

Machrihanish Seabird Observatory

Warden - David Millward Assistant Warden - Jo Goudie

Photo of the month

Red Knot

So nice to get this passing Knot with its rich red breeding plumage as it flew past.

Photo

Jo Goudie



August Report 2023

August was an exciting month with lots of large flocks of waders passing through. This is when a camera is not just for pretty pictures but a useful tool for identification.

It was interesting to see what made up some of the groups, what looked like a large flock of Redshank could also contain the odd Knot or Turnstone and we photographed Godwits of both types flying together. Who knows what we could have missed if we hadn't been photographing all the birds as they went past.

Best regards

Jo Goudie



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Photos by Jo Goudie unless otherwise stated
List of Selected Species for August 2023



Otter

Seen several times over the month, feeding well and looking very healthy.



Greenshank

Greenshank – 7th – 1, 10th – 1, 12th – 1, 13th – 1, 14th – 1.



Curlew and Whimbrel flying together – great for showing the differences.

Curlew – 2nd – 2, 3rd – 7, 4th – 5, 5th – 5, 6th – 4, 7th – 2, 8th – 4, 10th – 1, 12th – 2, 13th – 5, 14th – 6, 15th – 2, 16th – 5, 18th – 1, 19th – 6, 20th – 6, 21st – 8, 22nd – 12, 23rd – 13, 24th – 11, 25th – 9, 26th – 3, 27th – 2, 28th – 3, 29th – 5, 30th – 6.

Whimbrel – 13th – 2, 14th – 2, 19th – 2, 20th – 7, 30th – 5.

Again, the use of the camera to record birds showed me that Curlew and Whimbrel fed and flew together, something I hadn't considered.

Black Guillemot – 3rd – 1, 18th – 1.

Guillemot – 2nd – 1, 29th – 1.

Manx Shearwater – 4th – 9, 8th – 4, 13th – 3, 15th – 1, 29th – 8.

Razorbill – 2nd – 1, 24th – 1, 27th – 3, 29th – 2, 30th – 3.

Red Throated Diver – 10th – 2>N, 20th – 1, 25th – 1, 28th – 2>N.

Common Tern – 12th – 4.

Sandwich Tern – 5th – 2, 12th – 3, 14th – 2, 19th – 1.

Swift – 6 seen heading south way out at sea.

Kittiwake – 4th – 1, 10th – 1, 12th – 2, 20th – 1, 30th – 1.

Lesser Black Backed Gull – 1 on the 23rd.



Turnstone

Turnstone – 3rd – 4, 8th – 1, 13th – 7, 14th – 2, 15th – 5, 19th – 4, 21st – 40+, 22nd – 19, 23rd – 6, 24th – 20, 25th -7.



Dunlin and Knot together

Dunlin – 2nd – 2, 8th – 5, 12th – 5, 14th – 25, 15th – 2, 18th – 5, 19th – 10, 22nd – 1, 23rd – 6, 24th – 20, 25th – 2, 29th – 2.

Red Knot – 15th – 3, 18th – 3, 19th – 5, 21st – 4, 22nd – 44, 23rd – 25, 24th – 19, 25th – 4.



Mink

An unwelcome visitor appeared on the 15th running over the rocks of the point. He was searching the rock pools and eventually disappeared carrying a very large green crab.



Wheatear

Wheatear – 5th – 2, 6th – 2, 7th – 1, 12th – 1, 13th – 1, 14th – 3, 15th – 4, 18th – 1, 19th – 1, 22nd – 2, 23rd – 1, 24th – 1, 27th – 1.



Mute Swan family

All cygnets are doing well and growing by the day



Bar tailed Godwit

Bar Tailed Godwit – 16th – 1, 19th – 5, 21st – 1, 24th – 26, 25th – 2, 29th – 21.



Black tailed Godwit

Black Tailed Godwit - 16th – 4, 21st -3, 24th – 1, 29th – 18.

Don't remember seeing so many flocks of Godwits. They were all heading south.



Sparrowhawk

Came through hunting on the 4th and the 20th. Sat for a spell on the 29th.



Sparrowhawk

Merlin – 24th – 1.

Peregrine Falcon – Seen over Machrihanish bay by the golf course on 17th and again by the Observatory on the 18th.

Kestrel – 3rd – 2, 4th – 2.



Arctic Skua juvenile



2 Dark phase Arctic Skua – Photo David Millward

Arctic Skua – 4th – 2, 21st – 1.

Redshank – 8th – 8, 10th – 15, 12th – 1, 13th – 1, 14th – 19, 16th – 1, 18th – 1, 19th – 2, 20th – 1, 21st – 50+, 22nd – 20+, 23rd – 2, 26th – 2, 28th – 30+, 29th – 1.

Great to see such good numbers in flocks heading south.

Ringed Plover – 2nd – 5, 6th – 3, 18th – 5, 19th – 14, 20th – 2, 21st – 1, 23rd – 7, 24th – 3, 25th – 7.

Common Sandpiper – 2nd – 3, 3rd – 1, 10th – 1, 12th – 2, 13th – 5, 14th – 2, 15th – 2, 22nd – 2, 24th – 1, 25th – 3.

Sanderling – 12th – 6, 14th – 45, 19th – 17, 21st – 2, 23rd – 8, 24th – 4, 25th – 20, 30th – 1.



Flock of Redshank with a Knot and Turnstone with them



Knot in juvenile plumage



Redshank with Bar tailed and Black Tailed Godwit



Ringed Plover with Sanderling and Dunlin



Gannet showing full stomach



More Otter encounters



Bar tailed Godwit feeding on the golf course



Black tailed Godwit

**Other species for the month include 3 Grey Wagtail, 2 Greenfinch, 1 Reed Bunting,
1 Whitethroat and 2 Wigeon.**



Both Bar Tailed and Black Tailed feeding together