

BIRDS ON LUNDY 2020

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REVIEW OF THE BIRDING YEAR

A total of 162 species were recorded during 2019. Highlights included:

- Lundy's first **Killdeer** (Mar), **Sora Rail** (Sep) and **Great White Egrets** (Dec)
- The island's second **White's Thrush** (Oct)
- The first **White-tailed Eagle** for 140 years
- A good breeding season for **Puffins**, **Guillemots** and **Razorbills**
- Confirmed breeding by at least one pair of **Whitethroats** and two pairs of **Blackcaps**

Overall, it was the third wettest year on record for the island, although spring was drier than average, and June was the second driest ever.

JANUARY – Max temp 11.9C, min 1.6C, mean 7.8C. Rainfall 119.1mm

January was mostly mild and unsettled with strong westerly and south-westerly winds, including Storm Brendan, which arrived on 13th bringing gusts up to 66 mph. There was some quieter weather early in the month and, more especially between the 18th and 25th, when high pressure brought fine, settled but chilly conditions. Wet and windy conditions returned from 26th.

After a notable absence earlier in the season, **Red-throated Divers** finally turned up off the East Side, with up to three during the first ten days, rising to 28 on 24th. A single **Black-throated Diver** graced the Landing Bay on 23rd. Other seabirds, also primarily off the Landing Bay, included single **Cormorants** on 2nd & 29th, a maximum count of 2,113 mixed **auks** (19th), regular sightings of up to two **Great Northern Divers**, and both abundance and diversity of **gulls**. These comprised a maximum of 2,766 **Kittiwakes** (29th), up to 14 **Mediterranean Gulls**, 32 **Common Gulls**, two **Black-headed Gulls** and, remarkably, a first-winter **Little Gull**, first seen from the Terrace on 19th, then in the Landing Bay area on 20th & 28th. On the passerine front, notable occurrences included a singing **Goldcrest** in Millcombe on 3rd, a **Pied Wagtail** on 5th, single **Chiffchaff** and **Black Redstart** on 10th, up to four **Stonechats** on well-scattered dates, a high count of 39 **Rock Pipits** on 18th and small numbers of **thrushes**, **Chaffinches** and **Goldfinches**. The spell of settled weather after mid-month stimulated **Skylarks** to begin singing and displaying, whilst more unusual for January were a female **Reed Bunting** on 19th and two **Snow Buntings** over the Terrace on 24th. Also logged were single **Woodcocks** on 18th & 20th, up to five **Snipe**, regular sightings of two **Woodpigeons**, and a **Kestrel** on 18th and 23rd. At the end of the month, a group of three adult **Greenland White-fronted Geese** appeared on the Airfield on 26th, remaining on the island to 8 Feb.

Greenland White-fronted Geese, Airfield, 26th January (photo: Dean Jones).





Lapland Bunting, Brick Field, 13th February (photo: Dean Jones).

FEBRUARY – Max temp 10.9C, min 4.2C, mean 7.6C. Rainfall 163.2mm

February began with mild, changeable, westerly weather before high pressure briefly crossed the country between 5th and 7th bringing more settled conditions. The rest of the month was exceptionally wet and also windy, with frequent belts of persistent heavy rain interspersed with brighter showery weather. Storm Ciara on 9th and Storm Dennis on 15th brought very high rainfall totals to much of the country, and Storm Jorge ushered in further heavy rain on 28th. Winds during these storm systems peaked at 68–70 mph. During February as a whole, most of England experienced 200–300% of the average rainfall for the month. Flooding was consequently widespread, with Lundy's ponds, pools and streams filled to capacity and extensive surface-water lying in places, notably on Ackland's Moor, near the water tanks.

The often stormy weather brought large numbers of gulls seeking shelter on and around the island. Among an abundance of **Kittiwakes** (max 1,316 on 27th) and Herring Gulls (max 447 on 21st) were a second-winter **Yellow-legged Gull** on 18th & 19th (only the second record for Lundy), a first-winter **Glaucous Gull** on 20th (which remained into Mar) and another **Little Gull** (this time an adult, seen between 19th & 26th, sometimes together with the lingering first-winter bird from Jan). Also of note were up to 10 **Common Gulls**, four **Mediterranean Gulls**, and single **Black-headed Gulls** on two dates. Almost certainly a casualty of Storm Ciara, a freshly dead **Grey Phalarope** was found along the Lower East Side Path on 11th, whilst a **Lapland Bunting** feeding unobtrusively among Skylarks in Brick Field on 13th was one of the few late-winter or early spring occurrences known for the island. An exceptional count of six **Great Northern Divers** (likely also sheltering from the storms) was made on 17th, but **Red-throated Divers** were comparatively scarce with a peak of seven on 8th. Among other sightings of note were four **Purple Sandpipers** in the Devil's Kitchen area on 16th and two at Gannets' Bay on 23rd, three passing **Cormorants** on 23rd, and a **Water Rail** on the Warden's front doormat on the night of 14th! A **Jackdaw** was calling from Millcombe Wood on 26th and two were seen the next day. In spite of the challenging conditions, a trickle of spring passerine migration was apparent from the first week of the month, with small arrivals of **Skylarks** and **Meadow Pipits**, the latter reaching a maximum of 36 on 23rd, whilst five **Pied Wagtails** and four **Stonechats** in the final week also provided a hint of things to come.

MARCH – Max temp 13.7C, min 3.3C, mean 7.9C. Rainfall 73.2mm

During the first week, a cool westerly airstream brought a mix of sunshine and showers, with occasional longer spells of rain. It was generally milder but still rather unsettled from 7th to 15th with belts of rain crossing the country at regular intervals, interspersed with brighter, showery weather. High pressure slowly built across the British Isles after mid-month, and a welcome spell of dry, settled weather followed, bringing plenty of sunshine by day and chilly nights. However, an increasingly strong east or north-east wind took the shine off things towards the end of the month, especially on 29th, when the 'feels like' temperature, taking account of wind chill, struggled to get above 1C.

The return of **Puffins** is always a keenly anticipated moment in the island's ornithological calendar. This year it was on 11th that the first 32 birds were recorded at Jenny's Cove and St Philip's Stone, several already prospecting for burrows on the sidelands.

Passerine migration really kicked in during the first half of March, with peak counts of 214 **Meadow Pipits** (3rd), 23 **Pied/alba wagtails** (11th) and 36 **Stonechats** (5th – including a dozen scattered over a small area of South West Field). The first **Grey Wagtail** of the year was recorded on 8th and the first confirmed **White Wagtail** on 20th, and there was a typical smattering of **Firecrests** (max three on 14th) and **Black Redstarts** (max 3 on 27th), whilst **Goldcrests** peaked at 18 on 24th. The first dates for longer-distance migrants included a very early **House Martin** on 8th, **Chiffchaff** on 10th, **Blackcap** on 17th, **Sand Martin** on 18th, **Wheatear** on 20th, **Ring Ouzel** on 21th, **Swallow** on 23rd and **Willow Warbler** on 24th. However, the cold north-easterlies depressed both variety and numbers during the latter part of the month, with six **Redwings** on 27th adding to a distinctly wintry feel.

Notable non-passerine passage migrants included **Cormorants** (max five on 22nd), **Sparrowhawk** (a male on 29th & 30th) and **Woodcock** (ones and twos on four dates to 31st), whilst representatives of some of the island's scarcer breeding birds included **Teal** (max 21 on 22nd, comprising 7 drakes & 14 ducks), **Woodpigeon** (max 10 on 27th & 29th) and **Water Rail** (max four on 14th).

On the rarity front, the undoubted highlight was Lundy's first **Killdeer**, a North American plover, which has only been recorded a handful of times in Devon. Many congratulations to Neil Trout for this extraordinary find near Stoneycroft and the water tanks on 16th. Scarcities logged during the month included first-winter **Glaucous Gulls** on 1st & 14th and a stunning adult at Pondsbury on 5th, up to 14 **Common Gulls**, a single **Black-headed Gull**, several **Mediterranean Gulls** and up to nine **Red-throated Divers** (the latter on 5th). Two **Hooded Crows** arrived on 13th (one remaining to 14th), a female **Bullfinch** was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 25th, a male **Hen Harrier** was hunting over Barton Field on 27th and an **Osprey** was being mobbed by **Ravens** over Brick Field on 28th. Finally, after a single bird on 13th & 14th, **Jackdaws** were seen on six dates from 24th to the end of the month, with a maximum of 14 in Tent Field on 30th.

Firecrest, Millcombe, 14th March (photo: Dean Jones).



FIRST DATES FOR SPRING MIGRANTS

March	3 rd	Black Redstart
	6 th	Manx Shearwater
	8 th	House Martin
	10 th	Chiffchaff
	11 th	Puffin
	14 th	Firecrest
	17 th	Blackcap
	18 th	Sand Martin
	20 th	Wheatear
		White Wagtail
	21 st	Ring Ouzel
	23 rd	Swallow
	24 th	Willow Warbler
April	6 th	Sandwich Tern
	7 th	Collared Dove
	8 th	Ringed Plover
	9 th	Sedge Warbler
		Grasshopper Warbler
		Redstart
	10 th	Yellow Wagtail
		Tree Pipit
	11 th	Pied Flycatcher
	13 th	Whitethroat
	15 th	Whimbrel
	16 th	Dunlin
	18 th	Cuckoo
		Lesser Whitethroat
	19 th	Swift
		Garden Warbler
		Reed Warbler
	Whinchat	
23 rd	Curlew	
	Spotted Flycatcher	
26 th	Common Sandpiper	
27 th	Wood Warbler	
May	7 th	Turtle Dove

LAST DATES FOR 'WINTER' VISITORS

March	31 st	Woodcock
April	1 st	Red-throated Diver
	7 th	Jack Snipe
	11 th	Fieldfare
	13 th	Redwing
May	6 th	Merlin
	24 th	Great Northern Diver

*Top: Black Redstart, near Pilot's Quay, 16th April.
Below: Spotted Flycatcher, Millcombe, 1st May
(photos: Dean Jones).*



BREEDING SPECIES IN 2020

The following 38 species were all confirmed as successfully fledging young:

Mallard	Manx Shearwater	Blackbird
Teal	Shag	Robin
Woodpigeon	Kestrel	Stonechat
Water Rail	Peregrine	Wheatear
Oystercatcher	Carrion Crow	House Sparrow
Kittiwake	Raven	Duncock
Great Black-backed Gull	Skylark	Pied Wagtail
Herring Gull	Swallow	Meadow Pipit
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Chiffchaff	Rock Pipit
Guillemot	Blackcap	Chaffinch
Razorbill	Whitethroat	Linnet
Puffin	Wren	Goldfinch
Fulmar	Starling	

In addition, Spotted Flycatcher bred but failed to fledge any young, whilst Storm Petrel almost certainly bred near North Light, probably also at Brazen Ward, and possibly elsewhere.

Male Starling, Village, 8th May (photo: Dean Jones)



APRIL – Max temp 19.9C, min 3.9C, mean 10.3C. Rainfall 36.9mm

Until the last few days of the month, April 2020 was notable for being extremely dry and also one of the sunniest Aprils on record. Although the frequently clear skies brought some beautifully warm and sunny days, the nights were rather cold and – as often with high pressure in spring – the East Side was sometimes exposed to a gusty and bone-chilling easterly, belying the sunshine. The month ended with some welcome rain as a slow-moving area of low pressure edged in from the south and west.

Ornithologically, the month opened with a characteristic mixture of departing winter visitors and growing numbers of summer migrants arriving from the south. On 1st, for example, the last two **Red-throated Divers** of the season and a small influx of 11 **Redwings** coincided with 38 **Linnets** and 184 **Puffins** – the highest counts of the year so far for these two Lundy breeding species – together with 23 **Chiffchaffs**, 11 **Willow Warblers** and 18 **Wheatears**.

One of the most noticeable features of the month – continuing a trend started in March – was the unusually high number of **Jackdaws**. The prolonged settled weather seems to have encouraged roaming birds from the mainland to make the crossing to Lundy, with a mass arrival of 59 coming in from the south-east on 2nd. Altogether there were records of this irregular visitor to the island on nine dates during April.

Migratory movements continued throughout the first week, with diversity making up for relatively low numbers. Highlights included a female **Greenfinch** on 3rd, a male **Merlin** on 4th, a **Firecrest** on 5th, the first **Sandwich Tern** of the year on 6th – in the Landing Bay alongside a lingering **Great Northern Diver** – and singles of **Jack Snipe**, **Mediterranean Gull**, **Collared Dove** and **Black Redstart** on 7th. The second week kicked off with a **Ringed Plover** calling in flight on 8th and brought the first falls of warblers: 90 **Willow Warblers** on 8th and 75 **Blackcaps** on 9th, the latter accompanied by the first **Sedge Warbler**, **Grasshopper Warbler** and **Common Redstart** of the year, all represented by lone individuals. The following day (10th) the first **Tree Pipit** gave its characteristic flight call over Millcombe, two stonking male **Yellow Wagtails** appeared in High Street Field and a **Buzzard** began a two-day visit to the island. These were followed on 11th by the first **Pied Flycatchers** and a further fall of 110 **Blackcaps** and 53 **Willow Warblers**, and in Millcombe on 13th by the first **Whitethroat**.

Common Sandpiper, Devil's Kitchen, 26th April (photo: Dean Jones).





Hoopoe, main track near Pondsbury, 10th April (photo: Dean Jones).

Hirundine migration was decidedly slow to get going, with 122 **Swallows** on 14th being the first three-digit count. However, numbers reached some 1,750 on 22nd, alongside 140 **House Martins**, whilst the highest **Sand Martin** count of the month came on 23rd when 130 were logged. Numbers of passage **Wheatears** appeared lower than in many recent years, with 92 on 15th being the highest count. Large, brightly marked birds typical of the Greenland-breeding race were seen on at least six dates from 9th. The first **Whimbrel** was below North Light on 15th and six **Dunlin** were in South West Field on 16th, the same day that **Linnet** numbers peaked at 143. **Ring Ouzels** were recorded on ten dates, mainly during the third week of Apr, peaking at four on 18th, the same day as the first **Lesser Whitethroat** and **Cuckoo** appeared along the Terrace, followed a day later by a **Swift** over the Battery, a single **Garden Warbler** and **Reed Warbler** in Millcombe and two **Whinchats** in South West Field. The last week or so brought a lone **Siskin** over Millcombe on 22nd, a **Curlew** and a female **Reed Bunting** on 23rd, a **Common Sandpiper** in the Devil's Kitchen on 26th and two **Wood Warblers** in Millcombe on 28th.

Against the backdrop of all these migratory comings and comings, some of Lundy's resident species were already well on with the business of breeding; the first broods of **Mallard** ducklings were on Rocket Pole Pond and Barton Pond on 10th.

