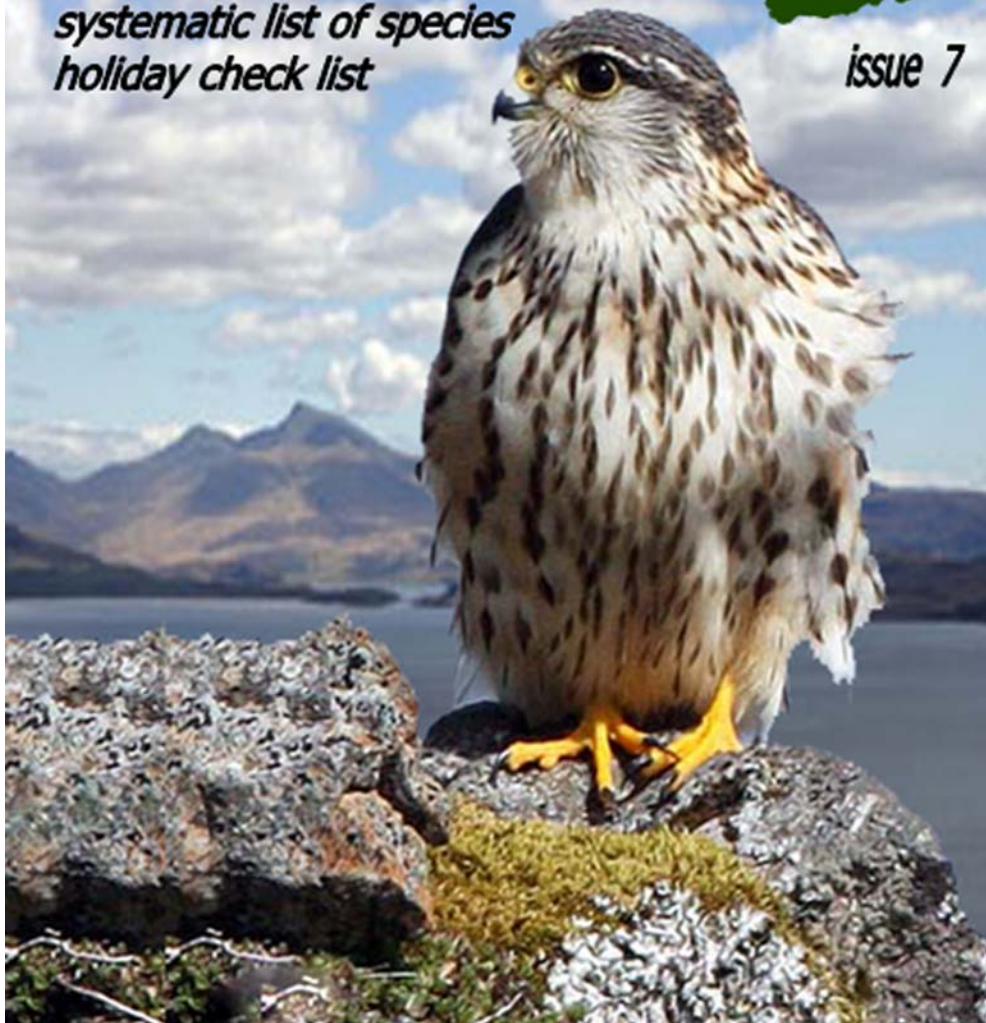


Isle of Mull bird report and Species list

*a guide to bird watching areas
where and when to watch birds
rare bird sightings reports
systematic list of species
holiday check list*



issue 7



The Isle of Mull Bird Club had its inaugural meeting on 31st January 2001

Regular meetings are held from October to April, usually in the Craignure Village Hall with regular meetings and field visits during the summer months.

The club is open to all ages and off island members and everybody is made welcome.



The protection of Mull's White tailed Sea Eagles involves the local Wildlife Crime Officer and Police force, Scottish Natural Heritage, Forest Enterprise, RSPB, Isle of Mull Bird Club members and many local Mull residents and visitors.

You can play your part by reporting any suspicious activity or vehicles.

Tobermory police	01688	302016
Craignure police	01680	812322
Oban police station	01631	510500

**Mull
Eagle
watch**



Codes of conduct and the law.

White tailed Sea Eagles

Please be aware that White tailed Sea Eagles and Golden Eagles are protected by law against disturbance of the birds or habitats. Many will know that in 2008 an individual was successfully prosecuted and fined £600 for disturbing the birds near Lochdon and Grasspoint. The Eagle watch has been operating successfully for several years now with the full co-operation of the Mull community and of visitors to the island. There are many areas around the island which afford good opportunities to watch the eagles and indeed many other raptors, and there is also the Sea Eagle hide at Loch Frisa which is open daily from early spring to late autumn, and for two days a week throughout the winter months.

