

1st-10th August 2012

Three Greylags were present on 7th while ducks included 3 Wigeon on 3rd and 6th and a single Teal, also on 6th. Storm Petrel ringing on the night of the 4th produced 71 trapped birds plus 3 Leach's Petrels (1 trapped plus 2 singing birds), this following a good count of 53 Storm Petrels in Fair Isle waters from the Northlink. Single Grey Herons were seen on 3 dates while a Kestrel arrived on 8th. Notable wader counts and sightings during this period included 4 Golden Plovers (10th), 14 Lapwings (6th), Sanderling from 4th, with 2 on 6th, 6 Purple Sandpipers (3rd), 6 Dunlin (7th), Whimbrel on 3 dates, 4 Curlew travelling north (9th), Green Sandpiper (4th and 9th), a peak of 3 Greenshanks (6th) and 2 **Wood Sandpipers** (4th) with singles on 6th-7th. Two **Sandwich Terns** fishing in South Harbour on 3rd were the first to be recorded on Fair Isle since 2009.

The first real migrants of the autumn are taking their time to arrive, with the only birds of note being 6 Chiffchaffs new in on 10th, a juvenile Willow Warbler on 5th, followed by 2 the next day and 3 on 9th, an early Fieldfare at Skerryholm on 6th, a peak of 4 Robins on 3rd bolstering the ranks of our summering birds, a Dunnock at the Chalet on 2nd and steadily building numbers of Pied Wagtails coming into roost at the Obs with 20 on 4th.

11th August 2012

Light south/south-easterly with misty patches

Five juvenile Shelduck were present in South Harbour; a very good count on Fair Isle, and a Teal was also present. A Sooty Shearwater and 4 Storm Petrels were logged from the Good Shepherd and 8 Grey Herons on the coastlines of the island were newly arrived. Wader totals included still small numbers of Oystercatchers, Ringed Plovers, Golden Plovers, Lapwings, a single Sanderling, 2 Purple Sandpipers, 6 Dunlin, 9 Curlew, a Green Sandpiper, 2 Greenshanks, 18 Redshanks and 28 Turnstones.

Two Swifts were floating around the isle while small migrants on the island included a **Wood Warbler** in the Observatory Plantation, 4 Chiffchaffs (all moulting summering birds), 4 Willow Warblers, a Sedge Warbler and 2 Linnets.

12th August 2012

Moderate easterly and overcast

A decent day with a few scarce arrivals, including a juvenile **Marsh Harrier** that circled over Meadow Burn (much to the displeasure of the islands Oystercatchers, Curlews and Meadow Pipits) before drifting north.

Four Shelduck were still present, along with 3 Teal and 2 apparently wild Mallards (just about notable!). Waders, other than the usual suspects included 5 Knot, an increase to 10 Dunlin, 2 Ruff, 3 Green Sandpipers and a Greenshank while a clear increase in Common Gulls brought 135 to the islands recently cut silage fields.

One Collared Dove arrived along with a couple of extra Swifts. A good arrival of migrants onto the island produced the autumns first 2 Garden Warblers, **Barred Warbler** in the plantation, Grasshopper Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher, Whinchat, 5 Pied Flycatchers and Common Crossbill, while other counts included 4 **Wood Warblers** (an excellent day-count), 6 Chiffchaffs, 17 Willow Warblers, a single Blackcap, 3 White Wagtails, 118 Meadow Pipits and 6 Linnets.

13th August 2012

Moderate easterlies, fine

Shelduck increased in number to 6 juveniles on the rocks near South Light; the biggest flock to be seen on Fair Isle since 8 were present on 29th May 1969! Golden Plovers increased to 21 birds while other waders of note included a Sanderling, 15 Dunlin, 2 Ruff still and 2 Greenshanks.

Nine Swallows worked their way south while small passerine migrants included a lingering **Wood Warbler**, 3 Chiffchaffs, 16 Willow Warblers, 3 Garden Warblers, the first **Icterine Warbler** of the autumn in Skinners Glig, a Whinchat, a single Pied Flycatcher and 4 White Wagtails.