Rarities

A **Hoopoe** near Pondsbury on 10th was part of an influx to southern Britain during the fine, settled weather conditions. A female **Hawfinch** perched on the allotment wall outside Paradise Row on 16th following a run-in with the local **Pied Wagtails**. It was seen later in Millcombe Wood and reappeared on Sue Waterfield's feeder on 18th. The allotment wall yielded an even more spectacular bird on 16th when a **Black Kite** set pulses racing and camera shutters firing. However, the clearly visible jesses gave away the bird's captive origin. It was seen the following day at Jenny's Cove and over the Village.

MAY – Max temp 21.8C, min 5.1C, mean 12.0C. Rainfall 15.1mm

Overall, it was the sunniest May on record for England and also an exceptionally dry month with just 17% of average rainfall. However, things started off on a rather unsettled note, with mist and drizzle affecting Lundy on 3rd, followed by heavy rain with easterly gales on 5th. High pressure then built across the country bringing mostly warm, dry and sunny conditions to the island from 6th to 10th. North or north-easterly winds heralded a shift to much cooler weather from 11th to 16th, and though it remained dry with often unbroken sunshine by day, there were some very chilly nights. Winds turned to the west or south-west from 17th to 24th, bringing warmer, moister air for a time, enveloping the island in banks of sea-fog each morning from 19th to 21st, and triggering thunder and lightning over the Channel on the night of 20th/21st, though it remained stubbornly dry. Gale-force south-westerlies on 22nd drove a big swell into the West Side – potentially bad news for some nesting seabirds – but gradually eased as high pressure firmly re-established itself, giving a period of baking sunshine and light breezes once any morning mist and fog had cleared. However, this summer-like interlude came to an end as stiff easterly winds set in from 29th.

Visible spring migration very much reflected the strong contrasts in wind direction during the month, with hirundine movements in particular showing significant peaks early and later in the month, either side of the plunge of cold, north-easterly winds during mid-May. **Swallow** counts, for example, reached 1,916 on 6th and 1,794 on 19th, but were below 50 every day from 8th to 18th. **Sand Martins** posted an unusually late spring peak of 478 on 6th, the same day that 341 **House Martins** passed through, although the maximum count of House Martins was not until 19th when 471 were logged. **Swifts** were sadly in short supply, with ones and twos for the most part; 10 on 4th was by far the highest number seen. Given that skies were frequently clear at night, nocturnal migrants were able to navigate unhindered by cloud or rain, meaning that only small numbers stopped off to rest and feed on Lundy. The more unsettled conditions at the beginning of May, followed by the arrival of warm, dry air from the south, brought a few flurries of warblers, including 17 **Willow Warblers** on 2nd, 10 **Blackcaps** on 6th and 13 **Sedge Warblers** and 14 **Whitethroats** on 7th. The 6th & 7th also saw a scattering (ones and twos only) of less common migrants, including **Reed Warbler**, **Grasshopper Warbler**, **Garden Warbler**, **Whinchat** and **Yellow Wagtail**, but it was an overnight influx of 26 **Spotted Flycatchers** on 6th that stole the show. On 9th there were two **Redstarts** around the Quarries and two **Pied Flycatchers** bathing in the stream below the Casbah in Millcombe. As is often the case, a trickle of migration continued right up to the end of the month and into early June, with small arrivals of **Blackcaps**, **Whitethroats** and **Spotted Flycatchers**, and the transient presence of singing **Willow Warblers** in Millcombe and Quarter Wall Copse.

May often sees a nice diversity of waders stopping off on their northbound journeys, but they were rather few and far between in 2020. There were just two **Common Sandpipers** on 9th, two **Ringed Plovers** on 13th and a **Golden Plover** on 20th, alongside a handful of **Whimbrel** (maximum of 4) and **Dunlin** (maximum 6).

*Garden Warbler, Terrace willows,
7th May (photo: Dean Jones).*





Cliffside auks in Jenny's Cove, 31st May (photo: Dean Jones).

A typical scattering of unusual or unseasonal avian visitors included six **Jackdaws** over Jenny's Cove on 1st (with two more calling from the Barn roof on 25th), a **Buzzard** over the Village on 9th, single **Lesser Whitethroats** in Millcombe on 10th & 29th, one or two **Great Northern Divers** on 19th & 24th, a **Mistle Thrush** in Barton Field on 22nd, a **Grey Wagtail** in Millcombe on 27th and the first **Grey Heron** of the year – at Pondsbyrny – on 29th. Small arrivals of **Woodpigeons** to the East Side (11 on 8th and 16 on 18th) – alongside the more typical spring influx of **Collared Doves** – were definitely also in the 'unusual' category, whilst a purring **Turtle Dove** in Millcombe on 7th arguably qualifies for genuine rarity status these days. A pair of **Bullfinches** foraging in Turkey Oaks behind Brambles on 31st provided a very unexpected way to close the month!

Among the island's breeding seabirds, adult **Manx Shearwaters** were incubating eggs in five of the nestboxes at the Old Light colony on 5th, 147 **Guillemots** were on eggs in the St Mark's Stone study plot by 6th, and the first **Kittiwake** egg was seen on 15th (at Threequarter Wall Buttress). Encouragingly, a total of 297 **Puffin** burrows had been mapped at Jenny's Cove by 21st and the first observation of adults delivering sand eels to burrows (proving the presence of young 'pufflings') was made on 25th. A count of seabirds on 30th undertaken by walking the whole of the island's perimeter came up with 191 **Fulmars**, 89 **Shags** (including large chicks at Long Roost), 330 **Kittiwakes**, 141 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**, 415 **Herring Gulls**, 48 **Great Black-backed Gulls**, 7,637 **Guillemots**, 2,384 **Razorbills** and 397 **Puffins**.



*Female Stonechat, Lower East Side Path, 24th May
(photo: Dean Jones).*

Breeding landbirds seem to have had a generally good month, in spite of the widely fluctuating temperatures, though the extremely dry conditions made life challenging for adult **Blackbirds** foraging for earthworms to feed to their chicks. Fifty-six active **Starling** nests were located during surveys of the Church, Village and Old Light areas on 8th & 12th. The first **Raven** fledglings were seen along South End on 12th, the first **House Sparrow** on 14th, the first **Robins** on 19th, the first **Starlings** on 21st, the first **Carion Crows** on 26th, the first **Chaffinches** and **Blackbirds** on 29th, the first **Dunnocks** and **Wheatears** on 30th, and the first **Goldfinches** and **Meadow Pipits** on 31st. In addition, adult **Skylarks**, **Stonechats** (four pairs), **Pied Wagtails** and **Rock Pipits** were all seen gathering and delivering food to nest sites containing hungry young. Singing male **Chiffchaffs**, **Willow Warblers**, **Whitethroats** (up to five) and **Blackcaps** were all apparently holding territory in Millcombe and elsewhere along the East Side during the second half of the month. Though there were no observations of courtship or nestbuilding, all except **Willow Warbler** were to go on to breed successfully in 2020.

Rarities

A **Hooded Crow** was foraging in Tent Field on 1st and there was a further sighting in the same location on 15th, but it was unclear whether it was the same individual. A gorgeous, but typically elusive, singing male **Golden Oriole** graced Millcombe on 8th & 9th, whilst a second individual – either a female or a first-year male – turned up, also in Millcombe, on 20th. Detailing the first occurrence for the Lundy Birds blog, Dean Jones related that, *“Although the bird was being very vocal, I didn’t manage to actually see it until later in the day due to the now lush-green canopies in Millcombe providing perfect camouflage. Luckily though, come the afternoon, Tom was driving down the Valley in his ATV, after his umpteenth lamb check of the day, and flushed the bird, allowing brief but spectacular views in flight. Thanks Tom!”* The prize for star bird of the month though has to go to the female **Rustic Bunting** seen (and photographed) briefly in Millcombe on 10th during an otherwise generally quiet morning – proof, if ever that were needed, that just about anything can turn up anywhere, at any time, on Lundy!

Sika Deer and a Hooded Crow, Tent Field, 15th May (photo: Dean Jones).





Male (left) and female colour-ringed Wheatears, Pilot's Quay, 3rd June (photos: Dean Jones).

JUNE – Max temp 23.7C, min 7.9C, mean 13.7C. Rainfall 129mm

The month started dry and sunny under high pressure, with Warden Dean Jones describing the 1st as: "An absolute scorcher of a day! Clear skies and wall-to-wall sunshine and very little in the way of wind throughout." However, it soon turned much cooler and more changeable, with northerly winds and even a little rain on 3rd, followed by a period of often overcast and windy conditions (WNW gusts of 41 mph on 6th) and a thoroughly wet spell from 10th to 12th. Things settled down again for a time mid-month, with long sunny spells and light winds until further rain arrived – preceded by thick fog – on 18th. Thereafter, it remained changeable to the end of the month, with several very warm days from 22nd contrasting with a prolonged period of SW gales and heavy rain from 27th.

It was a time of mixed fortunes for some of Lundy's cliff-nesting seabirds, the number of **Kittiwake** nests (first chicks seen on 13th) down on 2019 and signs of another poor year for productivity (not helped by the periodic storms washing out a number of nests), whilst **Guillemots** (including a Skomer colour-ringed individual in Jenny's Cove) appeared to be enjoying a very good breeding season. Writing about **Puffins** on 4th, Dean Jones commented: "By mid-morning, the productivity slope was covered in birds! It's hard to think that this time 15 years ago there were only five Puffins counted on the whole island – none of which were present in Jenny's Cove. Whereas today there were 115 birds running around, fighting and affectionately billing on the productivity slope, and 317 birds in total between the Battery and the Pyramid – a truly incredible recovery of numbers since the eradication of rats was confirmed in 2006."

Small numbers of migrating **Collared Doves**, **Swallows**, **martins**, **Swifts**, **warblers** and **Spotted Flycatchers** continued to move north until mid-month and even beyond, whilst singing **Chiffchaffs**, **Willow Warblers**, **Blackcaps** and **Whitethroats** were still all holding territory. Breeding was confirmed for three of these warbler species when a pair of **Chiffchaffs** were copulating in Millcombe on 10th, **Whitethroat** fledglings were seen along the East Side on 16th and **Blackcap** fledglings appeared in Millcombe on 24th. Towards the end of the month, a pair of **Spotted Flycatchers** were found to be incubating four eggs in the Casbah (Millcombe) – only the second known breeding attempt of recent years.

Continued efforts were made to read as many **Wheatear** colour-rings as possible for the Retrapping Adults for Survival (RAS) project as more and more fledglings emerged from nests around the island. Other species with recently fledged young included **Pied Wagtail** on 7th, good numbers of **Wrens** on 18th and the first **Woodpigeon** on 19th, along with plenty of **Goldfinches**, **Linnets** and second-brood **Dunnocks** and **Blackbirds**.

The 16th was devoted to another count of cliff-nesting seabirds around the entire island, with totals (adult birds only) of: 191 **Fulmars**, 111 **Shags**, 8,252 **Guillemots**, 2,177 **Razorbills**, 400 **Puffins**, 242 **Kittiwakes**, 602 **Herring Gulls**, only 145 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** and 62 **Great Black-backed Gulls**.

Notable sightings included an unseasonal male **Siskin** on Sue Waterfield's bird feeders outside Paradise Row on 5th & 6th, a **Cuckoo** in Millcombe on 8th, a **Golden Plover** in Middle Park on 9th, a different **Cuckoo** at Threequarter Wall on 12th and one in Quarter Wall Copse on 16th. Finally there was a singing male **Reed Warbler** in the Secret Garden on 17th.

Rarities

An elusive first-year male **Common Rosefinch** was singing in Millcombe during the early morning of 1st; a **Crossbill** flew over Millcombe on 3rd; a misty, murky Millcombe was brightened by a singing sub-adult male **Golden Oriole** on the morning of 18th; two more **Crossbills** (both females) were feeding in Millcombe from 19th to 21st; and the valley was also graced by an adult **Rose-coloured Starling**, together with **Common Starlings**, on 21st.

JULY – Max temp 21.9C, min 10.0C, mean 14.7C. Rainfall 22.7mm

The first week was dominated by a continued cool and changeable, often cloudy and wet westerly airflow. Strong winds gusting to 45 mph (in excess of Force 8 on the Beaufort Scale) during the first week generated an unusually powerful Atlantic swell for the time of year. The middle of the month was more settled, with a few particularly warm and sunny days around 17th. However, this benign interlude broke down in the final week, with westerlies picking up again, bringing prolonged spells of low cloud, fog and drizzle, and outbreaks of heavier rain at times. The island was once more battered by gale-force winds on 27th, peaking at 47 mph (Force 9), but these abated the following day and temperatures were back up to 23C by 30th.

The first 'pufflings' (**Puffin** chicks) of the year emerged from their burrows at Jenny's Cove on 1st, the first **Fulmar** chicks were seen there on 6th, and most young **Guillemots** had 'jumped' from the study colony at St Mark's Stone by the end of the first week of the month. Only a few dozen **Guillemots** and a single **Razorbill** remained on the cliffs between Jenny's Cove and Aztec Bay by 19th. The swell piling into the West Side at the start of the month sadly washed out a number of **Kittiwake** nests at Threequarter Wall Bay, including a rebuilt nest – complete

with chick – after an earlier wash-out event. A raft of at least 4,000 **Manx Shearwaters** gathered in the relatively sheltered waters off the East Side on 7th, and a check of the 'Manxie' nest-boxes at the Old Light colony found seven occupied, including several containing fluffy chicks. Some 35 **Storm Petrels** were ringed near North Light on the night of 16th/17th, and a post-breeding raft of 71 **Shags** was off the Quarries on 22nd.



Manx Shearwater chick in a nestbox in the Old Light colony, 11th July (photo: Dean Jones).



A juvenile Kestrel, one of two that fledged from an East Side nest, 6th July (photo: Dean Jones).

Among landbirds, the first young **Peregrines** of the season took to the wing on 1st, the **Swallow** brood fledged from the Church porch over the weekend of 4th/5th, and the **Spotted Flycatcher** pair in Millcombe were feeding four small young in the Casbah on 6th, the same day that two **Kestrels** fledged from a nest along the East Side – the first successful nest on the island since 2005. Another brood of young **Blackcaps** (clearly reared by a different pair to the family party seen in late June) was in Millcombe on 9th and adult **Chiffchaffs** were feeding a single fledgling there on 14th. Sadly, the flycatcher chicks were found dead in the nest on 10th – a casualty of the poor weather in preceding days, which had made it near impossible for the adults to find food.

After a 'blink-and-you'll-miss-it' hiatus at the end of northbound migration in the latter part of June, a flurry of post-breeding dispersal and early southbound movement was already evident by mid-July. There were 40 **Swifts** on 11th and a daily trickle of **Willow Warblers** through the island began on 14th, building up to 45 in Millcombe alone on 22nd, the day after the first returning **Sedge Warbler** was logged at Quarters Pond. Other migrants in the last two weeks of July included small numbers of **Swallows** and **martins**, single **Cuckoos** on three dates, up to four **Grey Herons**, a scattering of waders – including ones and twos of **Whimbrel**, **Curlew**, **Dunlin**, **Green Sandpiper** and **Redshank** – and single **Mediterranean Gulls** on 27th & 28th.