Corncrake have had another successful year on Iona and are only just beginning to establish themselves on the mainland of Mull, and are therefore very sensitive to even minor disturbance.

Please do not walk through iris beds in an attempt to 'flush' birds to get a better view. This is illegal and is considered as disturbing nesting birds, as indeed is playing a tape of Corn crake calling to attract birds.

Watching and patiently waiting is the best strategy.

Bird watching area notes

Loch Spelve-Croggan NM2769:

A very large sea loch which provides shelter for all three Divers in autumn & winter. Also Common Eider, Mallard, Red breasted Merganser, occasional Goosander, Goldeneye and Common Scoter have also been recorded. Oystercatcher and Ringed Plover breed on its shores. In autumn Ruddy Turnstone & Golden Plover are found in the fields and on the shore line. Common Gulls nest on the shore, Shag and Cormorant regularly fish in the loch as do Razorbill & Guillemot and Black Guillemot.

In winter around the fish farm there are often both Glaucous and Iceland gull. Rock Pipit, Meadow Pipit, Skylarks and Pied Wagtail and Grey Wagtail nest along the margins throughout the summer. Also Common Sandpiper and Wheatear. From Ardara there is an Oak woodland for nesting Redstart, Spotted Flycatcher and Wood Warbler, also Tree Creeper. It was here that a Pied Flycatcher was seen (May 2002) and a few boxes have been installed in the hope of encouraging them to return, so far without success.

Croggan NM2770:

is a good site for Otters and is a vantage point for sea watching the Firth of Lorn where Porpoise are often seen. The 'Narrows at the entrance to Loch Spelve are strongly tidal and often hold fishing sea birds on an incoming tide.

There is scattered oak woodland along the south shore which holds both Redstart and Wood warbler.

Loch Buie NM2460:

A large south facing sea loch, holds a variety of species including all 3 Divers in winter. Raptors include Sea Eagles and Golden Eagles, regularly seen here, also Peregrine & Ravens. Gannets and Shearwaters with Fulmar and other gulls are often fishing in the bay. Usually good for Otters & often excellent for Dolphins in summer. Splendid views on a clear day towards Islay, Jura and Colonsay.

Ardalanish Bay NM1837:

has a beautiful beach, (perhaps the best on the island) it's the best place to see Sanderling in spring and autumn (occasionally in summer) also Ringed Plover, Dunlin & Oystercatcher.

All three Divers can be seen in the bay at different times of the year. The farmer creates excellent habitat for smaller birds by farming organically and Twite and Linnet feed in small flocks in autumn.

Skylarks and Meadow Pipits are numerous and gather in winter flocks before migrating south.

Rock Dove (true birds) feed in the fields. A few Jackdaws with Rooks which come over from Iona, and Hooded Crows are usually present.

There is a small reed bed which holds nesting Reed Bunting and it's a likely habitat to hold Water Rail. Reed Warbler has also been recorded here.

Nesting Snipe and Lapwing can be found on the edges of the reed bed and in August there is a field full of Grass of Parnassus plus many other wild flowers including many varieties of orchids.

Chough were in the area until recently, it's worth listening & looking out for these birds which breed on Islay and Colonsay which is not very far away, so they could be back anytime.

Mull & Iona Species List 6

Velvet Scoter

Melanitta fusca

very scarce winter visitor and passage.

Usually found off the north west coast and in sea lochs.

2004. one at Fishnish Bay in November.

2006. a single bird was off Grasspoint-Lochdon 24th June.

2007 a drake was seen at Loch Tuath on 15th August.

2009 a drake was on the sea at Grasspoint 27th July

**Surf Scoter**

Melanitta perspicillata

north atlantic vagrant usually in spring.

1996 a female at Lagganulva in April

1999 The last record was a drake in Craignure Bay April-May

Goldeneye

Bucephala clangula

scarce winter visitor,

small numbers overwinter on most of our sea lochs with up to 55 birds over

wintering on Loch na Keal at the head of the loch (Knock end) by

the fish farm waste outlet between November – February.

Lochdon, Loch Spelve and the Aros estuary also hold fewer birds,

usually less than a dozen birds.

**Smew**

Mergus albellus

very rare visitor, usually in winter months.

1982 December through to January 1983 at Aros Park Lochan

1983 in January at Aros Park and also in March on Mishnish lochs, (probably the same bird). 2004 a single redhead was on Loch Pottie in May.

Red breasted Merganser

Mergus serrator

common resident breeding species on all lochs.

