

Machrihanish Seabird Observatory

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

Photo of the month

Seeing youngsters is one of the great parts of Spring.

These are Shelduck ducklings and they have to be one of the cutest of the fledgling we see his time of year.

Photo Jo Goudie



May Report 2022

May at the observatory has been exciting waiting for the birds to return. I have been looking and listening for the firsts, such as, the first Sedge Warbler to appear and the first Sand Martin etc.

We follow the seasons with anticipation wondering what we will see and how it compares to the year before. So far, I have seen some birds not returning as strongly as before. Meadow pipit numbers seem down along with the Skylark. I have also been disappointed in the number of Sandpiper this year as we have only had 2 returning. Sandwich terns are slightly up from 4 last year to 8 this year. Wheatear numbers are not as good either but Linnets seem to have done well and we enjoy seeing them at the observatory. All we can do is watch and see how things go.

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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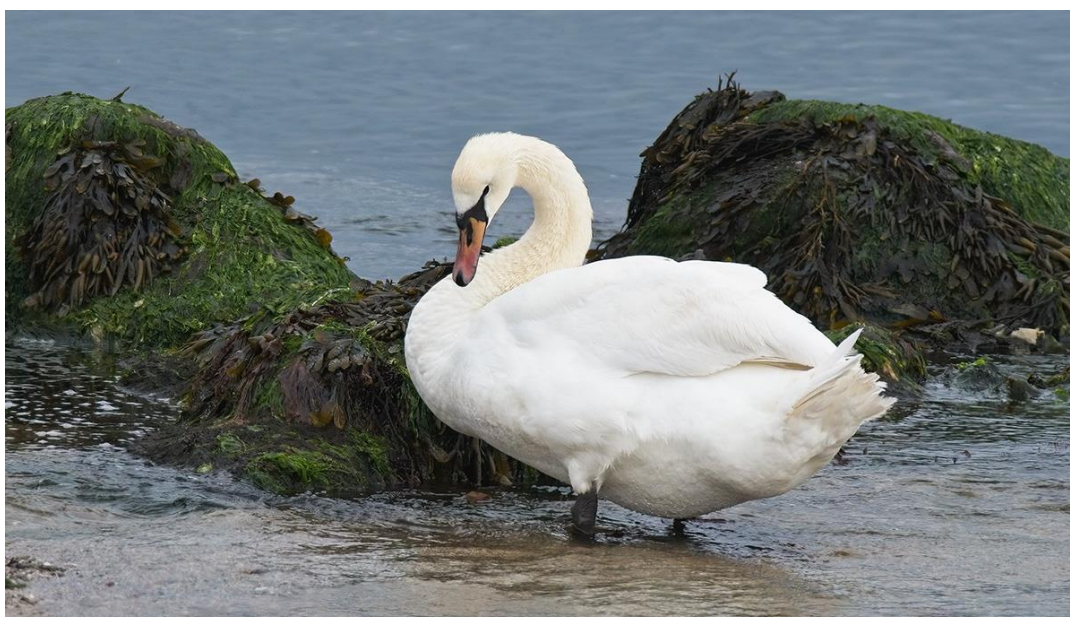
Website – www.machrihanishbirdobservatory.org.uk

Photos by Jo Goudie unless otherwise stated

List of Selected Species for May 2022



Sedge warbler - Only 2 sighted forming a territory near the observatory this year.
Very disappointing.



Mute Swan - Still 2 near the observatory, female currently sitting on the nest.



Great Northern Diver - 3 on 02/05/22, 7 on 03/05/22, 1 on 11/05/22, 1 on 15/05/22.

Red Throated Diver - 1 >S on 03/05/22 and 1>S on 12/05/22.



Sandwich Tern - falling into a dive. 8 seen on 03/05/22, 1 on 12/05/22 and 5 seen on 14/05/22.

Common Scoter - 2 seen heading South on 01/06/22.

Curlew - 10 seen flying South on 01/05/22.



Mallard - Regular group of around 10 seen around the observatory.



Grey Wagtail - Seen feeding in front of the observatory on 03/05/22.



Turnstone - 4 seen feeding in Machrihanish Bay on 11/05/22, 2 outside the observatory on 12/05/22 and only 1 seen on 14/05/22.



Sandpiper - a lone 1 seen on the 1st and 2nd of the month but had been joined by a second one by the 11/05/22.



Whimbrel - 3 seen on both the 1st and 2nd of the month, 15 seen on 11/05/22 but only a further 1 seen on 12/05/22.



Bar Tailed Godwits - 4 seen flying South over the observatory on 03/05/22.

Mixed flock of small waders seen flying past the observatory 15/05/22 and settling in Machrihanish Bay. Comprising of 15 **Ringed Plover**, 8 **Sanderling**, 2 **Dunlin**.

Dunlin also seen together in a flock of 8 on the 12th.

Sanderling - 3 seen together on 18/05/22.

Ringed Plover - 3 on 01/05/22, 4 on 02/05/22 and 2 on 03/05/22 with 2 settling near outlet pipe of research centre and looking like nesting there.

Red Breasted Merganser - 3 were seen heading South on 14/05/22.



Goldfinch - seen regularly in the area and feeding in front of the observatory.



White Wagtail - from 1 on the 3rd, numbers increased by a couple every visit to a peak of 15 seen on the 15/05/22.



Oystercatcher on the nest at the beginning of the month.



Shag - regularly sighted flying past the observatory as they feed.



Mute Swan taking flight



Otter - Seen next to the observatory 29/05/22



Otter - showing a facial injury.

Shelduck - still a regular 8 in pairs seen in the waters from Machrihanish Bay to the observatory.

Not all pairs seem to be breeding and only one pair seem to have had chicks. They did start off with 7 chicks but they were predated until there were only 4 and I haven't seen them coming up to the end of the month.

Good to see growing numbers of **Swallow**, **House Martin** and **Sand Martin** in the area.



Sika Deer - appeared on the point right in front of the observatory.
Wasn't expecting to see this. 29/05/22



Oystercatcher with 2 chicks on the 29/05/22.
It is so good to see them successfully hatching 2 chicks.



Dolphin – group of around 4 seen feeding around Machrihanish Bay on 22/05/22.