Rarities

A first-year **Melodious Warbler** was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 31st – a very early date for this scarce migrant from south-west European breeding grounds.



Manx Shearwater chick from the Old Light colony nestboxes, 24th August (photo: Dean Jones).

AUGUST – Max temp 24.2C, min 10.0C, mean 16.3C. Rainfall 81.4mm

Glorious sunshine, light winds and high temperatures from 1st to 3rd were followed by near gale-force winds and heavy rain on 4th and 5th, calm but very murky conditions on 6th, then several days with morning sea-fog clearing to very warm sunshine but continued high humidity, which triggered spectacular thunder and lightning storms (but little actual rain) on 10th. Following a quiet but often cloudy and showery period mid-month, things took a decidedly wet and windy turn, with several deep depressions moving in off the Atlantic. These included Storm Ellen (19th/20th) and Storm Francis (25th), when winds reached 63 mph (Force 10 on the Beaufort Scale) and 54 mph (Force 9), respectively. It was notably cool for the time of year as the month drew to a close.

Birds on the move early in the month included a **Great Skua** past Rat Island on 1st, single **Grey Herons** on 2nd & 4th, a **Black-headed Gull** on 4th, two **Whimbrel** on 5th, and fly-over **Ringed Plovers** on 1st, 6th & 8th. The 6th brought the first mixed fall of passerine migrants of the autumn, featuring minimum counts of 110 **Willow Warblers**, 29 **Sedge Warblers** and 13 **Spotted Flycatchers**. A male **Common Scoter** was on the sea below North Light, with a **Turnstone** calling in flight nearby on 9th, the same day that 12 **Swifts** flew high over Castle Hill and the first **Whinchat**, **Pied Flycatcher** and **Tree Pipits** of the season were also logged. A **Golden Plover** called in flight over South End on 10th. Sound recording of nocturnal migrants from close to Brambles on three consecutive nights (8th/9th to 10th/11th) captured calls of **Common** and **Green Sandpipers** on two nights, and those of **Ringed Plover**, **Dunlin** and **Curlew** on one night each. A **Greenshank** was seen by day on 11th, another **Turnstone** was logged on 20th, further **Black-headed Gulls** (ones and twos only) on three dates from 20th to 27th, single **Dunlins** on 20th, 24th & 28th, another **Greenshank** on 24th, a **Ringed Plover** on the night of 25th, two **Common Sandpipers** on 26th, the first **Merlin** of autumn flew over Millcombe on 28th, and another **Green Sandpiper** passed through on 31st. **Flycatchers** were prominent towards the end of the month, with up to 10 **Spotted** (24th) and six **Pied** (31st), whilst the first **Goldcrest** of autumn arrived on 28th, and both the first **Yellow Wagtail** and **White Wagtail** occurred on 31st.

Although so much migration was already in evidence, the breeding season was still in progress for some species. Recently fledged later broods of **Blackbirds**, **Wrens**, **Goldfinches** and **Linnets** were still being fed by adults during the first half of the month, a **Water Rail** chick was calling near Quarter Wall on 11th, and increasingly fat **Fulmar** chicks continued to occupy the ledges at Gannets' Rock and Jenny's Cove, with the island's nesting **Manx Shearwaters** and **Storm Petrels** also still at the chick-rearing stage.

Single **Puffins** were offshore on 1st & 5th, a spectacular feeding frenzy of nearly 200 **Gannets** was off the East Side on 8th, a southbound flock of eight **Cormorants** flew over the Castle on 10th, 23 **Storm Petrels** were mist-netted near North Light on the night of 10th/11th, and there was a notable count of more than 2,500 **Manx Shearwaters** offshore on 20th, along with two **Mediterranean Gulls** and two **Sandwich Terns**. The last week of the month saw a concerted effort to ring as many **Manx Shearwater** chicks as possible. In spite of challenging weather conditions, over 120 individuals were ringed (including some adults), and 50 **Storm Petrels** were handled on the night of 26th/27th, again near North Light.

Rarities

An unprecedented influx of juvenile **Yellow-legged Gulls** involved up to seven individuals, including three on 5th, singles on 24th & 28th and two together in the Landing Bay on 25th. A **Great Crested Grebe** in the Landing Bay on 7th was only the seventh record for the island. Two **Balearic Shearwaters** off Rat Island on 20th turned out to be both the first and last of a very poor year for this species. As well as likely being responsible for several of the Yellow-legged Gulls, Storm Francis also brought an adult **Sabine's Gull** to the Landing Bay on 26th. The second **Melodious Warbler** of the year was found in the Terrace willows on 31st.

SEPTEMBER – Max temp 23.2C, min 8.5C, mean 14.6C. Rainfall 48.3mm

After two warm and sunny days on 1st & 2nd, the early part of the month was unsettled with areas of rain moving in from the west, interspersed with brighter showery weather. Pressure rose from 12th settling things down, though the island was enveloped in sea-fog on 15th & 16th and a relentless buffeting easterly set in for several days from 17th, taking the edge off otherwise sunny conditions. After something of a hiatus on 21st & 22nd, things turned much more unsettled and cooler again from 23rd, with rain and strong winds at times, the northerly wind on 24th gusting to 50 mph (= Force 9, Severe Gale). Winds veered to the north-east towards the end of the month, making landing conditions tricky for MS Oldenburg.

The effort to ring as many **Manx Shearwater** chicks as possible continued, with a further 126 (plus nine adults) ringed between 5th and 12th. During the murky nights of 7th & 8th a few fledgling shearwaters were disoriented by interior lighting of buildings in the Village area, some landing on

The first southbound Spotted Flycatcher of the year, Barton Field, 4th August (photo: Dean Jones).





Wheatear (Greenland/Iceland race), Paradise Row, 29th September (photo: Dean Jones).

the grass outside the Tavern, others close to the front doors of surprised island staff. Though the number of birds involved appeared to be quite low, this shows the adverse impact that artificial light can have, especially at times of peak fledging if visibility is also poor due to low cloud or sea-fog. Visiting ringer Richard Taylor was particularly startled to find a 'crash-landed' fledgling shearwater partly concealed in a narrow strip of long grass on the Beach Road, only about 50 m from the jetty, moments after stepping ashore from MS *Oldenburg* on 5th. Rich rescued the youngster from its vulnerable position, kept it in a safe, dark place during the remainder of daylight hours, then released it that night, happily none the worse for its unorthodox introduction to a lifetime of mastery of the seas and skies, spanning both northern and southern hemispheres.

Among other seabirds were **Mediterranean Gulls** on three dates in the second half of the month, a **Sandwich Tern** on 15th & 16th, single **Pomarine Skuas** off the East Side on 5th & 24th, and a handful of records of **Arctic** and **Great Skuas**.

Small numbers of waders continued to pass through, including a scattering of **Golden Plover**, **Ringed Plover**, **Whimbrel**, **Curlew**, **Turnstone**, **Dunlin**, **Green Sandpiper**, **Redshank**, **Greenshank**, **Jack Snipe** and **Snipe** – mainly ones or twos only, but a migrating flock of 16 **Snipe** flew south, high over the Terrace, on 11th and there were 13 **Golden Plovers** on 23rd.

Passerine migration was in full swing, but – with a few exceptions – characterised by a steady flow of birds rather than particularly notable falls. One exception was on 10th when an arrival of 150 **Blackcaps** and 35 **Willow Warblers** was accompanied by smaller numbers of **Chiffchaff**, **Whitethroat**, **Sedge Warbler**, **Goldcrest**, **Spotted Flycatcher** and **Tree Pipit**, plus singles of **Reed Warbler**, **Grasshopper Warbler** and **Pied Flycatcher**. The first large-scale movements of hirundines also occurred on 10th, when 3,000 **Swallows** were estimated to have passed through, along with 61 **Sand Martins** and a dozen **House Martins**. Hirundine passage remained steady for the rest of the month, before another major influx of 2,500 **Swallows** on 29th. **Wheatears** peaked at 60 on 12th, there was an arrival of 60 **Chiffchaffs** on 21st and between 40

& 50 **Blackcaps** were logged daily from 25th to 27th. The first **Lapland Buntings** of the season were flushed near Rocket Pole Pond on 12th, followed by **Snow Bunting** on 17th, **Firecrest** and **Yellow-browed Warbler** on 19th, **Brambling** on 23rd and **Redwing** on 28th. Both numbers and frequency of **Redstarts**, **Whinchats** and **Yellow Wagtails** were very low in what should be the peak month for all three of these species. Notable records included singles of **Wood Warbler** (7th), **Treecreeper** (7th to 11th) and **Hobby** (10th).

Rarities

The first **Magpie** to be seen since 1996 was briefly near the Black Shed on 5th, whilst an **Icterine Warbler** was in Millcombe the same day, and a **Marsh Warbler** spent much of the morning of 6th in St John's Valley. Lundy's first ever **Sora Rail** was found in remarkable circumstances near the Terrace Heligoland Trap on 12th (see p.49) – with a juvenile **Red-backed Shrike** seen in the same general area earlier in the day. A **Goshawk** flew in off the sea, as banks of fog rolled in, and perched briefly in VC Quarry on 15th. The first **Spotted Redshank** for a decade was seen and heard on several occasions on 16th & 17th, whilst a juvenile **Dotterel** was in South West Field on 27th. Single **Dartford Warblers** were found in the gorse near Pondsburry on 10th and by the Rocket Pole on 17th, and there was a **Wryneck** along the Terrace on 22nd.



*Marsh Warbler, St John's Valley, 6th September
(photo: Tim Jones).*

OCTOBER – Max temp 15.7C, min 7.6C, mean 11.7C. Rainfall 158.4mm

October was generally cool, dull and unsettled with frequent drizzle and showers, but also heavy, persistent rain at times, making it the island's third wettest month of the year; only February & December yielded higher totals. The 3rd went down as the UK's wettest day on record in a data series stretching back to 1891. The first fortnight was also very windy on Lundy, mainly from the west or north-west. In particular, Storm Alex made its presence felt from 2nd to 4th, with winds peaking at 54 mph (just shy of Force 10) on 4th. It was briefly much drier and more settled from 14th to 19th, with easterly then south-easterly winds under the influence of high pressure to the north and east of the UK, but winds veered back to the west from 20th. With the exception of a quiet, sunny interlude on 22nd, the rest of the month saw a return of a mobile, wet and windy pattern, with gusts reaching Force 9 or 10 on four days from 24th to 31st, including storm-force northerlies on 28th & 29th.

Bird-wise, the month kicked off in style with three **Yellow-browed Warblers**, two of which were trapped and ringed in Millcombe, the third being seen in Quarter Wall Copse. On average, this stunningly beautiful migrant from Siberian forests was recorded every other day throughout October. Increasing frequency and numbers mean that it is no longer on the list of species considered as rare in Devon.

In spite of the often rough weather, hirundines continued to battle south, both **Swallow** and **House Martin** being logged daily to 18th, after which records were more sporadic. **Swallows** reached totals between 100 and 200 on five dates to 16th, while **House Martin** totals were between 20 and 30 on four dates to 11th. There were some classic days of 'summer meets winter' migration, the species list for 12th for example featuring not only the aforementioned hirundines, alongside

LAST DATES FOR SUMMER MIGRANTS

July	23 rd	Cuckoo
August	5 th	Puffin
September	3 rd	Swift
	10 th	Reed Warbler
	20 th	Sedge Warbler
	21 st	Grasshopper Warbler
	22 nd	Yellow Wagtail
	23 rd	Spotted Flycatcher Pied Flycatcher
October	24 th	Tree Pipit
	8 th	Sandwich Tern
	12 th	Willow Warbler, Whinchat
	13 th	Sand Martin
	21 st	Wheatear
November	23 rd	Redstart
	3 rd	Whitethroat
	4 th	Garden Warbler Lesser Whitethroat
	5 th	House Martin, Ring Ouzel
December	30 th	Swallow, Blackcap
	20 th	Manx Shearwater

Note: A last date cannot be given for Chiffchaff due to the presence of overwintering birds.

FIRST DATES FOR AUTUMN MIGRANTS/WINTER VISITORS

August	8 th	Snipe
	28 th	Merlin
September	4 th	Siskin
	10 th	Lesser Redpoll
	12 th	Lapland Bunting
	17 th	Jack Snipe Snow Bunting
	19 th	Yellow-browed Warbler Firecrest
	20 th	Reed Bunting
	23 rd	Brambling
	25 th	Great Northern Diver
	28 th	Redwing
	October	8 th
12 th		Fieldfare
16 th		Woodcock
19 th		Black Redstart

Juvenile Cuckoo below the Ugly, 15th July – there was no proof of breeding by Cuckoos in 2020, this bird most likely a southbound passage migrant (photo: Dean Jones).



Willow Warbler, Whinchat and Redstart, but also **Merlin, Redwing and Fieldfare**. Other 'bread and butter' mid- to late-autumn species on the move included **Blackcap** (max 100 on 3rd), **Chiffchaff** (a rather lowly 15 on 12th), **Goldcrest** (83 on 9th), **Stonechat** (26 on 22nd), **Pied Wagtail** (10 on 3rd), **Meadow Pipit** (190 on 11th), **Linnet** (130 on 15th) and **Goldfinch** (183 on 15th). There was also a scattering of **Firecrest, Grey Wagtail, Greenfinch, Lesser Redpoll and Reed Bunting** records during the month – all single-digit counts. **Coal Tits** were logged on most days from 10th, with up to five on 15th and a long-staying individual which showed plumage features suggestive of the Irish-breeding race *hibernicus*. A male and female **Bullfinch** appeared in Millcombe on 27th, the female remaining to the end of the month.

The short spell of more settled weather and easterly winds mid-month brought excellent conditions for logging visible (and audible) early-morning migration over Millcombe and Castle Hill. For example, the thousands of birds that passed through during the three mornings of 14th to 16th reached peaks of 400 **Redwings**, 200 **Fieldfares**, 90 **Blackbirds**, 500 **Starlings** and 500 **Chaffinches**, along with smaller numbers of **Song Thrushes** (max 18), **Mistle Thrushes** (4), **Ring Ouzels** (6), **Siskins** (27), **Bramblings** (4) and a variety of scarcer species, among them small groups of **Crossbills** on both 14th & 15th.

The same settled spell brought some large aggregations of feeding gulls and other seabirds off the East Side, peaking on 17th & 18th. Highest counts during this period included 500 **Herring Gulls**, over 400 **auks** (mostly **Razorbills**), 122 **Shags**, 110 **Kittiwakes**, 93 **Common Gulls**, 30 **Great Black-backed Gulls**, 23 **Mediterranean Gulls**, 10 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** and a single **Great Skua**.