14th August 2012

Moderate to strong easterlies, with occasionally heavy rain

Highlight of today was the discovery of not one, but **2 Citrine Wagtails** together at Utra Scrape. Both vocal birds, they showed well on the scrape and in the short turf along the cliff-edges.

A Teal dropped in, as did 3 additional Grey Herons. A Peregrine was logged while Sanderlings increased to 3 birds and Ruff to 6. Also present were 3 Common Sandpipers and small numbers of the usual wader suspects. Common Gulls increased to 335 birds.

A good arrival of birds occurred today, with highlights and counts including **2 Wood Warblers**, 3 Chiffchaffs, 28 Willow Warblers, 11 Garden Warblers, 3 **Barred Warblers** (trapped in the gully, Steensi Geo and Midway), a Grasshopper Warbler at Setter, 2 Whinchats, 135 Wheatears, 7 Pied Flycatchers, a Siskin, 2 Linnets and the first **Common Rosefinch** of the autumn in Hjukni Geo.

15th August 2012

Light south-easterlies. Overcast

The 2 **CITRINE WAGTAILS** continue to linger at Utra Scrape and near the Haa, but are more mobile than yesterday.

The flock of 6 Shelducks were seen together again and 2 Teal were present along with 6 Herons. A Kestrel also found the isle. Wader numbers continue to build up slowly on the island with counts of 27 Golden Plovers, 13 Lapwings, 10 Sanderlings (an excellent count for Fair Isle), the first **Little Stint** of the year at Utra, 22 Dunlins, 6 Ruff still, 2 Whimbrel, 16 Curlew, 4 Common Sandpipers, 21 Redshank and 46 Turnstones.

A good arrival of migrants onto the island brought totals and highlights of 2 **Wrynecks** discovered at Dronger and the Chalet garden; the first of the autumn, while other small migrants included 9 Swallows, a lingering **Wood Warbler**, 5 Chiffchaffs, 85 Willow Warblers, 25 Garden Warblers, 3 **Barred Warblers** still, the first 2 Lesser Whitethroats of the year along with the first Common Whitethroat and Reed Warbler, a Fieldfare, 6 Pied Flycatchers and the first Tree Pipit of the autumn.

16th August 2012

Moderate east/north-easterly with rain in the morning

One of the **CITRINE WAGTAILS** remains from yesterday.

One Shelduck remains while Teal increase to 3. One Peregrine was sighted along the west cliffs. Notable waders included 18 Golden Plovers, 8 Sanderling, the **Little Stint** still, 5 Dunlin, 3 Ruff, 7 Common Sandpipers, 2 Green Sandpipers and 1 Greenshank. Lesser Black-backed Gull numbers increased to 14.

A single **Wryneck** (presumably one of yesterdays birds) was at the Obs while the first **Red-backed Shrike** of the autumn was found at Wester Lothar and a good number of commoner migrants continue to arrive, including totals of 1 **Wood Warbler**, 88 Willow Warblers, 15 Garden Warblers (a slight decrease from yesterday), 2 **Barred Warblers** still, 4 Lesser Whitethroats, 2 Common Whitethroats, a Sedge Warbler, the Fieldfare, a Spotted Flycatcher, 2 Redstarts, 4 Whinchats, 4 Pied Flycatchers, 3 Tree Pipits and 1 Linnet.

17th August 2012

Light easterly. Fine

A great night of Storm Petrel ringing produced 127 trapped birds, including 7 re-traps. Sightings during the waking hours included a single Kestrel, 7 Sanderlings, 16 Dunlins, 6 Ruff and 6 Common Sandpipers.

A Swift shot through while one **Wryneck** was seen at the Chalet and the first Sand Martin of the autumn was logged. Additional notable migrants on the day included a single **Wood Warbler**, 3 Chiffchaffs, 72 Willow Warbler (including a pale 'northern-type' bird), 8 Garden Warblers, a single **Barred Warbler** at the Obs, 4 Lesser Whitethroats, 3 Common Whitethroats, 2 Grasshopper Warblers, 4 Reed Warblers, 2 Spotted Flycatchers, 5 Whinchats, 6 Pied Flycatchers, 1 Tree Pipit and a Siskin.

