

Machrihanish Seabird Observatory

Warden - David Millward Assistant Warden - Jo Goudie

Photo of the month

Fulmar

It is not often we see this bird by the observatory. There are a handful in Southend but they rarely venture into our patch.

Almost gull-like, this grey and white seabird is related to the albatrosses. It flies low over the sea on stiff wings, with shallow wingbeats.

Always a pleasure to see.

Photo

David Millward



February Report 2024

February has had its ups and downs. The fundraising has started well and we hope to continue raising money and getting the repairs started. We are so grateful to all the people who have so far donated and also the ones who have offered their help with the fix up.

On the down side, David, the warden suffered a bad collapse with a chest infection and ended up in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Glasgow. For the first week he was in a very bad way and is still recovering. We hope he will be back to his duties in late March. I am manning the observatory as much as I can, but I spend some of the time with him in Glasgow. Please bear with us.

Best regards

Jo Goudie



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Photos by Jo Goudie unless otherwise stated



Oystercatchers

It is good to have the **Oystercatcher** back and pairing up. They have been mating on and off for the last month but no sign of nest building. We seem to have our usual 2 pairs on the point with another pair on the bay to the side.

Black Guillemot – 8th – 1, 10th – 11th – 2, 12th – 1, 15th – 4, 16th – 1, 17th – 4, 18th – 2, 22nd – 2.
Seen in a mix of plumage, some in summer and some still in their winter grey.

Guillemot – 6th – 1, 11th – 2, 12th – 2, 29th – 2.

Razorbill – 5th – 15, 6th – 1, 7th – 5, 11th – 1, 18th – 1, 29th – 5.

Kittiwake – 5th – 11, 6th – 7, 7th – 3, 12th – 4, 18th – 1, 29th – 1.

Curlew – 5th – 5, 6th – 1, 7th – 1, 12th – 2, 18th – 2, 22nd – 1, 29th – 1.

Gannet – 2 seen on the 29th.

Shelduck – 7th – 2, 8th – 2, 10th – 2, 11th – 16th – 2, 17th – 2, 18th – 3.

Mute Swan – 16th – 2, 17th – 4, 18th – 2, 22nd – 2. Hopefully our pair will return.



Common Scoter

Common Scoter – 11th – 5, 12th – 1.



Fulmar (David Millward)

Fulmar – a rare sighting (for us) on the 18th.

Great Norther Diver – 5th – 1, 6th – 1, 7th – 2, 8th – 4, 10th – 4, 11th – 14, 12th – 1, 15th – 5, 16th – 10, 17th – 4, 18th – 2.

Red Throated Diver – 11th – 2, 17th – 1. Usually seen flying past.

Redshank – 2nd – 1, 5th – 1, 7th – 1, 8th – 1, 10th – 2, 11th – 2, 12th – 1, 16th – 8, 17th – 1, 18th – 5, 22nd – 12.



Red Breasted Merganser (David millward)

Red Breasted Merganser – 5th – 1, 22nd – 1.



Hooded/Carrion hybrid Crow

David Jardine informed me that Hooded Crows have a grey belly unlike the black belly in this bird which is a nice example of a hybrid between hoodie and a carrion crow.



Stonechat

Stonechat – 1 seen on the 11th by the stream. Nice male.



Cormorant



Purple Sandpiper

Purple Sandpiper – 2nd – 3, 6th – 2, 7th – 1, 11th – 5, 12th – 5, 15th – 4, 16th – 4, 18th – 4, 22nd – 7, 29th – 10. Overall, I feel there has been an increase in amounts seen this year.

Goldeneye – 8th – 1, 10th – 1, 11th – 1, 12th – 2, 15th – 3, 17th – 4, 18th – 3, 22nd – 3, 29th – 1.

Ringed Plover – 7th – 7, 11th – 4, 15th – 1, 16th – 3, 17th – 3, 18th – 1.

Turnstone – 2nd – 3, 5th – 1.

Grey Wagtail – 1 seen by the stream on the 11th.

Greenfinch – 2 seen by the observatory on the 5th.

Golden Eagle – Seen flying high over Machrihanish beach on the 6th and over the Gauldrons on the 7th.

Still a number of **Greylags** feeding on the fields by Drumlemble but they seem to prefer feeding down the Moss Road this year. Still a few **Whooper swans** with them.



Goldfinch