest**, 18 **Snow Buntings** and a **Reed Bunting**. A freshly dead but emaciated **Long-eared Owl** was discovered in the Gully. **Greylag Geese** are down to around 65 but the **Brent** and **Greenland Whitefront** remain. Bird of the day was only seen briefly - a first-winter **Iceland Gull** which looked incredibly dark as it flew past, a possible Kumliens?

**5<sup>th</sup> April:** A switch to westerly winds cleared the fog and resulted in beautiful almost cloudless sunny (though cool) sky first thing, however a rain front had arrived by 11am. A male **Wigeon** and a **Grey Wagtail** were new in whilst increased counts of **Oystercatcher** (140), **Bonxie** (10), **Common Gull** (44), **Meadow Pipit** (100), **Wheatear** (8) and **Fieldfare** (50) were made.

**4<sup>th</sup> April:** Another day of foggy weather severely hampered birding so the only birds of note were the first **Shelduck** of the year plus four **Wheatear** and a **Mistle Thrush**.

**3<sup>rd</sup> April:** A much quieter, very foggy day with a cool SE'ly breeze. A couple of **Water Rails** and a similar number of **Dunnocks** and **Robins** plus a **Goldcrest** were the only new things in. Other sightings included one **Bonxie**, five **Pied Wagtail**, just one **Wheatear**, **Chiffchaff** and a **Reed Bunting**.

**2<sup>nd</sup> April:** Best day of the year so far for weather – a light SE'ly with lots of sunshine and little cloud. The birding didn't quite match up to it but our first **White Wagtail** (and four **Pied**) dropped in and a **Redpoll** sp flew over. **Greenfinches** increased to seven and **Wheatears** to nine (all males) and a couple of **Dunnocks** arrived. Also seen were **Swallow**, **Chiffchaff**, six **Snow Buntings** and a pair of **Reed Buntings**. Close offshore were the second-winter **Glaucous Gull**, **Long-tailed Duck** and **Common Scoter**. The first **Puffins** came ashore.

**1<sup>st</sup> April:** A fairly mild day with a light SSW'ly wind. New for the year were the first few **Puffins** in Finniequoy, three **Collared Dove**, a **Grey Wagtail** and a **Greenfinch**, but best of all was the first **Swallow**. Also, seen were the **Greenland Whitefronted Goose** (with the 120 **Greylags** and single **Brent**), a fine male **Long-tailed Duck**, **Common Scoter** and **Red-breasted Merganser**. On land were three **Bonxies**, four **Wood Pigeon**, the **Short-eared Owl**, 60 **Meadow Pipits** and a cracking '*littoralis*' **Rock Pipit** in South harbour. Other passerines of note included three **Wheatear**, three **Pied Wagtail**, an increase in thrushes (55 **Blackbird**, 16 **Fieldfare**, 5 **Song Thrush** and 25 **Redwing**) and corvids (20 **Hooded Crow**, a single hybrid Hooded x Carrion Crow and 6+ migrant **Ravens**) plus two **Reed Bunting**. There were lots of **Guillemots** and **Razorbills** ashore all day and in the late afternoon 200+ **Puffins** in Furse.

## MARCH

**31<sup>st</sup> March:** A pretty wet, misty day with highlights of six **Whooper Swan**, a **Greenland Whitefronted Goose** and a **Black-tailed Godwit**. The **Common Scoter**, **Chiffchaff**, three **Rook** and five **Chaffinch** remain.

**30<sup>th</sup> March:** A blustery westerly wind today but the plane managed to get in with Assistant Warden Simon Davies on board! He went out that afternoon and found three year ticks; a **Chiffchaff** at Schoolton, a **Dunnock** at Chalet and a flyover **Linnet**! Two **Bonxies** were seen as well as the **Short-eared Owl**, two **Pied Wagtail** and three **Rook**. Munching seed in the Obs garden were five **Chaffinch** and 18 **Twite**.

**29<sup>th</sup> March:** Although the wind had switched to a strong SSW'ly, the temperature had not improved. Little of note was seen – **Rooks** had risen to three!

**28<sup>th</sup> March:** Another raw day with a strong northerly and some wintry showers. It was surprising then to find there had been a few arrivals; a **Short-eared Owl** was reported near Kenaby whilst a **Rook** was also a year tick. Two **Wood Pigeons** are now present plus eight **Snow Buntings** and three **Pied Wagtails**.

**27<sup>th</sup> March:** A very strong cold Easterly wind with some heavy showers made census difficult. Little new although **Meadow Pipits** have reached double figures (18 logged) and **Oystercatchers** triple figures (136 logged). A female **Merlin**, male **Peregrine** and the **Wood Pigeon** were seen.

**26<sup>th</sup> March:** A cool brisk SW'ly wind but bright and sunny brought the first **Wheatear** (a male) and encouraged more display from **Lapwings** and **Curlews** plus the pair of **Peregrines** (over Sheep Rock!) and also encouraged **Kittiwakes** onto ledges. Seven **Whooper Swans** flew through, a **Wood Pigeon** was new and an increase in thrushes was noted (27 **Blackbird**, 23 **Fieldfare**, 16 **Redwing**). **Oystercatchers** are up to 69 and **Ringed Plovers** to 25. A **Common Scoter**, three **Woodcock** and a male **Pied Wagtail** were also seen.

**25<sup>th</sup> March:** A female **Stonechat** and a **Red-breasted Merganser** were logged.

**24<sup>th</sup> March:** The most significant arrival was that of Assistant Warden Jack Ashton-Booth who has travelled up the east coast from Spurn Point! A male **Stonechat** at Leogh, three **Chaffinches** and 14 **Twite** in the Obs Garden were all there was even vaguely of note.