With the exception of one notable rarity (see below) it was not a vintage month for raptors, with just small numbers of **Kestrels, Sparrowhawks** and **Merlins** joining the island's resident **Peregrines**. The only owls were single **Short-eared Owls** on 8th & 22nd. Waders too were thin on the ground, with just a handful of records of one or two **Golden Plover**, plus single **Lapwing, Curlew** and **Woodcock**. The exception was 16 **Snipe** (and two **Jack Snipe**) located by 'lamping' in the in-fields on the night of 15th/16th.

Rarities

A flock of 15 **Barnacle Geese** flying low over the water past North Light on 5th was the first record of this dapper Arctic-nesting goose since 2002. Also on 5th, two **Blue Tits** were the first since 2015 and a **Snow Bunting** along the main track was the first of only five records during the month – all single birds. **Lapland Buntings** were also rather scarce, with four records of up to three birds from 7th. A **Red-breasted Flycatcher** was in Quarter Wall Copse on 6th, and two more **Barnacle Geese** were found at Pondsbyrny on 7th (staying to 11th) but were somewhat overshadowed by the appearance in Millcombe of a **White's Thrush** on the morning of 7th – only the second ever for Lundy, the first way back in Oct 1952! The thrush remained in Millcombe for almost three weeks but was shy and elusive during most of its stay. A **Dotterel** was seen and heard calling in flight over the Terrace on 11th, and a male and female **Great Spotted Woodpecker** both arrived in Millcombe on 15th, the same morning as two **Hawfinches** flew over the valley and out over the Castle towards the mainland. The 16th brought two **Woodlarks** and the month's second 'mega' in the form of a juvenile **White-tailed Eagle** from the Isle of Wight reintroduction programme – the first of its kind to be seen on Lundy for 140 years, the last one having been shot in the late 19th century. A different **Red-breasted Flycatcher** was in Quarter Wall Copse on 18th, whilst the island's sixth **Cetti's Warbler** was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 18th, as was a **Little Bunting** on 19th. Another **Woodlark** was above Benjamin's Chair on 22nd, and an *abietinus* **Chiffchaff** (confirmed subsequently by mtDNA analysis) was caught in Millcombe on 23rd. Finally, a first-year **Iceland Gull** flew past Rat Island on 28th.

NOVEMBER – Max temp 14.7C, min 5.2C, mean 10.4C. Rainfall 101.4mm

Continuing the theme of late-October, the month began mild, wet and windy, with northerly gusts of 60 mph (Force 10) on 1st & 2nd. Things turned quieter and drier from 4th as a ridge of high pressure built in and there followed several beautifully tranquil and sunny late-autumn days. Easterly, then south-easterly winds picked up from 7th, veering south-westerly on 9th, with outbreaks of rain. Another quiet, sunny day on 10th was the prelude to a further lengthy wet and windy period. Wind gusts reached Force 9 on 11th, 15th & 19th and rarely dropped below Force 7 or 8 on other days until 23rd, when quieter, much more pleasant weather saw out the month.

The 1st brought 266 **Kittiwakes** and a late dark-morph **Arctic Skua** off the East Side, as well as a notable group of 13 **Rock Pipits** at North End. The female **Bullfinch** (first seen in late-October) reappeared in Millcombe on 2nd & 3rd, the same dates that single **Black-headed Gulls** were logged. A **Black Redstart** on 3rd was followed by a flurry of up to four between 19th and 25th.

The switch to much more settled weather from 4th saw passerine migration pick up to levels not seen since mid-October. Peak day-totals during 4th to 7th included 234 **Redwings**, 128 **Blackbirds**, 69 **Fieldfares** and 35 **Song Thrushes**, alongside 950 **Chaffinches** and 4,750 **Starlings** – by far the highest counts of the autumn for the latter three species.

Following an influx of 32 on 3rd, **Blackcaps** reached double digits for the final time on 5th when 11 were logged. Alongside their more-numerous and more-seasonal relatives, an exceptionally late **Whitethroat** was photographed in Millcombe on 3rd, a **Lesser Whitethroat** was at Quarter Wall on 4th and a **Garden Warbler** was trapped and ringed in Millcombe, also on 4th. In addition, the 4th brought a **Collared Dove**, four **Mistle Thrushes** and at least six **Bramblings**, and there were 10 **Mediterranean Gulls** offshore.

A final lone **House Martin** was seen on 5th, as were four **Swallows**, but there were records of a single **Swallow** on a further ten days, up to and including 30th – an exceptionally late date for Lundy. The last **Ring Ouzel** was part of the thrush arrivals on 5th, the same day that at least seven **Woodcocks** were flushed at various places around the island, the **Bullfinch** put in a final appearance, and three **Reed Buntings** were logged. Star bird, however, was a ringtail **Hen Harrier** over Quarter Wall. A **Lapwing** was logged on 5th & 6th, with two present on 7th, and three **Golden Plovers** dropped into Brick Field on 8th, whilst four late **Manx Shearwaters**, also on 8th, were followed by a single bird on 15th.

The end of the settled spell was almost like throwing a switch and there was a mass exodus overnight on 8th/9th, with Dean Jones remarking on 9th that “today’s birding had a distinct wintry feel”. The remainder of the month was much quieter bird-wise, with only a trickle of migration continuing, but also a few notable records, including a late **Great Skua** harassing up to 180 **Kittiwakes** off the East Side on 11th & 12th, a **Yellow-browed Warbler** scouring Quarter Wall Copse for a meal on 12th, a **Common Scoter** flying past Rat Island on 12th, followed by six on 22nd, and a few **Mediterranean Gulls** and **Common Gulls** that continued to be seen off the Landing Bay. Small numbers of finches and thrushes continued to move through until the end of the month, including a notable late pulse of 76 **Chaffinches** on 26th. Single **Blackcaps** were



logged on 26th & 30th and a **Firecrest** lingered in Millcombe, alongside the long-staying *hibernicus*-type **Coal Tit**.

Rarities

A **Lapland Bunting** was on Ackland's Moor on 4th & 5th, whilst a male **Great Spotted Woodpecker** first seen on fenceposts in Barton Field on 5th had made its way down to Millcombe on 6th. Also on 5th, a **Hoopoe** made for a very unexpected, if all-too-brief, sighting from the window of Castle Cottage. Nearly as unlikely was a late **Red-throated Pipit** calling in flight over Millcombe on 13th. As Dean Jones remarked at the time: "*Not a bird you'd expect to find in a force 6/7 westerly.*" Yet both of these birds were eclipsed in Lundy rarity terms by the female **Goosander** feeding in Rocket Pole Pond on 22nd & 23rd – only the second record for the island, the last as long ago as 1934! Finally, there were single **Snow Buntings** on three dates between 13th and 22nd, a juvenile **Glaucous Gull** was roosting with **Lesser Black-backs** in lower Lighthouse Field on 14th and a small influx of four 'Siberian' *tristis* **Chiffchaffs** occurred on 26th.

DECEMBER – Max temp 12.2C, min 1.6C, mean 7.8C. Rainfall 196.3mm

The month was quite cold at first and again approaching New Year's Eve, when northerlies brought snow to some parts of the country, though not to Lundy. However, December was generally unsettled and mild, a succession of depressions bringing mainly south to south-westerly winds and frequent rainfall, making it the wettest month of the year and filling up the island's seasonal wetlands, including the marsh on Ackland's Moor. Wind speeds reached Force 9 on 16th & 19th and Force 10 on 26th & 27th.

On 1st, a vocal 'Siberian' *tristis* **Chiffchaff** was in Millcombe, a **Golden Plover** flew over the Village, and 11 **Goldfinches** were logged – a high count for this time of year on Lundy – along with a single **Siskin**. A search of the in-fields under cover of darkness that evening revealed 11 **Snipe** and three **Woodcock**. Exceptionally late **Manx Shearwaters** were seen off the Landing Bay on 11th & 16th (a single bird on both dates), a **Purple Sandpiper** was photographed along the western edge of Middle Park on 11th, single **Mediterranean Gulls** were off the East Side on 7th & 8th, with a **Common Gull** in the same area on 7th, and a **Great Northern Diver** was in the Landing Bay on 17th. One or two **Linnets** were seen on three days to 11th and the last **Skylark** of the year was a single bird on 10th. The **Firecrest** and *hibernicus*-type **Coal Tit** remained in Millcombe to the end of the month and into 2021, and two **Reed Buntings** were seen on 22nd. Other notable records included well-scattered sightings of **Black Redstart** (ones and twos), **Stonechat** (up to four) and a standard (*collybita*) **Chiffchaff** in Millcombe.

Rarities

Single **Snow Buntings** were on the main track at Quarter Wall on 6th and close to Tibbetts on 30th, and a juvenile **Glaucous Gull** was mixed in with other gulls using the in-fields on 11th & 12th. These pale into insignificance next to Martin Thorne's remarkable sighting of three **Great White Egrets** in flight off South End on 8th (see p.62) – a first for Lundy to end 2020!

Left: Mistle Thrush, Barton Field, 4th November. Below: Snow Bunting, main track, 6th December (photos: Dean Jones).



BIRDS IN 2020 – NOMENCLATURE AND SEQUENCE

The Systematic List follows The British List (9th edition, summarised version dated January 2020) maintained by the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU). Where different from the species name in common usage (e.g. Robin), the international English name applied by the BOU (in this case European Robin) is given in square brackets after the scientific name.

The numbers of birds given in the tables, where included, are primarily taken from the LFS logbook and give the monthly maxima and, in most cases, the number of days on which the species was reported. It should be noted that some of these counts may not be truly representative of the numbers of birds present and are perhaps at least partly reflective of variations in observer coverage.

ASSESSMENT OF RECORDS OF RARE BIRDS

Records of species and sub-species that are vagrants to Britain (e.g. Sora Rail, Killdeer) are assessed by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Records of species classified as 'nationally scarce migrants' or which are otherwise rare in Devon (e.g. Red-breasted Flycatcher, Marsh Warbler) are considered by the Devon Birds Records Committee (DBRC). In addition, records of 'Lundy rarities', species that are regularly encountered on the mainland but rare on the island (e.g. Mediterranean Gull, Treecreeper), are assessed by the Lundy Bird Recorders.

In all cases, records of species that are rare – whether at national, county or island level – must be accepted by the relevant committee or recorder as being adequately documented. This helps to ensure that the ornithological records kept by different bodies, including the LFS, form a coherent whole, and that high standards of assessment are shared and applied. The unpredictable nature of birdwatching means that even the most experienced and knowledgeable observers are sometimes unable to clinch the identity of a suspected rarity; perhaps it was not seen for long enough, was too far away, or the weather was too bad for crucial plumage details to be picked out. In other cases, the distinguishing features are so subtle that photographs and/or examination of the bird in the hand may be required. The assessment of a rarity record as 'not proven' should be seen in this context; it does not necessarily mean that those assessing the record think the observer was mistaken.

Observers are asked to enter supporting notes for all records of rare species in the LFS logbook (which contains guidelines on what information to provide) as soon as possible after the sighting has been made. Please take care to ensure that your name(s) and contact details are included – and legible! Photos and video-clips are especially welcome; these can be emailed to the Lundy Bird Recorders at gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk.

Keeping in touch with Lundy bird news and information

The website www.birdsoflundy.org.uk linked to the 2007 publication *The Birds of Lundy* includes updates to the species accounts up to the end of 2020. Further updates will be added as new observations continue build on the knowledge gained from almost 75 years of intensive study by the LFS.

Complementing this long-term archive is an online blog www.lundybirds.blogspot.co.uk through which visiting birdwatchers and ringers may contribute news of the latest sightings. This relies completely on voluntary contributions (text and/or captioned photos), which can be emailed to gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk.

Observers' names are included in the Systematic List for all accepted records of species that are national rarities, nationally scarce migrants and/or Lundy vagrants, as well as for some other reports of particular interest.

BIRDS SEEN DURING BOAT CROSSINGS

Sightings during boat crossings are generally only included in the main list when it is clear that the birds in question were close to the island. There is a separate listing at the end of the report for other crossing records of interest. Observers are strongly encouraged to submit records, preferably via BirdTrack, for the coastal waters of the North Devon mainland, including the Taw & Torridge Estuary, to Devon Birds (www.devonbirds.org).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the island residents and visitors, whether or not they class themselves as birdwatchers, who contribute sightings to the LFS logbook. This 2020 Lundy Bird Report (as well as other wildlife reports) is a distillation of thousands of hours of observation by many dozens of individuals.

We note once again the outstanding contribution made by Dean Woodfin Jones, the resident Lundy Warden, together with his colleagues from the island Conservation Team, both staff and volunteers.

Special thanks to Devon Birds, particularly County Bird Recorder Kevin Rylands and Data Manager Karen Sims, for providing copies of BirdTrack data and other Lundy records submitted to Devon Birds, and for working closely with us on the assessment of rarity records, which help to ensure consistency between the respective bird reports published by Devon Birds and LFS.

Others who have helped us in various ways include Chris & Carol Baillie, Zoë Barton, Sam Bosanquet, Richard Campey, Chris & Mandy Dee, James Diamond, Rob Duncan, Martin Elcoate, Chas Holt, Andy Jayne, Ivan Lakin, Pete Lambden, Philip & Helen Lymbery, Alan & Sandra Rowland, Grant Sherman, Richard & Rebecca Taylor, Tony & Ann Taylor, Martin Thorne, Andy Trout, Nik Ward, Mark & Julia Webber, Lucy Winder and Justin Zantboer.

A gathering of gulls, Brick Field, 18th February (Photo: Dean Jones).



THE BIRDS OF 2020

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Lundy vagrant.

A flock of 25 flew south past North End, low over the sea, on 5 Oct (Rosie Ellis & Hope Simpson). These were followed by two adults (thought to be a pair) that settled on and around Pondsburry from 7 to 11 Oct (Shaun Barnes, Dean Jones *et al.*), where they were often to be found either on one of the small islands or feeding on the nearby grassland. These are the first Lundy records of this Arctic-breeding goose since 2002. The flock on 5 Oct equalled the previous highest count of 25 on 3 Nov 1968.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

[Greater White-fronted Goose]

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

Three adults (or possibly two adults and a third-calendar-year individual with reduced dark barring on the belly and a less prominent white forehead blaze) were on the Airfield and adjacent parts of Ackland's Moor from 26 Jan to 8 Feb (Dean Jones *et al.*). Record accepted by DBRC.

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

[Eurasian Wigeon]

Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in autumn; occasional winter visitor.

A male was on Pondsburry on 20 Feb, followed by a pair on 23rd (Martin Thorne). A first-winter male joined Mallard and Teal on Barton Pond from 15 to 17 Oct (Tim Jones *et al.*).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Resident breeding flock of feral origin, though numbers appear to have declined in recent years; unknown numbers of wild birds occur from time to time.

The first winter period maximum was 10 on 12 Feb. Bred successfully, with ducklings recorded between 10 Apr (10 at Barton Pond and 12 on Quarters Pond) and 19 May. The highest daily count of ducklings was 24 on 11 Apr. At the end of the year, the maximum of 13 was recorded on 29 Nov and 20 & 22 Dec (in all three cases composed of 4 males & 9 females).

