

Machrihanish Seabird Observatory

Warden - David Millward Assistant Warden - Jo Goudie

Photo of the month

Twite

A small bird with a very big character.

This male is showing the characteristic pink rump.

Seen feeding on niger seed we put out on

24th March 2023.

Photo - David Millward



March Report 2023

By the end of March we could feel Spring was in the air. We saw the gradual increase of some species and saw some disappear by the end of the month as they headed off to breed.

It seemed a short month with me being away for 10 days and then towards the end of the month we started on renovations which showed us the observatory is in bad condition in places and needing lots of work.

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

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Photos by Jo Goudie unless otherwise stated

List of Selected Species for March 2023



Great Northern Diver – views of a raft of 10 to 13 Divers together.

Seen in Machrihanish Bay and by the Observatory – 2nd – 11, 5th – 6, 7th – 13, 10th – 11, 15th – 1, 23rd – 4, 24th – 4, 25th – 7.

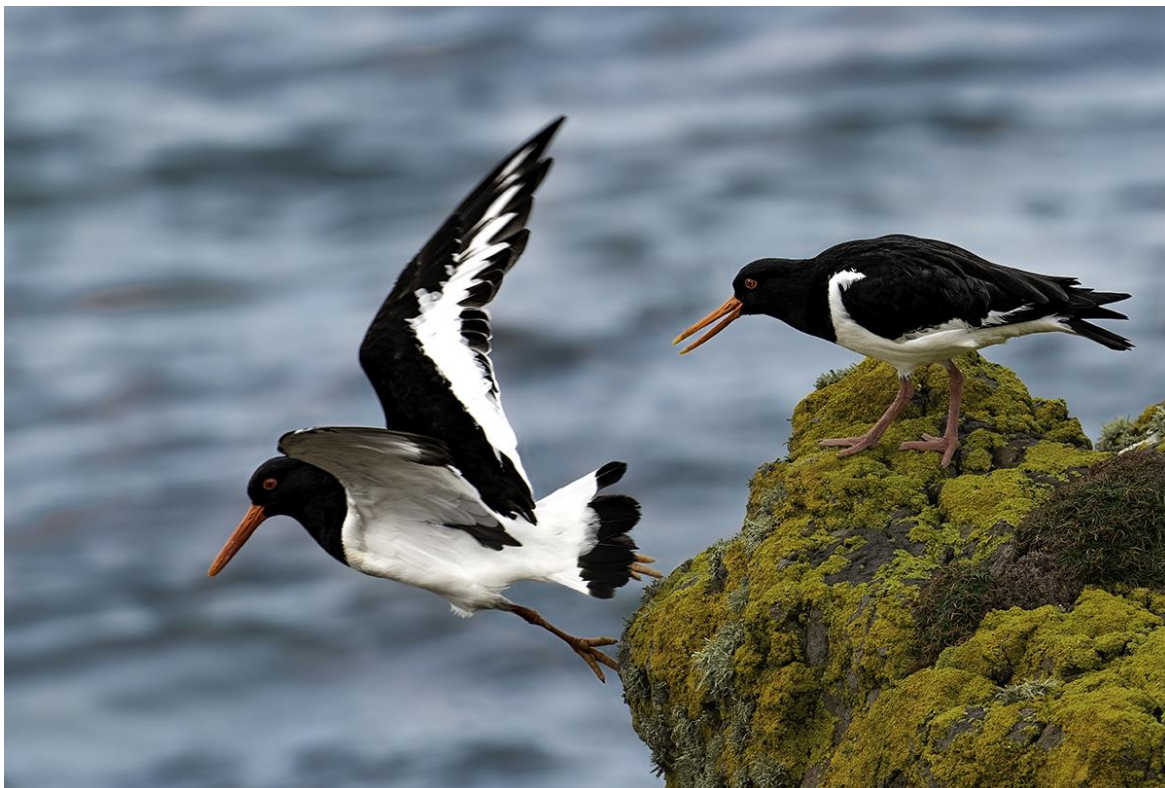
These numbers are up on last year where a regular 6 were seen.



Twite – Observatory – a regular 2 males visiting. 2nd – 2, 7th – 2, 23rd – 1, 24th – 2, 25th – 2.



Oystercatcher – close to the observatory we have 4 pairs trying to mark territories.
This has lead to some quite violent fights where they try to drown one another.
For the last couple of years we have had only 2 pairs which made it less of a competition.



David Millward



Purple Sandpiper with redshank

Purple Sandpiper – Observatory - 23rd – 5, 24th – 2.

Gannet – Observatory – numbers steadily increasing through the month.
5th – 2, 22nd – 12, 24th – 13, 25th – 6.

Razorbill – Observatory – small groups on passage >S on 22nd making a total of 72 seen in the space of 3 hours.

Guillemot – Observatory – 14 seen passing through>S on 22nd in small groups.

Goldeneye – Observatory – 5th – 1, 7th – 1, 23rd – 3, 24th – 2, 25th – 3.

Mute Swan – Observatory – 2 seen on most visits to the observatory. They stayed in the area most of last year and tried, unsuccessfully, to nest so it will be interested to see if they try again this year.

Whooper Swans – Usually seen feeding on the flooded fields by the Drumlemble School or on farmland by the quarry. 7th – 10, 22nd – 4, 24th – 10, 28th – 12.



Herring Gulls – David Millward

Red Breasted Merganser - Machrihanish Bay and by the Observatory – 22nd – 1, 23rd – 1.

Curlew – Observatory – 2nd – 5, 5th – 13, 7th – 6, 10th – 3, 22nd – 2, 23rd – 1, 24th – 1, 25th – 3.

Red Throated Diver - Observatory – 2nd – 4, 5th – 2, 7th – 1>S, 10th – 1, 25th – 1.

Wigeon – Observatory – 7th – 3.

**Ringed Plover – Observatory – 2nd – 10, 5th – 5, 7th – 4, 10th – 2, 22nd – 10, 23rd – 8, 24th – 2, 25th – 7.
Mach Bay – 2nd – 22.**

Shelduck – Numbers at around 6 to 8 for March.

White Fronted Geese & Greylag Geese – in local fields in decreasing as the month progressed.

**Sanderling –Observatory - 22nd - 7
Mach Bay – 2nd – 24.**

Magpie – Observatory – 10th – 1.



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Redshank – Observatory – 5th – 2, 7th – 4, 15th – 1, 22nd – 2, 23rd – 7, 24th – 2, 25th – 8.

Wheatear – Observatory – first one of the year glimpsed on the way up to the observatory on 28th.

Barn Owl – had the good luck to watch one for several minutes hunting along the grass verge at the side of the road heading into the Sound of Kintyre on the 8th.



David Millward

Grey Wagtail – Observatory – 23rd – 1.