**23<sup>rd</sup> March:** **Lesser Black-backed Gull** (2) and **Reed Bunting** (male at Schoolton) were added to the yearlist.

**21<sup>st</sup> March:** A **Pied Wagtail** has (finally) arrived!

**20<sup>th</sup> March:** Four **Chaffinches** (one male, three females) and five **Robins** were counted. Not much change elsewhere!

**19<sup>th</sup> March:** A fine cool day with many auks still ashore into the afternoon for the first time and **Lapwings** displaying in the Parks. Five **Meadow Pipits** and seven **Golden Plovers** were new. Still lots of **Skylarks** (200+).

**17<sup>th</sup> March:** The first two **Bonxies** were reported! Three **Stonechats** in Boini Mire and a single **Black-headed Gull** were seen.

**16<sup>th</sup> March:** **Stonechats** back down to a single female but 24 **Fieldfare** and a **Golden Plover** were signs of further movement.

**15<sup>th</sup> March:** **Stonechats** have increased to six (five male, one female) but little else to report.



**14<sup>th</sup> March:** A **Goldcrest** in Raeva was new as was a **Black Redstart** at the Cru. **Guillemots** and **Razorbills** are more in attendance today. Everything else pretty much the same.

**13<sup>th</sup> March:** The **Sparrowhawk** was still present and counts of 71 **Oystercatcher**, 36 **Lapwing**, 24 **Curlew**, 200+ **Greylag** (and one **Brent**) **Geese**, 170 **Skylark**, 15 **Blackbird** and five **Fieldfare**.

**12<sup>th</sup> March:** An adult female **Sparrowhawk** shot out of the Plantation. A **Woodcock** was trapped and a **Grey Heron** was on Field Pond.

**10<sup>th</sup> March:** A second **Stonechat** arrived and a small flock (16) of **Snow Buntings**.

**9<sup>th</sup> March:** A **Mistle Thrush** was new and the **Wood Pigeon** and **Stonechat** were seen again.

**5<sup>th</sup> March:** Not much new but **Skylarks** are now at 255 and a **Golden Plover** appeared. The **Stonechat** remains but no sign of the Hen Harrier.

The first frogspawn of the year was found in Pund Ditch.

**4<sup>th</sup> March:** The **Hen Harrier** was seen again and also the first **Wood Pigeon** and **Stonechat** of the year. A collection of wildfowl included 13 **Wigeon**, 4 **Teal**, **Long-tailed Duck**, **Goldeneye** and **Common Scoter** as well as 270 **Greylag** and single **Brent** and **Barnacle Geese**. Waders included 96 **Oystercatcher**, 35 **Ringed Plover**, 21 **Lapwing**, 19 **Curlew**, 185 **Turnstone** and 30 **Redshank**. **Skylarks** reached 155 and included the first bursts of song and a flock of 14 **Snow Buntings** arrived whilst three **Chaffinches** linger.

**3<sup>rd</sup> March:** A nice near adult (third-calendar year) male **Hen Harrier** was the best bird of the year so far.

**2<sup>nd</sup> March:** A count of 66 **Oystercatchers** indicated some movement overnight. There were c30 **Gannets** on Yellow Head and c400 on Kirk Stack.

**1<sup>st</sup> March:** As if the birds knew that it was the month when spring begins, there was an instant increase in passage. Waders were the most significant movers with 47 **Lapwing**, 50 **Ringed Plover**, 23 **Curlew** and 140 **Turnstone**. Only 15 **Oystercatchers** were seen though. Thrushes seem to be dropping whilst **Skylarks** reached 60.

## **JANUARY & FEBRUARY**

**February Highlights:** A *tundra* **Bean Goose** dallied for a few minutes on 5<sup>th</sup> and a **Barnacle Goose** joined the **Greylag** flock (230) and the lone **Brent Goose** on 9<sup>th</sup>.

Good numbers of **Fieldfares** (50) with smaller numbers of **Blackbird** (18) and **Redwing** (22) and the odd **Song Thrush** remained until snow covered the isle from 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> causing many to clear out. The two wintering female **Chaffinches** remained throughout and a lone male was seen on 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Oystercatchers** trickled through reaching a peak of 40 by the end of the month with smaller numbers of **Lapwings** (peak 35) and **Curlews** (peak 34). The first **Ringed Plover** was spotted on 17<sup>th</sup> and there were eight a week later. **Skylarks** started to appear around mid-month, reaching 30 by 27<sup>th</sup>. **Twite** numbers slowly increased from c15 to 43. **Gannets** were back on Yellow Head from 12<sup>th</sup> and a few **Guillemots** ashore on calm mornings during the final week of the month. Other sightings included occasional **Long-tailed Duck**, **Goldeneye**, **Grey Heron**, **Woodcock**, **Merlin**, **Black-headed Gull** and a few **Water Rail**, **Wigeon** and **Teal**.

**January Highlights:** At least two each of Glaucous Gull and Iceland Gull (including a Kumliens type) have been seen. One Brent Goose remains from the six that arrived in late autumn and a Waxwing was at Schoolton on 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Other sightings:** The ever-growing wintering Greylag flock has reached a record 160 this year with three Pinkfeet admixed. Other wildfowl included up to 13 Wigeon, five Teal and a Common Scoter. Three Oystercatchers, a Golden Plover and Dunlin (all 18<sup>th</sup>) added to the peak counts of 16 Lapwing, 113 Turnstone, five Purple Sandpiper, seven Curlew, 65 Common Snipe and three Jack Snipe. A couple of Merlin and a Peregrine were seen on and off throughout. Passerine highlights included unusual wintering records of Skylark (3) and Meadow Pipit (2) and an unusually high number of Fieldfare (110). Other records included a couple of Chaffinches, a dozen Twite and 35 Snow Buntings.