Maximum monthly counts of fully-grown birds

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8	10	9	5	5	5	6	6	10	11	13	13

Teal *Anas crecca*

[Eurasian Teal]

Regular migrant and winter visitor in small numbers. First breeding record in 2015, followed by successful breeding in 2016–2018, inclusive. Breeding appeared to be unsuccessful in 2019.

The highest count during the first winter and early spring period was 21 (7m & 14f) on 22 Mar. Display was seen in spring but successful breeding was only confirmed late in the season, when a female with two ducklings, thought to be about a week old, were on Pondsburry on 8 Aug (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). This suggests that earlier nesting attempts probably failed. The only double-digit count for the second winter period was 14 (5m & 9f) on 22 Dec.

Barnacle Geese, Pondsburry, 10th October (photo: Dean Jones).





Cuckoo, Halfway Wall, 27th April (photo: Dean Jones).

Max count of fully-grown birds for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
18	16	21	5	3	–	–	2	1	4	9	14
5	4	18	3	4	–	–	5	2	6	6	7

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Uncommon passage migrant.

Only recorded during autumn passage, with sightings on five dates: a male on the water close-in to North Light on 9 Aug, a female in the same area on 16 Oct, then – all off the Landing Bay or Rat Island – two males on 28 Oct, a male on 12 Nov, and six (2m & 4f) on 22 Nov.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

[Common Merganser]

Lundy vagrant.

A female fishing for Mirror Carp on Rocket Pond on 22 Nov was still present on 23rd (Dean Jones). This was only the second record of this saw-billed duck for Lundy, the first seen 86 years previously, by Felix Gade, on 17 Dec 1934.

Swift *Apus apus*

[Common Swift]

Common spring and autumn migrant and non-breeding summer visitor, though generally in small numbers.

Recorded between 19 Apr (one over the sidelands near the Battery) and 3 Sep (one). Higher counts included 43 on 23 Jun, 62 on 25 Jun, 40 on 11 Jul, 28 on 21 Jul and 18 on 1 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	3	10	62	40	13	18	–	–	–
–	–	–	4	16	8	10	4	2	–	–	–

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

[Common Cuckoo]

Uncommon and declining spring and autumn migrant; probably bred regularly in the past; breeding confirmed just twice since 1999 (in 2007 and 2012).

Single birds were recorded on 16 dates, from 18 Apr (along the Terrace) to 23 Jul. Both males and females were seen in May, so it is possible that breeding occurred. A juvenile was seen below the Ugly on 15 Jul, but nothing hinted at it being a Lundy-reared individual as opposed to a dispersing/passage bird from the mainland.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	1	1	1	1	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	3	7	3	3	–	–	–	–	–

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Common visitor in small numbers, mainly from spring until autumn, the great majority of those reaching Lundy being lost and/or tired racing pigeons.

Unusually few were recorded in 2020, presumably as a result of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions reducing the number and size of pigeon-racing events. The only double-digit count was of 10 on 12 Sep.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Uncommon but regular spring and autumn migrant.

In spring, single birds were seen on four dates from 3 to 22 Mar – including, on 8th, one perched on the Church Tower. The only subsequent record was of a late autumn migrant in Tillage Field on 1 Dec.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

[Common Wood Pigeon]

Probably breeds in most years; spring and autumn migrant in small numbers, with occasional larger influxes; sporadic in winter.

Although ones and twos were logged intermittently throughout Jan, none was seen in Feb and it appears that the island's small breeding population did not arrive until Mar (e.g. six on 5th). One was perched, incongruously, on Goat Island on 3 Mar. The highest counts of the year were 16 on 18 May and 13 on 22 Sep. There were only five other double-digit counts. Successful breeding by a pair in the tree-planting enclosure below Government House was confirmed when fledglings were seen in Millcombe on 19 Jun (Dean Jones).

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	–	10	8	16	8	10	7	13	4	1	1
8	–	20	25	29	25	20	23	27	7	15	2

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

[European Turtle Dove]

Increasingly scarce migrant; now occasional in very small numbers in spring but rare in autumn.

A singing male in Millcombe on 7 May (Dean Jones) was sadly the only record for the year.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

[Eurasian Collared Dove]

Regular migrant, usually in small numbers, especially in spring; summer resident in some years; has both bred and overwintered, though not recently.

During spring migration there were records on 25 dates between 7 Apr (one in Millcombe) and 25 Jun (two), with a maximum of four on 8 May, and also including one with a Woodpigeon at Aztec Bay on 15 May. A single bird turned up on 20 & 21 Jul, whilst autumn migrants were limited to two birds on three dates 17-22 Sep and one on 4 Nov.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	1	4	2	1	–	2	–	1	–
–	–	–	2	17	6	2	–	3	–	1	–

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers; bred annually 2007 to 2013 and in 2015 & 2019; no proof of breeding in 2014 or 2016–2018.

Writing in the LFS logbook on 17 Feb, Dean Jones commented: "Water Rail on my front doormat this evening (Pig's 4). Poor wee dote must have been trying to escape the winds." Although adults were seen and heard during the spring, including one calling from Quarter Wall Copse tree nursery on 26 May, successful breeding was only confirmed when persistent calls of at least one chick were heard from an extensive area of dense juncus cover just west of the intersection of Quarter Wall and 'Pointless Wall' (the incomplete wall that is bisected by the Airfield) on 11 Aug (Tim Jones). The highest autumn-passage count was five on 11 & 13 Oct, with most of these in Millcombe.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	1	4	2	2	1	–	1	2	5	4	2
5	2	12	23	17	2	–	1	8	25	17	7



Lundy's first Sora Rail, Terrace, 12th September (photo: Dean Jones).

Sora Rail *Porzana carolina*

[Sora]

British vagrant. Not previously recorded on Lundy.

A clearly tired but otherwise apparently healthy juvenile was captured by hand as it clambered through brambles near the Terrace Heligoland trap during the late afternoon of 12 Sep. It was seen again at around 11:30 hrs the next morning by visitors Sandie & Mark West along the Lower East Side Path, closer to Quarter Wall Copse than to the Terrace. It was also seen later that day, at around 16:00 hrs, by Conservation Team volunteer Ben Hanson, this time back on the Terrace. There was no sign of the bird on 14th or subsequently. Record accepted by BBRC.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

[Common Moorhen]

Lundy vagrant.

A passing nocturnal migrant was recorded calling in flight at 21:40 hrs on the night of 16-17 Oct (Tim Jones) – the first island record since Feb 2009.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Lundy vagrant.

One was in the Landing Bay, close to Rat Island, where it was seen from the jetty and from *Obsession II*, on the afternoon of 7 Aug (Jamie Dunning & Rosie Ellis). This is only the seventh record for the island; the most recent previous occurrences being in Feb 2017 and Sep 2003.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

[Eurasian Oystercatcher]

Common breeder and passage migrant; recorded throughout the year but scarcer in late autumn and winter.

Numbers built up in late winter and early spring as the island's breeding Oystercatchers returned to take up their territories. A ringed bird was seen within a group of seven below Millcombe on 19 Feb – a metal ring on the left leg and yellow over white colour-rings on the right leg (Martin Thorne). A minimum of 15 pairs bred (Dean Jones). The highest count of the year was about 60 using the high-tide roost at Brazen Ward on 26 Jul (Josh Harris), likely including staging passage migrants in addition to post-breeding aggregations of Lundy-nesting birds.

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
12	12	20	15	28	31	60	20	12	15	8	3

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

[Northern Lapwing]

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

The only spring-passage record was of a single bird on Ackland's Moor from 19 to 25 Mar (Dean Jones). In autumn there were singles near the Old Hospital on 15 Oct (Jamie Dunning) and in High Street Field on 6 & 7 Nov, followed by two there on 8 Nov (Dean Jones).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

[European Golden Plover]

Regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; irregular winter visitor.

Not recorded during the first winter period. The only spring migrants were singles on the Airfield on 20 May and in Middle Park on 9 Jun. In autumn there were records on 24 dates between 10 Aug (one over South End) and 8 Nov (three), with a max of 13 on 23 Sep. The only later occurrences were single birds on 1 & 25 Dec.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	–	1	1	–	1	13	2	3	1
–	–	–	–	1	1	–	1	11	9	3	2

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

[Common Ringed Plover]

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; occasional winter records.

During spring passage, the only records were of single birds on 8, 16 & 22 Apr and two at South West Point on 13 May. Autumn migrants – most of which were calling 'fly-overs' – were recorded on 13 dates from 1 Aug to 30 Sep. Most of these were again single birds, but there were two on 6, 9 & 12 Sep and three on 10 Sep.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus**British vagrant. Not previously recorded on Lundy.*

One was found near Stoneycroft during the late afternoon of 16 Mar (Neil Trout). The following is a transcript of Neil's entry in the LFS logbook: "16.20 to 16.40 hrs. Initially in Stoneycroft Meadow but flew to temporary pond on Ackland's Moor, beyond water tanks. From distance, thought to be a Ringed Plover but closer inspection allowed the following notes to be recorded: Bulky plover, larger than Ringed Plover with longer tail. Double wide, black breast bands with lower part of lower breast band more mottled. White breast band between the 2 black bands was a brighter white than the belly. Upperparts mid-brown to greyish brown. Legs greyish flesh. Bill black with length of half the head width. White supercilium flaring towards rear of ear coverts. White on lores extending onto side of face. Dark eye with thick black line between eyes, over loreal area. White collar broadening onto chin and upper breast. Call a 'Klee-oo'. Flight details too brief to note anything. 10x40 binoculars, down to 30 yards."

The following day (17th), Assistant Lundy Warden Rosie Ellis reported that the island plateau was shrouded in claggy low cloud, with "shockingly poor visibility" and the bird was not seen by those out peering through the murk (in spite of rumours on social media to the contrary). Neil's initial sighting therefore turned out to be both the first and the last. Record accepted by BBRC. There have been two previous BBRC-accepted records in Devon, and about three further historical (pre-BBRC) Devon records.

Two of the six Dunlin in South West Field, 16th April (photo: Dean Jones).



Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

[Eurasian Dotterel]

Uncommon but virtually annual spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; Devon rarity.

There were two records of single birds during autumn passage. A juvenile was photographed in South West Field by Lundy Ranger Matt Stritch during the late afternoon of 27 Sep. One seen and heard calling in flight over the Terrace on 11 Oct appeared to come down in the vicinity of Quarry Cottages or Brick Field but could not be relocated (Zoë Barton, Dean Jones). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus**Regular spring and autumn migrant in small and declining numbers.*

Spring migrants were recorded on 23 dates from 15 Apr (one below North Light) until 30 May (one), with maxima of 10 on 28 Apr and 11 on 30 Apr. Autumn passage was typically sparse, with single birds on 19 & 29 Jul, followed by two on 5 Aug and 2 Sep.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

[Eurasian Curlew]

Increasingly uncommon spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; occasional winter visitor; formerly bred (up to 1973) and was also a common passage migrant.

The table tells another chapter in the sorry tale of this species of global conservation concern, with records on just seven dates during the year (23 Apr; 16, 22, 24 & 27 Jul; 14 Sep and 17 Oct), all involving single birds only.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-
-	-	-	1	-	-	4	-	1	1	-	-

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

[Ruddy Turnstone]

Increasingly uncommon spring and autumn migrant and rare winter visitor.

There were just three late-summer and early-autumn records, all of birds seen and heard calling in flight: one off North Light on 9 Aug (Tim Davis & Tim Jones) and single birds over the Village on both 1 Sep (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones) and 15 Sep (Dean Jones).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina**Regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; apparent decline in recent years; very rare in winter.*

In spring there were six in South West Field on 16 Apr and 4 May, followed by two on 6 May and one on 7th. Autumn-passage migrants were logged on 13 dates from 19 Jul to 20 Sep, with all records involving ones and twos only.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	-	6	6	-	1	2	2	-	-	-
-	-	-	1	3	-	1	3	9	-	-	-

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima**Rare spring and autumn migrant; very rare in winter.*

Four were on rocks in the Devil's Kitchen/Hell's Gates area on 16 Feb, followed by two in the same general location on 19th, then two at Gannets' Bay on 23rd (all records Martin Thorne). During the second winter period one was photographed (very unusually) on grassland on the West Side on 11 Dec (Jonny Morgan).

*Purple Sandpiper, Rat Island, 16th February
(photo: Martin Thorne).*



Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

[Eurasian Woodcock]

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers, mainly October to March.

During the first winter period and spring passage there were records of ones and twos on seven dates from 18 Jan to 31 Mar (the latter involving an unfortunate individual that was flushed from next to the Upper East Side Path above White Beach by escaped Highland Cattle, straight into the talons of a female Peregrine...). Following the first autumn migrant – a single bird on 16 Oct – Woodcocks were logged on a further nine dates to the end of the year (the last being two on 3 Dec), with a notable influx of seven on 5 Nov, following a clear night with light easterly winds.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	7	3
2	1	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	6	2

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtes minimus**Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, mainly late September to March.*

One was flushed from the side of the track between Rocket Pole Pond and South West Point on 7 Apr (Dean Jones). One was flushed on Ackland's Moor on 17 Sep (Richard Campey). Two were located by torchlight during nocturnal searches of the farm in-fields during the evenings of 15 & 16 Oct (Jamie Dunning & Dean Jones). Finally, there were singles at Pondsburry on 19 & 22 Dec (Neil Trout) and by Quarter Wall on 31 Dec (S. Aggot).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

[Common Snipe]

Common passage migrant and winter visitor, generally in small numbers; occasional hard-weather influxes.

Numbers logged were low during the first winter period and early spring, with a maximum of six on 3 Mar. The final sighting of spring was one on 14 Apr. In autumn, returning passage migrants were noted from 8 Aug (one flushed by a Grey Heron on Pondsburry), with numbers peaking at 16 on 11 Sep when a flock flew south high above the Terrace, and again on 15 Oct when most were picked out by torchlight during an evening search of the farm in-fields.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	2	6	1	–	–	–	3	16	16	3	11
3	4	7	2	–	–	–	4	14	10	7	7

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

[Red Phalarope]

Nationally scarce migrant.

The fresh corpse of an adult was found along the Lower East Side Path above White Beach on 11 Feb (Mr & Mrs Vincent *per* Dean Jones). This followed a period of Atlantic gales when winds reached 70 mph on 9 Feb as Storm Ciara bore down on the island. It seems probable the bird was a victim of weather-related exhaustion and starvation. Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos**Regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers (though the abundance of hard-to-view shoreline habitat must mean that many are missed); very rare in winter.*

During spring passage there were singles on the Beach Road on 26 Apr and calling from White Beach on 29th, followed by two feeding on the edge of the Landing Bay on 9 May. Autumn migrants comprised recordings of flight calls from near Brambles on the nights of 8/9 & 9/10 Aug (Tim Jones) and two calling to each other in the darkness near North Light at 03:00 hrs on the night of 26/27 Aug (Dean Jones).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus**Rare spring migrant; uncommon autumn migrant.*

Single southbound migrants were logged on seven dates in late summer and early autumn: 20 & 30 Jul, 8, 9 & 31 Aug and 2 & 23 Sep. Of these, the individuals on 30 Jul and 8 & 9 Aug were detected by 'nocmiggling' – the deployment of digital sound-recording equipment to capture nocturnal flight calls of migrant birds (Jamie Dunning, Tim Jones).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

[Common Redshank]

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.