Loch na Keal & Lochdon hold good numbers of this species

at all times of the year, but they can be found on all lochs .

**Goosander**

Mergus merganser

scarce breeding species, often seen in pairs,

The Aros estuary, Lochdon bridge pool and other sea lochs. Mishnish lochs & Loch

Cuin by Dervaig are regular sites for this species in winter.

Occasionally see along the Bellart and Aros rivers, and along the river Lussa estuary at Inverlussa.

2007 a group of 13 immature Goosanders on north shore of Loch Cuin by Dervaig

in July. 2008 regular sightings at usual sites 2009 9 birds were recorded at Loch

Cuin in September.

Black Kite

Milvus migrans

Vagrant

A bird at Kilfinichen Bay April 20th 2005. (not accepted by BRBC)

Red Kite.

Milvus milvus.

scarce passage migrant,

Most years birds are recorded. Nearest resident Kites are near Callander on the

mainland. 2009 Glen Bellart in June, a single bird. September 20th at Ormsaig near

Buenssan, (wing tags indicated that it was a 2009 juvenile from the Black Isle)



Mull & Iona Species List 11

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*
 common spring & winter passage,
 Found in small flocks on most mud flats and estuaries, a first probable breeding bird was recorded on 11th July 2004 in Ben More area. In autumn, young migrating birds at Fidden often allow one to get very close.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*
 very scarce spring & winter passage migrant,
 2008 birds were on Staffa in late May and in August, and are probably breeding

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*
 very scarce passage migrant. Few records on Mull
 2006 3 birds were found at Loch na Keal on 22nd May.
 2007 a party of 4 birds were at Ardanish beach on 18th June.
 2009 a single bird was at Fidden on 19th April



Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*
 very scarce passage migrant
 Only four previous records in Argyll and one of them was at Fidden on 17th September 1985

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*
 a rare North American visitor,
 Previously a single bird was at Fidden. (AS/AB)
 2007. the last record is of a single bird at Uisken beach 4th June (Bryan Rains)
 2008 A single bird at Fidden in October

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*
 very scarce migrant,
 Recorded at Dervaig July 2002, and at Fidden 6th Oct 2004. Very few records received.
 2006 bird at Fidden in April & Dervaig in November.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*
 widespread resident breeding species,
 All round the coast, at Lochdon and Loch Spelve. Loch Scridain and Loch Beg, Aros Estuary and many other tidal areas.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*
 regular passage migrant
 Flocks of up to 145 birds have been recorded at Lochdon in September. during April-May and Sept-Nov there is a good passage of birds at Loch Beg, Fidden and Lochdon. Small numbers of the shores of Loch Spelve.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
 scarce passage migrant,
 mainly in the Autumn along shore lochs, Summer plumage birds are reported occasionally. 2007 April. 10 birds at Lochdon, 14 at Killiechronan, 20 at Fidden and 6 at Dervaig, plus returning birds at Killiechronan including juveniles. 2008. Summer plumaged birds at Dervaig and Loch na Keal in June & July.



Holiday check list of species

Species (1)	date	Species (2)	date
Am Gold Plover (2005)		Curlew	
Arctic Skua		Curlew Sandpiper	
Arctic Tern		Dotterel	
Bar tailed Godwit		Dunlin	
Barn Owl		Dunnock	
Barn Swallow		Eider	
Barnacle Goose		Eurasian Wigeon	
Bee Eater		European Nightjar	
Bittern (1983)		Fieldfare	
Black billed Magpie		Fulmar	
Black headed Gull		Gadwall	
Black necked Grebe		Garden Warbler	
Black tailed Godwit		Glaucous Gull	
Black throated Diver		Glossy Ibis (2009)	
Blackbird		Goldcrest	
Blackcap		Golden Eagle	
Blue Tit		Golden Oriole (1989)	
Brambling		Golden Plover	
Brent Goose		Goldeneye	
		Goldfinch	
Bullfinch		Goosander	
Buzzard Common		Goshawk	
Canada Goose		Grasshopper Warbler	
Chaffinch		Great black Gull	
Chiffchaff		Great crested Grebe	
Coal Tit		Great northern Diver	
Collared Dove		Great Shearwater	
Common Gull		Great Skua	
Common Sandpiper		Great Spot Woodpecker	
Common Scoter		Great Tit	
Common Tern		Greater Scaup	
Coot		Green Sandpiper	
Cormorant		Green Woodpecker	
Corn Bunting		Greenfinch	
Corn Crake		Greenshank	
Cory's Shearwater		Grey Heron	
Crested Tit (2002)		Grey Phalarope	
Crossbill		Grey Plover (2004)	
Cuckoo		Grey Wagtail	