Machrihanish Seabird Observatory

Warden - David Millward Assistant Warden - Jo Goudie

Photo of the month

Ruby Tailed Wasp

With the hot, still weather we had an unusual visitor to the observatory. This is a Ruby Tailed Wasp. This tiny 10mm glittering, metallic wasp is one of many species of solitary bee and wasp that can be spotted in a number of habitats in the UK.

It was busy in the garden around the observatory and liked to sit where the sun was warmest.

Photo

Jo Goudie



June Report 2023

What a hot month June has been for us. It's about time we had the sun. This has enabled the Mute Swans to have 4 cygnets as last year their nest was washed out.

We also enjoyed the good weather by having a busman's holiday to Islay and Jura. The observatory overlooks these islands, so it was nice to look the other way for a change. It was fascinating to see how different these islands were as they do not have a lot of agriculture, mostly cattle and sheep. Less disturbance of land means more Hen Harrier and Cuckoo, never seen so many. It is a beautiful place I would definitely visit again.

Best regards

Jo Goudie



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Photos by Jo Goudie unless otherwise stated

List of Selected Species for June 2023



Ringed Plover with Dunlin

Ringed Plover –
$$2^{nd}$$
 – 8, 4^{th} – 15, 5^{th} – 10, 7^{th} – 3, 8^{th} – 4, 16^{th} – 1, 18^{th} – 7, 20^{th} – 3, 21^{st} – 7, 22^{nd} – 10, 29^{th} – 9.

Dunlin –
$$2^{nd}$$
 – 12, 4^{th} – 33, 5^{th} – 23, 21^{st} – 8, 22^{nd} – 5, 29^{th} – 1.



Black Headed Gull - around 10 regularly hanging around the observatory coastline.



Oystercatchers – busy mating.



Result – a chick



Sedge Warbler – Display flying $-2^{nd} - 4$.



Swallow – regular visitors as they come to feed on the swarms of seaweed flies we get.

Swift –
$$8^{th}$$
 – 1, 16^{th} – 1.

Song Thrush –
$$2^{nd} - 1$$
, $15^{th} - 1$.

Twite –
$$2^{nd} - 2$$
, $5^{th} - 4$.



Mute Swans - Successfully hatched 4 cygnets this year.



Wheatear - Several fledglings seen.

Buzzard – 2nd – 1.

Heron – 29th – 1.

Shelduck – several pairs seen with ducklings from 4 up to 10.



Arctic tern – 20^{th} – 5, 22nd – 2.

Common Tern – $2^{nd} - 1$, $18^{th} - 1$.

 $\textbf{Sandwich Tern} - 4^{th} - 1,\ 8^{th} - 10,\ 20^{th} - 1,\ 22^{nd} - 8.$



Goldfinch – feeding fledgling.



Young Starling showing their dull brown plumage.



Arctic skua – brief fly past $-20^{th} - 1>N$

Red Throated Diver – 5th – 1>S.

 $\textbf{Greylag Goose} - 7^{th} - 1.$

 $\textbf{Sanderling} - 2^{nd} - 5, \ 4^{th} - 76, \ 5^{th} - 80 +.$

Gannet – some small groups and individuals but no large strings as I would expect.

Guillemot –
$$20^{th}$$
 – $30+$, 29^{th} – 2.

Redshank
$$-20^{th} - 2$$
.

Curlew
$$-22^{nd} - 1$$
.

Sandpiper
$$-2^{nd}-1$$
, $5^{th}-318^{th}-5$, $21^{st}-3$, $29^{th}-7$.

Linnet
$$-4^{th} - 5$$
, $18^{th} - 6$, $20^{th} - 2$.

House Sparrow – unexpected flock flew in. 20^{th} – 23.

Lapwing $-5^{th} - 2$ flew over.

Islay Photos



Cuckoo – saw many on Islay and Jura. In total, over 20 I would say.



Marsh Fritillary – Seen on Jura. Never seen one before so a new one to my list.



Red Deer - Apparently many on Jura.



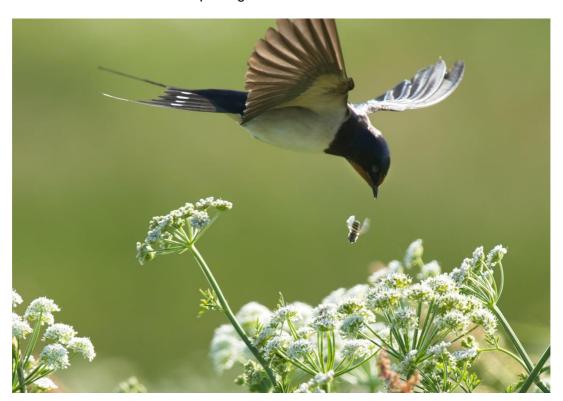
Strange Oystercatcher with unusual plumage colouring.



Sedge Warbler



Swallow – picking insects off the flower umbles.



Not always successful.



Chough – Fabulous member of the corvid family. Great aerial acrobats.



Beautiful Demoiselle - Large metallic damselfly with fluttering, butterfly-like wings.