

BIRDS RECORDED IN 1961

The Observatory was manned intermittently from March 6th until October 1st under difficulties due to the lack of a full-time Warden. However, the more important migration periods were quite well covered and the following records made.

2. Great Northern Diver (*Colymbus immer*).

One was seen close inshore on most days in March.

14. Storm Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*).

One was found dead near the Old Light on July 28th and shows that the species still visits the Island.

16. Manx Shearwater (*Procellaria puffinus*).

A few seen offshore during April and they were heard calling on most nights over the Island. From June 8th they were seen regularly on the sea until the last two in August with peak numbers of up to 250 between June 14th and 17th.

26. Fulmar (*Fulmaris glacialis*).

Thirty-three were first seen on April 11th. Breeding took place at the two colonies, Jenny's and Gannet's rock, as usual although numbers were slightly reduced.

The last single bird left on September 7th.

27. Gannet (*Sula bassana*).

Seen offshore in each month with increased numbers during rough weather. Peak dates were twenty on June 16th, at least fifty on August 21st and thirty on September 28th.

28. Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*).

Seen in every month as usual in small numbers of up to fifteen. A count of thirty-three on September 17th was exceptional and suggests that movement was taking place.

29. Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*).

Resident numbers were maintained.

30. Heron (*Ardea cinerea*).

Singles were seen on June 11th, August 16th, August 30th and September 25th to 28th.

45. Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*).

Up to four seen regularly during June, July and August were probably all from the birds introduced to the Island in 1957.

91. Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*).

Recorded on most days in ones and twos. Three were seen on July 28th.

93. Sparrow Hawk (*Accipiter nisus*).

One seen on September 13th was the only record.

102. Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*).

One female during the spring on April 10th.

105. Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*).

A pair were seen frequently during May and June and also on September 1st and single birds during August. There was no proof of breeding.

107. Merlin (*Falco columbarius*).

One seen on April 10th and 11th was the only record for the year.

110. Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*).

Bred as usual in small numbers and was recorded on almost every day.

118. Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*).

Seen in ones and twos in every month.

120. Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*).

The first for the autumn was seen on September 21st increasing to three on September 25th.

131. Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)

Resident as usual. No large flocks were recorded, the highest number being twelve in May and June.

133. Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*).

About ninety were seen on April 8th and small numbers were seen in every month. The nesting numbers, about eighteen pairs, were higher than usual.

134. Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*).

One was seen in the spring on May 24th. One was again seen on August 28th and one on most days between September 2nd and 17th.

140. Golden Plover (*Charadrius apricarius*).

Thirty were seen in February and also regularly in March until 20th and thirty again on April 9th. Four on April 16th and two on 20th were of the Northern form. First for the autumn was seen on August 26th and single birds were frequently seen subsequently until September 25th with two on 17th.

142. Dotterel (*Charadrius morinellus*).

Well recorded this year. The first two arrived on September 1st at the Brickfields and increased to four on September 2nd and five on 3rd. All five became restless in the evening and were seen in flight over the Airfield and Millcombe. Five were still present on September 4th and three last seen on 5th.

143. Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*).

A flock of thirteen on August 25th and a single bird on October 1st were the only records.

145. Snipe (*Capella gallinago*).

Two were present from April 9th to 21st, north of the Old Light. One was seen on August 26th, 29th and 30th ; up to two from September 6th to 14th and six on September 23rd.

150. Curlew (*Numenius arquata*).

One or two on most days February to May, up to ten in June with a peak of twenty-one on June 15th and another of thirty on June 27th. Small numbers of up to ten only were recorded during August until the 28th when fifty were counted. In September the numbers fluctuated, twenty-three on 15th and 16th being the most seen. Two on September 21st to 24th were the only birds seen subsequently.

151. Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*).

The first bird was a single on April 11th and a possible summering bird was seen on June 26th. Four returning birds were seen on August 16th followed by one or two later in the month and singles in September until 5th.

156. Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*).

One was seen at Ponds bury July 24th to 31st. One on August 28th flying south over the Island was the only autumn migrant.

159. Common Sandpiper (*Tringa hypoleucos*).

Two on August 16th and one on September 22nd were the only autumn birds.

161. Redshank (*Tringa totanus*).

Singles only on February 19th, April 14th, and July 24th.

165. Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*).

One on August 28th was the only record for the year.

169. Knot (*Calidris canutus*).

One only on August 28th.

176. Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*).