Two were on Rat Island on 29 Jul (Dean Jones), one flew from near the Jetty and around Rat Island on 1 Sep (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones) and one heard calling from below the Terrace on 15 Sep was eventually glimpsed on Quarry Beach (Richard Campey).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus**Rare autumn migrant.*

A calling bird flew high over Quarter Wall and Ackland's Moor during the late afternoon of 16 Sep (Dean Jones). It was still present on 17th when it was heard and seen in flight over the Airfield and later near Pondsburry (Richard Campey).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

[Common Greenshank]

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.

Flight calls of a single bird were heard from the Tavern Garden, in the direction of South West Field, on 11 Aug (Tim Davis). One was calling in flight, low past the Old Light Manx Shearwater colony when nestboxes were being checked, on 24 Aug (Rosie Ellis & Dean Jones). One calling in flight over the mouth of Millcombe during the morning of 6 Sep was later found roosting on the north shore of Pondsburry (Tim Jones *et al.*).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

[Black-legged Kittiwake]

Common but declining breeding species; large flocks may occur offshore outside the breeding season.

The peak counts during the first winter period – and indeed the year – came at the end of Jan when there were 1,499 on 27th, 1,570 on 28th and a massive 2,766 on 29th, all birds feeding in large flocks off the East Side. There were further high counts of between 1,200 and 1,500 on four dates from 26 Feb to 6 Mar. The only four-digit count logged during the autumn and second winter period was 1,000 on 27 Oct, again involving flocks feeding off the East Side. An all-island count of cliff-nesting seabirds on 16 Jun yielded a total of 242 adult birds, whilst the total number of nests located during the season was 308 – a reduction of 41 on the 2019 total. The first egg was seen at the Threequarter Wall Buttress colony on 15 May, whilst the first chicks were logged here and at the Aztec Bay colony on 13 Jun – although the great majority of adults were still incubating in mid-Jun. By the end of the month, 105 nests within the productivity study plots contained chicks. The first fledging was observed on 19 Jul. Final analyses showed that a total of 101 chicks fledged from the combined total of 152 apparently occupied nests (aon) at the Aztec Bay colony (124 aon) and Threequarter Wall Buttress colony (28 aon), representing 0.66 chicks fledged per active nest. Although this was higher than for any of the three previous seasons (0.59 in 2019, 0.46 in 2018 and 0.38 in 2017), quite a number of nests sited lower down the cliffs were lost due to storm-swell during unseasonable periods of westerly gales, with other losses resulting from predation by gulls, or falling from over-crowded and crumbling nests (Dean Jones).



Kittiwake with the first chick of the year, Jenny's Cove, 13th June (photo: Dean Jones).

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2,766	1,316	1,500	150	330	242	460	197	210	1,000	266	150

*There was no full breeding census in 2020 and the breeding-season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not necessarily representative of the breeding population as a whole.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

Nationally scarce migrant.

An adult in the Landing Bay on 26 Aug (Bart Donato, Tim Frayling & Dean Jones) was the first Lundy record of this delightful Arctic-breeding gull since Sep 1997 and only the fifth ever for the island. Its arrival followed in the wake of a deep depression that was centred over the Irish Sea at noon on 25 Aug, with severe westerly gales affecting Lundy. Record accepted by DBRC.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Uncommon visitor throughout the year, mainly July to October; occasional cold-weather influxes.

The significant increase in regular seawatching, especially during the late-autumn and winter months, thanks to the presence of a resident ornithologist in the form of Warden Dean Jones, has led to greatly improved information on the current status of the three scarcer small gulls in Lundy waters (namely Black-headed, Mediterranean and Common Gulls). In 2020, Black-headed was by far the least regular and least numerous of the three, with records on just 16 dates, compared with 50 for Mediterranean Gull and 48 for Common Gull, whilst the maximum counts for the three species were six, 29 and 93, respectively. The last Black-headed Gull of winter and early spring was an adult foraging in the Landing Bay on 27 Mar, whilst the first post-breeding bird was not logged until 4 Aug. The peak of six was on 5 Oct (all in the Landing Bay and off the East Side).

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	1	1	–	–	–	–	2	–	6	1	–
1	2	1	–	–	–	–	4	–	4	4	–

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Lundy vagrant.

A first-winter bird was first seen foraging off the Terrace on 19 Jan. What was thought to be the same individual was then off the East Side on 28 Jan, closer in to the Landing Bay on 12 Feb, with foraging Kittiwakes off the southern tide race on 18 & 23 Feb, and then in the Landing Bay again on 26 Feb. An adult was in the Landing Bay, feeding with a small group of gulls just below the Ugly, on 19 Feb, close to the first-winter Little Gull in the southern tide race on 23 Feb, and again with the first-winter bird in the Landing Bay on 26 Feb (Dean Jones). These are the 8th & 9th LFS records.



1st-winter Mediterranean Gull off the Jetty,
8th December (photo: Martin Thorne).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

Uncommon but increasingly regular non-breeding visitor.

In just a few years the status of Mediterranean Gull in Lundy waters has transformed from that of extreme rarity to regular visitor. As noted in the account for Black-headed Gull (above), this is undoubtedly due in part to improved seawatching coverage throughout the year. However, continued expansion in range and numbers of European and British 'Med Gull' populations is probably the most significant driver of change. In 2020, the highest count during the first winter period was 14 on 25 Jan, whilst the last of the season was a single adult off the Landing bay on 7 Apr. In the latter part of the year there were records on 28 dates from 20 Aug (two juveniles) to 8 Dec (one), with a maximum of 29 on 20 Oct. The wings only of a first-winter bird were found on the cliff-tops above Long Roost on 19 Sep (Sam Bosanquet).

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
14	4	2	1	–	–	–	2	3	29	10	1
13	2	6	1	–	–	–	1	3	11	11	2

Common Gull *Larus canus*

[Mew Gull]

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; mainly September to April.

Recorded on 26 dates in the first winter period, with a maximum of 32 along the east coast on 24 Jan. The last of the season were eight on 31 Mar. The second winter period brought records on a further 22 dates, the first of these a single bird on 5 Oct, with a maximum of 93 on 18 Oct. See the Black-headed Gull account above for comments on improved information of the status of smaller gulls in Lundy waters.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
32	10	14	–	–	–	–	–	–	93	15	1
12	6	8	–	–	–	–	–	–	9	12	1

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus**Breeds; present in all months, but fewer in winter.*

A fourth-calendar-year bird wearing a red darvic colour-ring was seen at Ponsbury on 6 Apr but it was too distant for any inscription to be seen (Dean Jones). It appears highly likely that this individual had been ringed on the Pembrokeshire island of Skokholm, although there is an Irish scheme that also uses red colour-rings. An adult was incubating eggs on a nest below the Earthquake on 22 Apr. An all-island count of cliff-nesting seabirds on 16 Jun yielded a total of 62 adult birds. Chicks from a nest at North East Point were close to fledging on 10 Jul.

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
29	22	36	34	48	62	10	15	20	30	7	23

*There was no breeding census in 2020 and the breeding-season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not necessarily representative of the breeding population as a whole.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus**Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.*

An exceptional year by Lundy standards, with an unprecedented series of multiple sightings involving at least four individuals. A first-winter bird was in the Brick Field, Tillage Field and Ackland's Moor marsh area from 20 Feb to 1 Mar (Dean Jones). An adult on Ponsbury on 5 Mar flew off in the direction of Jenny's Cove (Tim Davis, Dean Jones, Tim Jones). A first-winter bird at Jenny's Cove on 14 Mar was potentially the same individual seen in late Feb but also seems quite likely to have been a different bird (Dean Jones). A first-year bird was in Lower Lighthouse Field, roosting with a flock of Lesser Black-backed Gulls, on 14 Nov (Dean Jones). Finally, another first-winter bird on 11 & 12 Dec was first seen in Tillage Field (Dean Jones, Martin Thorne). These are the sixth to ninth records for the island, including the first for both Feb and Mar. Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.



Immature Glaucous Gull, Brick Field, 26th February (photo: Dean Jones).

Iceland Gull *Larus galuoides**Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.*

Seen from Hammers, a first-winter bird was watched flying past Rat Island on 28 Oct (Rob Duncan, Dan, Ellie & Justin Zantboer). A first-winter bird – potentially the same as that seen in late Oct – was over Quarry Beach on 4 Nov (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

[European Herring Gull]

Common but declining breeding species; present all year, and though generally fewer in winter there may be significant influxes during storms and cold snaps.

An exceptional concentration of at least 1,500 were feeding off the East Side with Kittiwakes and other seabirds on 2 Mar. Adults were incubating eggs below the Earthquake on 22 Apr. An all-island count of cliff-nesting seabirds on 16 Jun yielded a total of 602 adult birds, whilst the first fledglings were seen at Jenny's Cove on 10 Jul (Dean Jones). It was generally a poor year for the island's three breeding large-gull species, with very few fledged young seen.

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
470	447	1,500	470	415	602	150	105	26	500	214	334

*There was no breeding census in 2020 and the breeding-season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not necessarily representative of the breeding population as a whole, particularly for May & Jul.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Lundy vagrant.

Increased year-round attention to gulls on Lundy, greater awareness among birders of key identification features for juveniles and immatures, and growing numbers of Yellow-legged Gulls reaching south-west Britain (particularly in late summer) combined to make 2020 an exceptional year for this species on the island. A third-calendar-year (= second-winter) bird in Tillage Field on 18 Feb and around Ackland's Moor marsh on 19th (Dean Jones) was only the second record for the island, the previous occurrence being as far back as May 1999. Aug saw an unprecedented influx of juveniles, involving up to seven individuals, including three that arrived in the wake of south-westerly storms on 5th. Of these, one was seen from the Ugly during a morning seawatch (Dean Jones); the other two were moving along the west coast in the evening (Jamie Dunning). Later in the month there were single juveniles on 24th & 28th (Dean Jones) and two together in the Landing Bay on 25th, sheltering from Storm Francis (Dean Jones).



Second-winter Yellow-legged Gull over the Tillage Field, 18th February (photo: Dean Jones)

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Common but declining breeding species; common passage migrant; generally uncommon in winter.

Adult birds were incubating eggs in the small colony above Miller's Cake on 12 May. An all-island count of cliff-nesting seabirds on 16 Jun yielded a total of just 145 adult birds (Dean Jones).

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
52	37	61	110	141	145	45	33	20	10	24	10

*There was no breeding census in 2020 and the breeding-season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not necessarily representative of the breeding population as a whole, particularly for May & Jul.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Uncommon passage migrant April to October.

Single birds were in the Landing Bay on 6, 10 & 16 Apr (Dean Jones); the bird on 6th perched on one of the mooring buoys. There were three scattered late-summer and autumn records: two off North Light during a seawatch on 20 Aug (Dean Jones); one off the East Side on 15 & 16 Sep (Richard Campey); and one from MS *Oldenburg* on 8 Oct about 15 minutes out from the island (Alison & Nick Blinston).

'Commic Tern' unidentified Common or Arctic Tern *Sterna hirundo* or *S. paradisaea*

Two were off the East Side on 5 Sep (Tim Jones), followed by one in the Landing Bay on 24 Sep (Dean Jones).

Great Skua (Bonxie) *Stercorarius skua*

Rare spring migrant and uncommon autumn migrant; has occurred in winter.

Not recorded during the first seven months of the year. There were autumn-passage records on 10 dates from 1 Aug to 12 Nov. Most were single birds but there were two on both 26 Sep and 28 Oct. All but one were off the East Side – frequently harassing feeding Kittiwakes and other gulls – and picked out from various vantage points including the Ugly and the Terrace. The exception was one off the West Side on 26 Sep.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

[Pomarine Jaeger]

Rare spring migrant and uncommon autumn migrant; has occurred in winter. Devon rarity.

One seen from MS *Oldenburg* a few minutes out from arrival in the Landing Bay on 5 Sep (Shaun Robson *et al.*) A pale-morph adult was seen in the Landing Bay during a seawatch from the Ugly on 24 Sep (Dean Jones).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

[Parasitic Jaeger]

Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

There were just four records, all in autumn, involving nine birds. Three dark-morph birds were off the Landing Bay on 26 Aug (Dean Jones). Two were kleptoparasitising Kittiwakes off the Landing Bay on 5 Sep, followed by three (one pale, one dark and one intermediate morph) in the same area on 7 Sep (Tim Jones, Shaun Robson *et al.*). A dark-morph bird was off the East Side on 1 Nov (Andy Jayne).

Unidentified skua species *Stercorarius* sp.

One off the Landing Bay on 7 Dec (Martin Thorne) was thought possibly to be a Pomarine Skua – probably the most likely species in Lundy waters on such a late date.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

[Common Guillemot, Common Murre]

Common and increasing breeder, though still in smaller numbers than formerly; uncommon from August to October, then sporadic visitor in highly variable numbers to breeding ledges during late autumn and winter.

Many were occupying the breeding ledges on 18 Jan, including 649 at Jenny's Cove, 226 at St Mark's Stone and 402 at Aztec Bay. The first chicks within the productivity study colony at St Mark's Stone were seen on 1 Jun, when an estimated 200 birds were continuing to incubate eggs. By 12 Jun a similar number of adults were looking after chicks and the majority of young had 'jumped' from the ledges by the end of the month. Overall productivity was good for the study colony: 165 chicks 'fledged' from 217 breeding pairs, representing 0.76 chicks per pair (*cf.* 0.69 in 2019 and 0.65 in 2018). The average number of adults at this site has increased six-fold since 1981, most likely as a result of the eradication of rats. An all-island count of cliff-nesting seabirds on 16 Jun yielded a total of 8,252 adult Guillemots (Dean Jones). Colour-ringed individual 'red 0114' (red ring with white numbering), originally marked on the Pembrokeshire island of Skomer in Jul 2013, was seen again in Jenny's Cove, occupying almost exactly the same spot on the breeding ledges as in 2019. First observed on 1 May, it was incubating an egg on 13 May & 4 Jun, then provisioning a chick on 13 Jun, rearing it successfully to the jumping stage (Dean Jones). Departure from the colonies was almost complete by mid-Jul; some 2,033 were counted between Jenny's Cove and Aztec Bay on 10 Jul, but only 64 were still present along the same stretch of coast on 19th.

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1,277	200	2,000	3,500	7,637	8,252	2,274	5	12	1**	4**	7**

*There was no full breeding census in 2020 and the breeding season counts included in the table are not representative of the breeding population as a whole. **From mid-Oct to the end of the year, up to 500 unidentified auks were periodically counted offshore; these will doubtless have comprised a mix of both Guillemots and Razorbills.