18th August 2012

Light easterly wind, fine and hot. Fog by midday

Sanderlings increased to 11 birds and a juvenile **Little Stint** was logged along with 15 Dunlin and 9 Common Sandpipers.

A single Woodpigeon arrived and 6 Swifts were logged along with a single **Wryneck** at the Double Dyke. The first Goldcrest of the year was found in Grey Geo while other migrants included 10 Swallows, 6 Chiffchaffs, 102 Willow Warblers (a healthy August total), 14 Garden Warblers, 1 **Barred Warbler**, 2 Lesser Whitethroats, 3 Whitethroats, a single Grasshopper Warbler, 5 Reed Warblers, 2 Fieldfares, 2 Robins, 5 Whinchats, 3 remaining Pied Flycatchers, 2 Tree Pipits and 2 Siskins.

19th August 2012

Very light south-westerly. Overcast

Easy highlight of the day's census was the discovery of a smart **ARCTIC WARBLER** on the cliff-faces lining the Kirn O' Skroo in the morning. Once the full island Eider census had been completed the bird was successfully twitched and gave good views, occasionally calling.

Greylag Geese increased to 4 and a Shelduck was logged along with a single Teal and 124 Eiders (the product of a full island count), while Herons increased to 3. Six Golden Plovers were present along with 6 Ruff, a flock of 20 Whimbrel in from the north, 23 Curlew (including northerly passage), 8 Common Sandpipers, 2 Green Sandpipers and 2 Greenshanks.

Numbers of most common migrants tended to decrease on previous days counts, with more notable records including a lingering **Barred Warbler** at the Obs, 3 Reed Warblers, 3 Pied Flycatchers, a good count of 149 Rock Pipits (undoubtedly the product of a full island Eider count!) and 3 juvenile **Common Crossbills**.

20th August 2012

Light south/south easterly. Fine and warm with patchy fog

A Wigeon was the first of the autumn while 2 Red-throated Divers were the first of the month. A Peregrine was seen off the west cliffs while waders included a Knot, 2 Purple Sandpipers and 6 Ruff. A juvenile **Little Gull** at South Light roosting with Arctic Terns was a good find, being the islands 26th record.

Both Woodpigeon and Collared Dove were logged along with a reasonable count of 14 Swifts. Other small migrants included a Goldcrest, a **Wood Warbler** behind Ward Hill, an increase to 51 Willow Warblers, 11 Garden Warblers, 2 **Barred Warblers** at the Obs and trapped in the Plantation, a Sedge Warbler, 5 Reed Warblers, 2 Fieldfares, 1 Song Thrush (the first of the autumn), a Spotted Flycatcher, the first **Black Redstart** of the autumn, 8 Whinchats, 160 Wheatears (many of which were undoubtedly Fair Isle breeders, but with a few migrants mixed in), 4 Pied Flycatchers, 2 Tree Pipits, a **Goldfinch**, a single Siskin and a juvenile **Common Rosefinch** trapped in the Plantation.

21st August 2012

Very calm with low cloud and fog. Humid

An **ARCTIC WARBLER** consented to appear around the trapping area just before dinner today, but sadly did not consent to capture; on camera or in a Heligoland. A nice bird, although very mobile, finally settling at Setter where good views were obtained, with certain features (the near absence of a bold median covert bar and slightly broadening rear supercilium) led to speculation that it could be a different bird to the one on 19th. Let's hope it is seen tomorrow!

A Shelduck was present along with 3 Teal and a south-bound Red-throated Diver. Two Storm Petrels were seen from the Good Shepherd in the afternoon and 2 Peregrines were seen off the west coast. Notable waders included the Knot and a single Sanderling, 16 Dunlin, 3 Ruff, 8 Common Sandpipers and a Green Sandpiper. The juvenile **Little Gull** remains.

An excellent total of 33 Swifts were in the north of the island while other migrants included 2 Goldcrests, 2 Sand Martins, 8 Swallows, 3 Chiffchaffs, 24 Willow Warblers, 10 Garden Warblers, 2 **Barred Warblers**, 5 Lesser Whitethroats, 2 Whitethroats, 3 Reed Warblers, 4 Whinchats, 1 Pied Flycatcher, 4 Tree Pipits, 1 Siskin and 3 Linnets.