One frequented the Quarter Wall Pond from August 31st to September 2nd. A little larger than a Dunlin, it had olive green legs and a richly mottled back with a thin pale stripe down the centre and three similar stripes down each side of the body. It had a pale buff stripe above the eye and the upper breast and chin were speckled terminating sharply on the lower breast while the belly was pure white.

In flight the wings appeared long and slender with no conspicuous bars. The tail had a dark centre and the rump was dark with white or buff margins.

When alarmed the bird stretched up its head in the typical manner before taking flight.

It also visited Pondsbury and Punch Bowl valley in the centre of the Island. (D. B. ILES.)

The record has been accepted by the Rarities Committee.

178. Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*).

In the spring, one was seen on March 30th and nine from April 9th to 15th. One on August 16th was followed by up to four later in the month. Up to two were frequent in September until the last one on the 16th.

181. Sanderling (*Crocethia alba*).

A single on August 27th.

198. Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*).

Bred in the usual numbers and up to forty were seen regularly.

199. Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*).

Resident as usual and recorded regularly until the end of September. The maximum count was of sixty-four on May 17th.

200. Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*).

Resident in the normal large numbers. The highest count was of 130 on August 30th. Numbers decreased to 100 on September 13th and to fifty subsequently.

208. Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*).

None seen until September when three were recorded on the 1st and one on 3rd and 4th.

211. Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*).

A count of the resident population on May 25th of c. 500 birds was the peak for the year. Numbers subsequently dwindled rapidly to fifty in August and the last two were seen on September 9th.

217-218. Common and Arctic Terns (*Sterna hirundo* and *S. paradisea*).

One on August 21st and three on September 22nd were the only records.

224. Razorbill (*Alcatorda*).

No change of status of the residential population was recorded.

227. Guillemot (*Uria aalge*).

No change of status of the residential population was recorded.

230. Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*).

A party of eight were seen on April 16th but peak numbers were recorded in May when fifty were seen on several days and forty-four on 28th.

234. Wood Pigeon (*Columba palumbus*).

Small numbers of up to six only were seen during April, May and June until the 14th when numbers increased to seventeen, falling to twelve on 16th and only a few at the end of the month.

Up to four were seen during July and August increasing to ten on September 22nd.

235. Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*).

The first one was seen on May 19th, ten on 24th and five on 26th followed by single birds on most days until June 26th.

Single returning birds were seen on August 28th and 30th, two on September 16th and the last one on 26th.

Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*).

One was seen on 28th May by W. L. Roseveare and F. W. Gade ; upperparts brownish grey with black half-collar on back of neck, size about that of Turtle Dove. This is a first record for Lundy and also for Devon. There is some evidence that two birds were present for about a week prior to and after this date.

237. Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*).

Single birds were seen intermittently throughout May and three on June 8th. None were seen after June 17th until a single autumn bird on September 4th.

249. Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*).

Two were seen several times on August 31st near Pondsburry and one only on September 1st and 2nd.

255. Swift (*Apus apus*).

Ten were seen on May 17th and June numbers were only up to five until an influx of over forty on June 14th and a further movement of over fifty on June 20th. None were then seen until one on August 23rd and four on 27th and 31st. Single birds were seen on the first five days of September.

258. Kingfisher (*Alcedo althis*).
One at north end in late July.

261. Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*).
One was present from March 27th to 30th.

265. Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*).
Single birds were seen on six days between August 30th and September 6th on the Terraces. Two of these were trapped and ringed.

272. Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*).
A movement of c. 100 on April 6th was the only one for the spring.
In September numbers increased from eight at the beginning to forty at the end of the month.

274. Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*).
First seen on April 6th when fifteen were counted, fifty on the 8th and a peak of 465 on 14th. Up to twenty only were seen each day in May until a large movement of several hundreds on 24th. Up to seven during August increased to thirty on 27th and 200 on 30th. On September 3rd and 8th, 150 were counted, then up to ten only until thirty were seen on 17th. Sixty-five were counted on September 21st but only five were present at the end of the month.

276. House Martin (*Delichon urbica*).
The first four were seen on April 14th followed by small numbers daily of up to twelve during May and until June 19th. The first two returning birds were seen on August 17th followed by peaks of thirty on August 28th and fifty on September 8th. Not more than four a day were seen during the rest of the month.

277. Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*).
The first five were seen on March 17th, one on 18th, none until sixty arrived on April 6th then variable numbers daily with a peak of 216 on April 14th. Four were the most seen on any day in May and June until the last two on June 16th. The first returning four were seen on August 10th, sixty on 12th and thirty on 17th diminishing to twenty at the end of the month. Small numbers of up to five were seen daily throughout September with one peak of at least eighty on 9th.