Razorbill, Aztec Bay, 20th June (photo: Dean Jones).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Common and increasing breeder, though still in smaller numbers than formerly; uncommon between August and February.

An all-island count of cliff-nesting seabirds on 16 Jun yielded a total of 2,177 adult birds. The majority of chicks had departed the breeding colonies around Jenny's Cove by the end of Jun (Dean Jones).

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
231	800	623	2,000	2,384	2,177	533	–	32	410	14**	70**

*There was no full breeding census in 2020 and the breeding season counts included in the table are not representative of the breeding population as a whole. **In Nov & Dec, up to 500 unidentified auks were periodically counted offshore; these will doubtless have comprised a mix of both Razorbills and Guillemots.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

[Atlantic Puffin]

Common and gradually increasing breeding species; formerly bred in considerably larger numbers; very rare between mid-August and early March.

The first of the year were 32 (28 at Jenny's Cove – of which eight were on land and 20 on the water – and four at St Philip's Stone) on 11 Mar. Numbers had reached 184 by 1 Apr and many were gathering nest material at Jenny's Cove on 23 Apr. Adults were first seen delivering fish to burrows in Jenny's Cove on 25 May, and over 70 burrows within the productivity study slope were being provisioned by 11 Jun. Final analysis showed that productivity was once again on the low side, with 133 chicks reared to 'fledging' from 261 apparently occupied burrows, representing 0.51 chicks per burrow (Dean Jones). An all-island count of cliff-nesting seabirds on 16 Jun yielded a total of 400 adult birds (Dean Jones), whilst the usual late-season peak of 402 was recorded on 1 Jul – the same date that the first 'puffling' was seen emerging from its burrow. The last of the year, a single bird, was seen off Rat Island on 5 Aug.

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	37	184	397	400	402	1	–	–	–	–

*There was no full breeding census in 2020 and the breeding season counts included in the table do not necessarily reflect the total breeding population.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

[Red-throated Loon]

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

During the first winter period and early spring, recorded on 33 dates from 3 Jan (one) to 1 Apr (two). Both frequency and numbers peaked in Jan, with a maximum of 28 on 24th, and six other double-digit counts between 19th & 27th. The Feb & Mar maxima were seven on 8th and nine on 5th, respectively. There were no records during the autumn or second winter period.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

[Arctic Loon]

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

One was off the East Side on 23 Jan (Dean Jones). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

[Common Loon]

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers, mainly October to March.

During the first winter period and early spring, recorded on 44 dates from New Year's Day to 12 Apr, with a maximum of at least six on 17 Feb in ones and twos along the East Side between Quarry Beach and Rat Island (Martin Thorne). There were two late-spring records – both involving single birds, perhaps one and the same individual – on 19 & 24 May. During the autumn and second winter period, recorded on only 15 dates from 25 Sep (one, in full breeding plumage still, flying north off the east coast) to 28 Dec, including a maximum of three on 27 Dec.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	6	2	1	1	–	–	–	1	1	2	3
12	17	8	7	2	–	–	–	1	4	7	3

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

[European Storm Petrel]

Uncommon passage migrant; apparently increasing numbers during the breeding season; size of the breeding population unknown.

During the night of 16/17 Jul, 35 individuals were mist-netted near North Light. These included 31 new birds, three Lundy-ringed retraps, and one bird that had been ringed in North Wales in 2012 (Dean Jones & Jamie Dunning). Singles were over the tide race south of Rat Island on 25 Jul (Jamie Dunning) & 5 Aug (Dean Jones). At least six were calling from crevices in and immediately above the wall of Brazen Ward on the night of 3/4 Aug (Eleanor & Josh Harris). During the night of 7/8 Aug, ones and twos were seen at Jenny's Cove, the west end of Quarter Wall, between The Battery and Old Light, and at Pilot's Quay (Josh Harris). Another ringing session at North Light on the night of 10/11 Aug, led by Chris Dee, resulted in the trapping of 23 individuals, of which 18 were new, four had been ringed on Lundy in 2018 (two individuals), 2019 (one) and earlier in 2020 (one), whilst one had been ringed on Skokholm only a couple of weeks earlier, on 13 Jul. A number of the birds caught (all without the use of tape-luring) showed evidently full crops and were almost certainly feeding chicks in the vicinity. Finally, a further 50 birds were trapped at North Light on the night of 26/27 Aug (Tim Frayling, Dean Jones *et al.*). Among these were 30 new birds, 17 Lundy-ringed retraps, two individuals ringed on Skokholm in 2019 and 2020 (the latter the bird captured on Lundy on 10/11 Aug) and one ringed at Annagh Head, Co. Mayo, Ireland in 2014. See also *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.88.

Tony Taylor adds: "In the three ringing sessions near North Light in Jul & Aug, a record 79 Storm Petrels were newly ringed and 29 other birds were recaptured. Four of these had been ringed elsewhere. While large numbers of non-breeding birds wander between colonies, there was plenty of evidence among the recaptures that a significant proportion of them are faithful to the catching area. Some were recaptured on more than one of the 2020 visits, and 16 had also been captured several times over the previous three years. The evidence all points towards a growing breeding population on Lundy."

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

[Northern Fulmar]

Common breeder; recorded in all months, mainly from January to September.

The highest pre-breeding count was 228 on 18 Jan. During the peak of the egg-laying and incubation periods there were two identical all-island counts of 191 adults on 30 May and 16 Jun. The first chicks were seen at Jenny's Cove on 6 Jul. In spite of good attendance at the breeding colony on the north-facing side of Gannets' Rock early in the season, the number of actual breeding attempts and overall success were again rather low, with 17 chicks fledging from 36 apparently occupied sites, a productivity value of 0.48 (cf. 0.48 in 2019; 0.39 in 2018). During the post-breeding moult, which takes place at sea, there were just six scattered records, all involving low single-digit counts, between mid-Sep and mid-Nov. The first significant number of the 'new' season was 48 on 22 Nov.

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
228	47	52	78	191	191	133	46**	40	1	48	2

*There was no full island breeding census in 2020 and the breeding season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not representative of the breeding population as a whole.

**Including 11 chicks.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Common breeder and passage migrant; usually seen from March to September; occasional records in October/November.

Many were heard coming into the island on the evening of 24 Mar and 82 were counted passing Rat Island in 30 minutes at 07:00 hrs on 5 Apr. Adults were incubating eggs in several of the LFS/RSPB-installed nestboxes in the Old Light colony on 14 May. These included bird EA10081 which has been using the same box since 2017. Checks on 11 Jul showed that of seven breeding attempts in the boxes, all were still active, with each box holding either a young chick or an adult continuing to incubate (Dean Jones). By far the highest counts of the year were 4,000 on 7 Jul, followed by 2,677 on 5 Aug and 2,542 on 20 Aug. There were no other four-digit counts. Following the departure of most breeding birds in Sep, a calling bird was recorded at night on 16/17 Oct and there were several unusually late records, including four on 8 Nov, one on 15 Nov and two on 11 & 16 Dec. Two Lundy-ringed adult shearwaters were reported from Bardsey and Skokholm during the year, while two chicks ringed on Lundy in late Aug in 2019 and 2020, respectively, were both found dead on the coast of Brazil in Oct 2020 (see also *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.88).

Tony Taylor has provided the following update on the long-running ringing study of the island's shearwaters: "*In late Aug and early Sep, two weeks were spent ringing Manx Shearwaters at night. A few further birds were caught earlier and later in the year, including during checks on nestboxes. In all, 67 adults were newly ringed and 27 birds ringed in previous years were recaptured. The number of chicks ringed was 245, along with seven other young birds that were in the process of fledging. Four of these fledglings were found in the village, probably after being attracted to artificial light in weather conditions that made orientation difficult during their first flights. A fifth fledgling was recaptured in the same circumstances, three days after it had been ringed as a chick below Sunset Buttress. The most significant of the recaptured adults included three originally ringed as adults in 2008, 2010 and 2011, and three ringed as chicks, two in 2013 and one in 2016. The nestboxes also provided valuable data, with five chicks reaching ringing age in them, from a record seven eggs laid. Of the parent birds, seven had been ringed in previous years and all were occupying the same boxes as before.*"

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	h*	82	16	100	4,000	2,677	24	2	4	4

*many heard at night

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Scarce autumn visitor and passage migrant.

Two flying west past Rat Island were seen from the Ugly on 20 Aug (Dean Jones). Although this was the second-earliest record for the island (after one on 26 Jul 2018) there were no further sightings,

marking 2020 as the first year since 2004 in which Balearic Shearwaters were not recorded in Lundy waters during Sep or Oct – in spite of regular seawatching by the Warden and other experienced observers. Interestingly, record numbers were seen off the south coast of South West England during the late summer.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

[Northern Gannet]

Common offshore, especially from spring to autumn, with peak numbers usually in late summer; typically less frequent in winter; formerly bred (until early 1900s).

There was a high late-winter count of 50 on 28 Jan. As is typical, both numbers and frequency were generally higher during the second half of the year; the peak count of 190 on 8 Aug was accounted for by a 'feeding frenzy' off the East Side, about a kilometre out from Tibbetts Point.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
50	5	20	11	25	25	30	190	30	30	43	41
23	13	16	13	22	14	16	23	23	25	23	12

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

[European Shag]

Common breeding species present throughout the year; numbers usually smaller in winter.

Two chicks were seen in nests at Long Roost on 30 May. A count of cliff-nesting seabirds on 16 Jun yielded a total of 111 adult birds (Dean Jones). The first fledglings were seen at Long Roost on 10 Jul, alongside many other large, soon-to-fledge chicks waddling around nest sites. A raft of 71 birds was off the Quarries on 22 Jul, but the highest post-breeding counts were 167 on 9 Aug and 191 on 21 Sep.

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
14	60	53	27	89	111	94	167	191	122	5	4

*There was no breeding census in 2020 and the breeding season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not necessarily representative of the breeding population as a whole.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

[Great Cormorant]

Regular spring and autumn migrant, typically in flocks overflying the island; formerly bred (until 1959); occasional in winter.

Recorded in all months except Jun and Dec, with a peak of 12 on 12 Sep. One was on the water off Quarry Beach on 29 Jan. In Oct, a first-winter bird was regularly seen fishing at Rocket Pole Pond.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	3	5	2	3	–	5	8	12	4	6	–
2	3	10	1	3	–	1	2	6	11	1	–

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Uncommon visitor; most regular from midsummer to early autumn.

One at Pondsbury on 29 May was the only record during the first six months of the year. In late summer and autumn there were records on 41 dates from 10 Jul (one in Barton Field) to 4 Nov (one), with a maximum of four on both 22 Jul and 14 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	–	1	–	4	1	4	2	1	–
–	–	–	–	1	–	14	11	10	5	1	–

Cormorants, off Pilot's Quay, 7th April (photo: Dean Jones).



Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

[Great Egret]

Colonising UK breeder; Devon rarity. Not previously recorded on Lundy.

Three birds (below) were photographed by Martin Thorne in flight as they passed South Light heading towards the North Devon mainland on 8 Dec. This is the first Lundy record of a species that has recently extended its breeding range to the UK, including 14 nests in the Somerset Levels alone in 2019. Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

[Western Osprey]

Scarce, but now annual passage migrant.

One over Brick Field on 28 Mar was wearing a blue darvic colour-ring (Dean Jones). Indications are that this bird had probably been ringed as a nestling in Scotland.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

[Eurasian Sparrowhawk]

Common spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; bred at least once in the past (1922); occasional in winter; has overwintered twice, in 2011/12 and 2018/19.

There were no records until spring passage when single birds were logged on 18 dates between 29 Mar and 1 Jun, with two present on 12 May. Following a single female on 19 Jul, autumn passage extended from 3 Sep to 28 Nov, with records on 52 dates: single birds on 37 days, two on 14 days and the maximum count of three on 17 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	1	2	1	1	–	3	2	2	–
–	–	2	11	4	1	1	–	20	17	15	–

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

[Northern Goshawk]

Lundy vagrant.

During the afternoon of 15 Sep, amidst deteriorating visibility due to gathering fog, a male flew in off the sea and perched briefly in VC Quarry (Richard Campey). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus**Uncommon spring and autumn migrant and rare winter visitor.*

A male over Millcombe and Barton Field during the early morning of 27 Mar was quartering South West Field later in the morning (Dean Jones). On 5 Nov, a ringtail over Quarter Wall mid-morning was seen several times during the afternoon, then quartering Pondsburry at dusk (Andy Jayne *et al.*).

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

On 16 Oct, a juvenile was seen in flight low over Ackland's Moor mid-morning, being harried by two Ravens, then later soaring off the East Side before heading south-east towards Hartland Point at 13:00 hrs (Tim Davis & Tim Jones *et al.*). This exciting record – concerning the satellite-tagged and colour-ringed individual 'G471' released in August 2020 as part of the Isle of Wight reintroduction programme – comes some 140 years after the last known White-tailed Eagle to have occurred on Lundy was shot in about 1880. Record accepted by DBRC.

Lundy's first White-tailed Eagle (inset) for more than a century flew over the island on 16th October. The tracking map (reproduced with permission of the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation) confirmed that G471 left the North Devon mainland at 10:20 hrs, some 35 minutes before it was first seen over the island. It flew out north of the island before returning to rest for a time near North Light, where it was seen by one of the Trinity House team working on the lighthouse as it flew below him! It later returned to the North Devon mainland where it roosted in cliffside woodland (photo: Dean Jones).



Buzzard *Buteo buteo* [Common Buzzard]

Uncommon visitor; formerly a breeding resident (last nesting attempt in 1965).

Single birds on 10 & 11 Apr (being harassed by a Raven over Quarter Wall on 10th, then seen over High Street Field on 11th) and 9 May (the latter a 'rather tatty' individual flying south over the Village and Millcombe) were the only records for the year.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant and rare winter visitor.

There were just two records, both in autumn: one flushed near to the top of the 'Steps of Doom' (that run between the Ugly and the Lower East Side Path) on 8 Oct (Ken Ebsworthy), followed by one flushed by the feral livestock management team near Pondsbury on 22 Oct.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

[Eurasian Hoopoe]

Nationally scarce migrant.

One flushed from the main track next to Pondsbury during the late morning of 10 Apr showed very well for a few minutes before disappearing into the long sward above the Quarries (Dean Jones). It was seen again in the afternoon feeding back along the main track (Rosie Ellis). On 5 Nov, one was watched from the window of Castle Cottage as it fed on the short turf of Castle Parade before flying off over the perimeter wall, in line with South Light (Elizabeth & Jonathan Williams). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

[Eurasian Wryneck]

Nationally scarce migrant.

One seen briefly along the Terrace on 22 Sep (Dean Jones). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Rare passage migrant and post-breeding visitor; one overwintering record (2018/19).

