

# Machrihanish Seabird Observatory

Warden - David Millward Assistant Wardens - Jo Goudie, Victoria Russell

## Photo of the month

The beautiful sight of a Golden Plover coming into it's summer plumage just had to be photo of the month.

What a stunning bird.

Photo David Millward



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## April Report 2022

April is always an exciting month as we feel the approach of spring and wait for the first arrivals. I also enjoy seeing the Great Northern Divers gain their amazing summer plumage of glossy black and white. Nature is amazing.

We have heard our first Cuckoo and seen Blackcaps, Willow Warblers and Wheatear. Numbers of Oystercatcher and Shelduck seem to be up so far and we seem to have gained a pair of Mute Swan. Also, the number of Common Scoter seen in April was encouraging along with a lone Pintail passing through.

Also had a first for Kintyre when our volunteer warden photographed a Cattle Egret near her home. Well Done Vic!

We will be manning the observatory as much as possible through 2022 but we cannot always be there. If you would like to visit on a specific date please let me know and we will try to have a warden there to open up for you. If you would like to volunteer to do some wardening please let us know. We are looking for volunteers.

Best regards

**Jo Goudie**

## Contact the Observatory

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Photos by Jo Goudie unless otherwise stated

## List of Selected Species for April 2022



**This month we wanted to show our solidarity with Ukraine.  
Our flag is easy to spot.**



**Razorbill** and **Guillemot** seen passing through in the distance, sometimes in mixed groups.  
**Razorbill** - 20+>S on 6<sup>th</sup>, 1>S on 9<sup>th</sup>, 6>S on 16<sup>th</sup>, 3>S on 18<sup>th</sup>, 8>S on 22<sup>nd</sup>.  
**Guillemot** - 20+>S on 6<sup>th</sup> with Razorbills, 1>S on 9<sup>th</sup>, 3>S on 18<sup>th</sup>



**Sandwich Tern** - 3>N on 6<sup>th</sup>, 3 seen 15<sup>th</sup>, 2 seen 16<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> feeding.



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**Red Breasted Merganser** - 2>S on 6<sup>th</sup>, 4>S on 9<sup>th</sup>, 2>S on 16<sup>th</sup>, 1>N on 20<sup>th</sup>, 1 female>S on 24<sup>th</sup>



**Redshank** - 1 or 2 seen regularly on the bays near the observatory or right next to the observatory.

**Curlew** - 1 seen on the 1<sup>st</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> with 4 seen on 16<sup>th</sup> dropping to 1 again on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Meadow Pipit** - 4 on the 15<sup>th</sup> seen feeding on the short grass by the stream.

**Mute Swan** - we still have the pair from last month, one adult one immature feeding at the water outlet and at the end of the stream. Seen every visit.

**Swallow** seen every visit.

**Sand Martin** - 2 seen on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Carrion Crow** - 2 flew in from the sea on the 9<sup>th</sup>.



**Sanderling** - Flock of 20 >S in front of the observatory plus 7 on the 29th.



**Wigeon** pair fly past on 10th



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**Gadwall** fly past on 10th



**Ringed Plover** - 12 seen on 1<sup>st</sup>, 7 seen on 6<sup>th</sup>, 2 seen on 9<sup>th</sup>, 8 seen on 10<sup>th</sup>, 2 on 16<sup>th</sup>, 7>S on 17<sup>th</sup>, 2 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 4 on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2>S on 26<sup>th</sup> settling down at the end of the month to a regular 2 nesting to left of the observatory.



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**Great Northern Diver** - up to 6 regularly seen feeding in the waters around the observatory and Machrihanish Bay in varying degrees of plumage change.

**Red Throated Diver** - 5 seen on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 1>S on 16<sup>th</sup>, 2>N on 20<sup>th</sup>, 1on 24<sup>th</sup>, 1>N on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Cuckoo** - 1 heard calling from the woods of the Lossitt Estate byt the observatory on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Rook** - seen flying in from thesea on the 24<sup>th</sup>.



**Common Sandpiper** - First of the year seen 15th on the small bay before the observatory.  
1 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 1 on 24<sup>th</sup>, 2 on 29<sup>th</sup>.



**Fulmar** - one seen far out from observatory point on 16<sup>th</sup>.



**Common Scoter** - 2>S seen on the 16<sup>th</sup>.



**Gannet** - seen regularly in growing numbers throughout the month.



**Canada Geese** - 2 flew in from the sea and passed the observatory on the 9<sup>th</sup>.



**Dunlin** - 2 seen in with a small flock of Ringed Plover on 17<sup>th</sup>, 2>N seen on 22<sup>nd</sup>.



**Iceland Gull** - flew past the observatory on the 17<sup>th</sup>, very pale.



**Male Pintail** - fly by on 20<sup>th</sup>. Not a common bird here, only 1 - 3 a year.

**Shelduck** - seem to have settled down to a regular 6 in 3 pairs and seen every visit.



Pod of roughly 12 playful **Dolphins** seen in front of the observatory on 6<sup>th</sup>.



**Reed Bunting** - 1 seen on the 6<sup>th</sup> and a pair seen on the 18<sup>th</sup> by the stream.



**Grey Wagtail** - 2 seen on the 10<sup>th</sup> by the steam and 1 seen on the 18<sup>th</sup>.



Small flock of 4 **Linnet** seen on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 2 on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 4 again on the 17<sup>th</sup>.



**White wagtail** - increasing numbers from 1 at the start of the month ending with 15+ feeding on the beaches around the observatory and by the stream.



First **Willow Warbler** of the year spotted by the stream on the 10<sup>th</sup>.



Un unusual sight of a **female Blackcap** on the rocks in front of the observatory.  
The Rock Pipits took exception and quickly chased her off.

**Buzzard** - seen on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> hunting along the wall by the stream.

**Merlin** - flew past the observatory point heading north on the 17<sup>th</sup>.



**Wheatear** - increasing numbers around the observatory.  
1 on 6<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>, 2 on the 15<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> increasing to 4 on the 20<sup>th</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>.



Vic Russell

**Cattle Egret** - A first for Kintyre and created quite a stir. Photographed on the 13th near Moy just outside Campbeltown by our volunteer warden Vic.



**Twite** - still seen feeding on the Niger seed in front of the observatory.  
A regular 2 or 3 observed with only 1 being ringed.