Five Sand Martins were ringed on August 30th and one of these was trapped at Slapton, South Devon, three days later.

279. Raven (*Corvus corax*).
Resident as usual and seen almost daily in numbers up to six in April, May and June and up to eight in August and September.

280. Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*).

Resident in large numbers, probably too many. The largest spring flock was of twenty-three on June 13th. A flock of nineteen on August 15th increased to thirty on 22nd and forty on September 16th.

283. Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*).

Four on February 19th, two on April 9th and one on April 17th.

288. Great Tit (*Parus major*).

One on May 25th was the only one seen this year.

299. Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*).

Small numbers present throughout the year, a slight increase to fourteen on September 4th may have been due to migration.

302. Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*).

Thirty on March 9th were the most seen and none were recorded after April 5th.

303. Song Thrush (*Turdus ericetorum*).

Present in small numbers in every month, five being the most seen. No autumn movement had taken place when the Observatory closed on October 1st.

304. Redwing (*Turdus musicus*).

Small numbers of up to eight were seen in March and April and one late migrant on May 28th.

307. Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*).

The first three spring migrants appeared on March 31st, four were seen on April 6th and six on 7th then diminishing to the last one on 13th. One single bird only was seen in the autumn on September 6th and 7th.

308. Blackbird (*Turdus merula*).

Counts of a hundred on March 6th and April 6th were peak spring movements. Up to eight only were seen in May and June. Numbers increased to twenty in late August and to thirty on September 20th, decreasing later in the month.

311. Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*).

First one on March 20th, twenty-five on April 6th rising to ninety on 10th. Small numbers of up to four daily in May and June. Small numbers again daily in August rising suddenly to fifteen on 29th and forty on September 2nd and forty-five on 4th, then falling to five on 10th, increasing to forty on 21st and fifty-five on 22nd. Several Greenland birds were seen during the movement and one was trapped on September 2nd and another on 3rd. The wing measurement of the first one was 113 mm. which is 3 mm. higher than the maximum given in *The Handbook*.

317. Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*).

A count of eighteen on May 24th was unusually high as five were the most seen otherwise. In September the only evidence of movement was a count of eleven on 22nd.

318. Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*).

None seen in the spring. An autumn movement started with six on August 29th and up to nine were recorded on most days until September 22nd. The last three were seen on September 25th.

320. Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*).

Singles seen from April 6th to 11th with two on 9th and 10th. Autumn migration started with a single on August 26th and continued on most days, usually with three, falling to a single on September 13th. A single was seen on September 22nd, three on 25th and one on 29th.

321. Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochrurus*).

The autumn movement started with a single seen daily from August 21st to 27th, then none until a single on September 22nd and 24th.

322. Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*).

A single bird was seen at the eastern end of Quarter Wall on August 28th during a general migratory movement. This was the only record of this species which, in any case, is a rarity on Lundy.

325. Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*).

Numbers well maintained with an increase in September indicating a possible movement. The highest counts were of fourteen on 4th and twenty on 26th.

327. Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella naevia*).

Ten seen on April 10th were very early migrants and a similar early movement was recorded at other Observatories. The first for the autumn was recorded on July 26th, another on August 30th, two on September 4th, one on 14th and two again on 22nd.

337. Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*).

Two on April 9th were the first for the spring. The first autumn migrant was seen on August 30th and was followed by small numbers with four on September 5th, three on 8th and the last two on 12th.

339-340. Melodious and Icterine Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta* and *H. icterina*).

One was watched on August 27th in Goldfish Quarry. The bird had slight pale edgings to the primaries. Singles were seen subsequently on 5th, 11th and 13th September. These birds have been accepted by the Rarities Committee as Icterine-Melodious.

343. Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*).

The first one was seen on April 12th. One was present in May and June until 15th. Autumn movement of ones and twos was noted from September 21st to 28th.

346. Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*).

One on August 30th, two on September 4th, one on 14th and two on 22nd were the only birds recorded during the autumn movement.

347. Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*).

An early spring arrival of nine on April 9th. One or two were seen daily in May and June. Small numbers in August increased to twelve on 31st but the peak movement occurred in September on 4th and 5th when up to thirty were seen. Not more than seven were seen on any day during the rest of September.

354-356. Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita* and *P. trochilus*).

The main first arrival occurred on April 6th when 120 Willow Warblers and 150 Chiffchaffs were seen. Both species were recorded in small numbers in May and until June 17th.