22nd August 2012

Very light south-westerly winds with showers

Wildfowl were represented by 2 Shelduck, a Wigeon, 3 Teal and a **Shoveler** on the Obs scrape, while Grey Herons increased to 6. Two Peregrines were logged. Wader counts included 58 Ringed Plovers, 6 Sanderling, 20 Dunlin, 6 Ruff, a Whimbrel, 3 Common Sandpipers, a single Green Sandpiper and 2 Greenshanks.

Migrant numbers tended to decline today, in conditions favourable for departure. Swift numbers remain relatively high, with 20 logged while migrant totals included a Goldcrest, 8 lingering Swallows, 23 Willow Warblers, 4 Garden Warblers, 3 **Barred Warblers** (Shirva, Obs and Setter), 3 Lesser Whitethroats, 2 Whitethroats, a Sedge Warbler, 2 Reed Warblers, 4 Whinchats, a single Pied Flycatcher and 6 Tree Pipits.

23rd August 2012

Light south-westerly and fine

Another fairly quiet day with no major surprises (though no-one was expecting any really) and smaller numbers of the same passerine species as yesterday. Notable sightings or species that showed an increase in number included a Merlin over Ward Hill (the first of the autumn), a flock of 36 Knot off the south end, 14 Curlews, 5 Common Sandpipers, 39 Redshanks, another good flock of 36 Swifts and a House Martin, a single lingering **Barred Warbler** and 121 Meadow Pipits.

24th August 2012

Light southerly wind with low cloud

An unexpectedly good day considering the weather, with the highlights including a **THRUSH NIGHTINGALE** trapped in the Gulley during the morning trap round, and **Icterine Warbler** trapped in Single Dyke on said same trap round plus another at Midway, a **Red-backed Shrike** at the Haa and 4 **Barred Warblers** (2 at the Obs plus Chalet and Schoolton).

Greylags increased to 8 and Teal to 5 while 2 Red-throated Divers sailed over the island in the morning. Raptors included a new Kestrel and a lingering Peregrine while waders of note included 19 Golden Plovers, 6 Sanderlings and 2 Ruff. Common Gulls increased in number to 58.

Small migrants included 6 Goldcrests, 2 Chiffchaffs, 20 Willow Warblers, 9 Garden Warblers, 2 Lesser Whitethroats, 1 Common Whitethroat, a Sedge Warbler, 4 Reed Warblers, the second **Black Redstart** of the autumn, 1 Common Redstart, 6 Whinchats, 152 Wheatears, 4 Pied Flycatchers, 5 White Wagtails, 221 Meadow Pipits and 5 **Common Crossbills**.

25th August 2012

Light to moderate north-westerlies. Fine but overcast

A **CITRINE WAGTAIL** at Easter Lothar Water in the morning was a pleasant surprise on a day when few new birds arrived onto the island. This was our 3rd of the autumn, and roughly the 66th record for Fair Isle.

A Red-breasted Merganser arrived in the Havens while a Kestrel and a Merlin were present. Waders of note included 3 Purple Sandpipers, 19 Dunlins, 7 Ruffs and 2 Green Sandpipers.

Passerines of note included an 'eastern-type' Willow Warbler along with small numbers of lingering birds, 2 **Barred Warblers**, 1 **Icterine Warbler**, the first Yellow Wagtail of the autumn at Bulls Park and 2 Crossbills.

26th August 2012

Light north/north-westerly. Fine

The **THRUSH NIGHTINGALE** remains in the Obs plantation, though is difficult to see due to its elusive nature.

A Wigeon and 4 Teal were noted along with 3 Herons and a newly arrived Sparrowhawk and lingering Merlin. Waders of note included 7 Sanderling and 2 Ruff.

A **Red-backed Shrike** was found at Boini Mire and a **Common Rosefinch** was at Midway in the morning while other lingering scarcities included 2 **Barred Warblers** and an **Icterine Warbler**. Counts of commoner migrants included 14 Willow Warblers, 2 Garden Warblers, 2 Lesser Whitethroats, 2 Whinchats, 44 *Alba* Wagtails and 12 White Wagtails and 325 Meadow Pipits (a clear arrival).