On August 10th about thirty Willow Warblers were seen on return migration and on 30th about twenty of both species. In September the peak date was 5th when twenty-five Willows and six Chiffchaffs were counted. Numbers fell to five on 22nd and one on 28th September.

364. Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*).

One from April 6th to 14th.

One or two returning birds were seen regularly from August 16th until 30th when they increased to six and 31st when twelve were seen. In September, ten were seen on 8th, fourteen on 22nd falling to six at the end of the month.

366. Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*).

Small numbers of up to four daily in May until 28th, only one in June on 15th. First three returning birds on August 10th and ten on 11th were followed by daily records which again reached ten on 29th and twelve on September 2nd, thirteen on 5th followed by up to seven daily until 22nd and single birds until September 29th.

368. Pied Flycatcher (*Muscicapa hypoleuca*).

One female on May 28th was the only spring record.

Autumn migrants started with three on August 24th rising to eight on 29th and up to eight daily to September 4th falling to three or four daily; six were seen on 13th and one to four daily until the last two on September 29th.

371. Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*).

Resident status maintained and no evidence of movement.

373. Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*).

A peak spring movement of c. 300 occurred on April 11th. The resident population remained unchanged. In the autumn, migration started on August 28th with an increased count of forty, followed by up to sixty daily until an increase to 100 was noted on September 10th. A further wave on September 24th increased the count to 180 while 460 were seen on the following day. The number did not exceed 130 for the remainder of the month.

376. Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*).

Two only were recorded in the spring on April 14th.

Autumn migration was noted daily from August 28th, when six were seen, and eight on September 4th was the highest number. The movement ended with the last one on September 21st.

379. Rock Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*).

Small numbers were counted regularly and no change in the resident population was noted.

380. Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*).

Autumn movements increased the resident population from September 3rd, when twenty-five were seen, to fifty on 7th, seventy on 11th, and 120 on 14th. The movement ended on 17th. The majority of the birds seen during this movement were White Wagtails (*M. a. alba*).

381. Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*).

A single on July 27th and another on August 28th were the only birds recorded.

382. Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*).

Only one in the spring on April 9th and 10th.

Autumn migration started with one on August 26th and continued daily. Seven were seen on 28th rising to eight on September 5th and fifteen on 7th. The movement ended with six on September 17th after which occasional birds were recorded until the last one on 26th. One bird trapped and ringed on September 14th with a white chin and stripe above the eye appeared to be a Blue-headed (*M. f. flava*).

385. Lesser Grey Shrike (*Lanius minor*).

One adult was seen by A. J. Vickery on September 24th in the afternoon on the fence to the south of the Old Light. The head was noted to be grey on the top and back with a broad black band running from behind the eyes right across the forehead.

The record has been accepted by the Rarities Committee.

389. Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).

Thirty on March 9th and up to ten in April and twenty-four on June 20th were the highest spring counts.

One was seen on August 15th and small numbers of up to nine during September.

393. Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*).

Two on February 19th and up to eleven from April 6th to 10th.

395. Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*).

One spring movement of c. 200 was noted on April 11th and 14th. Flocks of up to thirty were seen regularly in May and June. On August 9th at least fifty were seen and on 16th the flock had increased to over 100. Up to eighty were seen in the first half of September and thirty during the second half of the month.

401. Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*).

One in the Heligoland trap on April 18th.

407. Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*).

Resident in small numbers as usual and no movements noted.

408. Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*).

One on April 14th was the only record for the year.

409. Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*).

A single bird was recorded on June 13th.

413. Red-headed Bunting (*Emberiza bruniceps*).

One male was on the Island from 25th July until August 27th. It was regularly seen feeding on chicken corn with Chaffinches near the kitchen garden. It had a chestnut head and throat, flecked with grey, the crown being streaked chestnut-grey and yellow while the breast had chestnut patches interspersed with yellow. The underparts and rump were bright yellow, mantle dark brown streaked buff-grey and coverts greenish-yellow. The primaries and secondaries had buff-grey edgings to dark brown feathers and the tail was as mantle without the yellowish tinge.

The record has been accepted by the Rarities Committee.

422. Lapland Bunting (*Calcarius lapponicus*).

One on September 14th, one on 23rd and 24th, two on 25th, one on 26th and two on 27th.

423. Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax*).

Five on March 20th, one on April 14th and 20th. In the autumn, one was seen on September 27th and two on 28th and 29th.

425. Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*).

One on April 9th and 14th and up to six from May to October. A pair bred in a hole in the wall in High Street. This is the first record of breeding on the Island.