A male and female appeared in Millcombe on 15 Oct, with both still present on 18th and the male remaining until 20th (Tim Davis, James Diamond *et al.*). A male, thought to be a different individual to that seen in Oct, was first seen working its way along fence posts in Barton Field on 5 Nov, remaining until 6th, when it was in Millcombe (Dean Jones).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

[Common Kestrel]

Common visitor in small numbers, mainly in spring and autumn; has bred (most recently in 2005).

A single female was seen on three days in the second half of Jan, followed by a male in early Mar and a female later in the month. Two were logged on several days in Apr, but it was in May that the presence of a territorial pair was confirmed, and Jun when a nest site was discovered along the East Side. Two chicks fledged on 6 Jul – the first confirmation of successful breeding since 2005. Autumn passage peaked in Sep and Oct, with a maximum of four on 16 & 17 Oct. The last of the year was a single bird on 24 Nov.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	1	2	2	2	4	3	3	4	2	–
3	1	6	12	12	5	11	8	18	13	15	–

Merlin *Falco columbarius**Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers; very rare in summer.*

There were no records during the first winter period. Single spring-passage birds were logged on eight dates from 16 Mar to 6 May. These included a male hunting Meadow Pipits in Barton Field on 4 Apr and a female with a Wheatear in its talons at the western end of Quarter Wall on 17 Apr. The first autumn migrant was on the early date of 28 Aug. Thereafter, passage birds were recorded on a further 37 dates, from 20 Sep (one) to 29 Nov (one), with a maximum of three on 13, 14 & 16 Oct.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	1	1	–	–	1	1	3	2	–
–	–	1	6	1	–	–	1	5	23	9	–

Merlin, Barton Field, 23rd October (photo: Dean Jones).



Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

[Eurasian Hobby]

*Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant.*The only record for the year involved one hunting over Lighthouse Field on 10 Sep (Tony Taylor *et al.*).**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

[Peregrine Falcon]

Breeds; recorded in all months in recent years.

A female was feeding on a drake Mallard in Barton Field on 22 Feb (Kevin Welsh). There were five occupied breeding territories. Eggs were being incubated from 15 Apr. Three pairs managed to fledge a total of five chicks, the first fledgling being noted on 1 Jul (Dean Jones).

Maximum count for each month*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	4	5	6	4	6	5	8	6	4	2	3

Request: Please report any sightings of colour-ringed Peregrines directly to the Warden, and help to protect the island's breeding birds by not revealing nest locations in the LFS logbook, on social media, or elsewhere.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio**Nationally scarce migrant and Devon rarity.*A juvenile was in the vicinity of Quarry Cottages, the Terrace and the track to Quarry Beach during the early afternoon of 12 Sep (Tim Davis & Tim Jones *et al.*). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.**Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus*

[Eurasian Golden Oriole]

*Nationally scarce migrant.*There were three records during the peak May-Jun period for this species on Lundy, all involving single birds in Millcombe: a singing male on 8 & 9 May (Dean Jones *et al.*); a female or second-calendar-year male on 20 May (Dean Jones); and a sub-adult male on 18 Jun (Dean Jones). Records accepted by DBRC.**Magpie** *Pica pica*

[Eurasian Magpie]

Lundy vagrant.

One was seen briefly in Tent Field, between the Black Shed and the helipad, during the early afternoon of 5 Sep (Shaun Robson). This is the first record of this exceptionally rare bird for Lundy since May 1996!

Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*

[Western Jackdaw]

*Rare spring migrant; very rare autumn migrant and winter visitor.*An exceptional spring for a species that normally occurs only two or three times each year, with records on 20 dates from 26 Feb to 25 May. One calling from Millcombe Wood on 26 Feb was followed by two over Millcombe on 27th, one in High Street Field on 13 & 14 Mar, one over Millcombe on 24 Mar, three on 26th, and two foraging in lower 'Aerogenerator Field' (Lighthouse Field) on 28 & 29 Mar. Fourteen parachuting into Tent Field on 30 Mar, seven in High St Field on 31st and 11 on the Church Tower on 1 Apr were the advance party for a mass arrival of 59 drifting in from the south-east and over Castle Hill at about 13:00 hrs on 2 Apr, resting briefly before continuing north at 15:00 hrs. There were 11 again on 3 & 4 Apr, one over the Village on 11th, two calling loudly over the Village on 12th, 11 in lower 'Aerogenerator Field' on 25th, in Tent Field on 26th and on the roof of Old House South on 27th, six over Jenny's Cove on 1 May and – finally – two calling from the roof of the Barn and later in High Street Field on 25 May (Dean Jones *et al.*). This is by far the most significant and sustained influx to the island of recent years. It is thought that the prolonged spells of settled weather in Apr may have been a contributory factor. The flock of 59 birds on 2 Apr exceeded the previous record spring count of 53, set way back in the early years of the LFS on 25 Apr 1948. However, the all-time record still stands at a colossal 250 on 20 Oct 1983.**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus**Rare spring migrant; very rare autumn migrant and winter visitor.*

One in upper Lighthouse Field on 20 Apr (Dean Jones).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Breeds; present throughout the year.

Numbers were relatively high at the start of the year, with a count of 57 on 19 Jan, but the post-breeding maximum was just 43 on 7 Sep. Unusually low numbers were recorded from then until the end of the year, including an Oct peak of just 20 – a month when counts have typically been around 60 in many recent years. Poor breeding productivity and possible emigration from the island could explain the apparently reduced numbers. Potential underlying causes might include a shortage of food due to a very low rabbit population and a pandemic-related reduction in human visitors and their discarded food scraps. One was watched leaving the island from South West Point and flying towards Hartland Point on 12 Apr (Dean Jones). The first fledglings were seen along the East Side on 26 May.

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
57	41	41	29	25	31	27	23	43	20	15	23

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

Two were with Carrion Crows and Jackdaws in High Street Field and on Ackland's Moor on 13 Mar, one remaining until 14th when it was seen in Brick Field (Dean Jones). Single birds were in Tent Field on 1 & 15 May (Dean Jones). With no sightings between 2 and 14 May, it seems probable that either two different birds were involved on 1st & 15th or the same individual visited the island twice but disappeared to the mainland in the intervening period. Records accepted by DBRC.

Raven *Corvus corax*

[Northern Raven]

Breeds; present throughout the year.

One was carrying nesting material along the East Side on 26 Jan. The highest count of the year was 20 on 8 Mar. There were four successful nests: at Benjamin's Chair, the cliffs just west of Old Light, Halfway Wall Bay and Long Roost. The first fledglings were seen at the South End on 12 May.

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6	6	20	9	14	8	7	12	14	13	11	9

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Uncommon autumn migrant and very rare spring migrant; occasional in winter.

A mid-Oct arrival brought daily records from 10th to 18th, including a peak of five on 15th (in Millcombe, St Helen's Combe, and in willows above Quarry Beach). There were two on 12th, 17th & 18th, and singles on the remaining dates. The first bird to arrive, on 10th, showed plumage features consistent with the Irish-breeding race of Coal Tit *P. a. hibernicus*, having noticeably yellowish cheeks, a similar yellow wash on the underparts, and distinctly cinnamon flanks. However, no definite conclusions about the bird's origins can be drawn on plumage alone as there are known to be intergrades between Irish and British Coal Tits in the north-east of the island of Ireland. This particular individual, which was ringed in Millcombe on 15 Oct, was seen regularly in Millcombe through the rest of Oct and Nov, then more sporadically in Dec, but was still present at the end of the year and into early 2021.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

[Eurasian Blue Tit]

Uncommon autumn migrant and rare spring migrant.

Two were seen in the Ugly/St Helen's Copse area on 5 Oct (Shaun Barnes).

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

Lundy vagrant.

A very good autumn for this species, with records on three dates thought to involve four different birds: one flew south, calling as it went, over the Ugly and lower Millcombe, during the early morning of 16 Oct (Jamie Dunning, Dean Jones *et al.*), with what was considered to be a different individual seen and heard on the western fringes of Middle Park, just north of Halfway Wall, at 16:30 hrs the same day; one showed well, allowing itself to be photographed, above Benjamin's Chair on 22 Oct (Dean Jones); and one was calling in flight over Millcombe on 4 Nov (Dean Jones).



Woodlark, Benjamin's Chair, 22nd October (photo: Dean Jones).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

[Eurasian Skylark]

Common breeder; common spring and autumn migrant; sporadic in winter with influxes during exceptionally cold weather.

Scarce for a time immediately after New Year, song was first heard on 17 Jan and numbers reached 20 the following day. The highest count of the spring – indeed the year – was 69 on 1 Mar. Some 51 song territories were located during the breeding season and adults were first seen delivering food to chicks in the nest on 11 May in South West Field (Dean Jones). The autumn-passage peak was 35 on 14 Oct. After 21 on 22 Nov there were only five more scattered records of one to three birds until the end of the year (the last on 10 Dec), though there continued to be coverage of suitable habitat, indicating a real, rather than apparent absence.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
20	51	69	38	32	39	15	20	28	35	29	2
13	22	28	29	31	26	18	14	23	17	12	2

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Common spring and autumn migrant; occasional in summer.

The first spring migrants were four on 18 Mar. Numbers were low until the fourth week of Apr when there were 120 on 22nd, 130 on 23rd and 112 on 26th. By far the largest arrival was on 6 May when 478 were logged. The last of the spring were two on 10 Jun. Return passage was logged on 26 days from 19 Jul (five) to 13 Oct (one). Numbers were generally low, with only six double-digit counts, the highest of these being 61 on 10 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	7	130	478	2	5	6	61	1	–	–
–	–	5	21	18	1	5	4	15	2	–	–

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

[Barn Swallow]

Common and at times abundant spring and autumn migrant; breeds in very small numbers in most years.

The first of the spring were one over Quarter Wall on 23 Mar, followed by three the next day, but then a gap to 3 Apr. Maximum counts reached 34 in the first week of Apr, 122 in the second week, 312 in the third week and a first peak of 1,750 on 22 Apr (when 532 passed north off the West Side in the space of an hour). Thereafter, numbers fluctuated considerably, with counts in the tens or low hundreds interspersed with a further two very high counts: 1,916 on 6 May and 1,794 on 19 May. A handful of

birds were still moving north well into Jun (e.g. pulses of 11 on 8th and 15 on 9th). Three pairs nested: in the Church porch, next to the Black Shed, and in a natural site at Quarry Pond. Four young fledged from the Church porch on 4 Jul, whilst the other two pairs both fledged three young. A second brood was attempted in the Church Porch and young were being fed during the first half of Sep, but they failed to fledge successfully. There was some evidence of post-breeding dispersal in Aug (e.g. 15 on 8th) but it was well into Sep before the first real pulse of migration, when 305 were logged on 7th, followed by estimates of 1,000 on 9th, 3,000 on 10th, 750 on 21st and 2,500 on 29th. Numbers fell away rapidly from the start of the fourth week in Oct, though there were still records on most days. Swallows were logged on the unusually high total of 15 dates in Nov, the last of the year being a single bird over lower Millcombe on 30th.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	3	1,750	1,916	15	7	15	3,000	200	4	–
–	–	2	27	31	29	30	25	30	27	15	–

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

[Common House Martin]

Common spring and autumn migrant; occasional during summer and has bred.

Unusually, it was a House Martin over the Terrace on 8 Mar (Kevin Waterfall) that provided the first hirundine record of the year – a distinction usually claimed by Sand Martin or Swallow. Following another lone individual on 24 Mar and single-digit counts during the first fortnight of Apr, the first real influxes were 38 on 15 Apr and 140 on 22nd. However, the largest arrivals were in May, when there were 341 on 6th and 471 on 19th. Autumn migration appeared rather sparse and there were only seven counts of 30 or more, of which 150 on 29 Sep was by far the highest. The last of the year was a single bird on 4 & 5 Nov.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	140	471	3	4	14	150	30	1	–
–	–	2	20	27	5	6	6	16	19	2	–

Yellow-browed Warbler, Millcombe Pond, 12th October (photo: Dean Jones).



Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti**Lundy vagrant.*

One trapped and ringed in Millcombe during the early morning of 18 Oct (Rob Duncan, Dean Jones) was only the sixth to be recorded on Lundy.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus**Very rare autumn migrant and exceptional in spring/early summer; has overwintered once (2008/09).*

One was working its way south, calling as it went, in the incongruous setting of the bracken and boulder-strewn sidelands above Jenny's Cove on 14 Oct (Tim Davis & Tim Jones).

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix**Uncommon spring and autumn migrant, occurring with declining frequency.*

There were just three records during the year, comprising two during spring passage and one in autumn: two birds on 27 Apr (one in the Battlements sycamores and one along the Lower East Side Path above White Beach) and one in upper Millcombe on 28th – see cover photo (all Dean Jones); and one in Millcombe, feeding above the Casbah within a small mixed flock of Chiffchaffs, Willow Warblers and Goldcrests, on 7 Sep (Tim Davis & Tim Jones).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus**Nationally scarce migrant.*

During autumn passage, logged on 21 dates from 19 Sep (one in sycamores above the Casbah, Millcombe) to 12 Nov (one in Quarter Wall Copse), with a maximum of five on 22 Oct (two in Millcombe, one in Quarter Wall Copse, one in the Terrace Trap willows, and one in Howard's Quarry – the small quarry with willows and blanket weed to the south of VC Quarry). Most other records concerned ones and twos only, but there were three on 12 Oct. Unusually there were several records of birds feeding on the ground. One was on the muddy margins of Millcombe Pond on 12 Oct, whilst another spent much of 14 Oct feeding in the lee of the main track wall alongside Tillage & Brick Fields. Another individual, also on 14th, was feeding on the ground, out in the open, on the sunny, sheltered edge of St Helen's Field above Millcombe, together with a Chiffchaff and several Goldcrests.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus**Very common spring and autumn migrant with occasional mass arrivals; breeds sporadically.*

The first of the spring were two on 24 Mar, one of which was in full song in Millcombe Wood. Numbers peaked at 90 on 8 Apr and there were other counts of 50 or more on 9 Apr (50), 11 Apr (53) and 26 Apr (57). One very pale bird, lacking yellow or green tones in its plumage, was seen in Millcombe on 18 Apr and considered likely to be from a northern European breeding population (Dean Jones). The last double-digit count of spring was 17 on 2 May. Although song was heard into Jun there was no evidence of any breeding attempt. Return passage was noted almost daily during the second half of Jul, including a small fall of 45 birds on 22nd. Movements peaked in Aug, with 110 on 6th representing the highest count of the season and of the whole year. The last was a single bird on 12 Oct.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	2	90	17	3	45	110	35	1	–	–
–	–	3	30	29	26	18	21	21	1	–	–

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

[Common Chiffchaff]

Common spring and autumn migrant; occasional in midsummer and winter; breeds sporadically.

During the first winter period there were single birds on 10, 20, 24 & 29 Jan and 10 Feb. The first probable spring migrant was in 'Smelly Gully' (lower Millcombe) on 10 Mar, but it was only from the relatively late date of 22nd onwards that passage really got under way. Thereafter there was an almost uninterrupted run of daily records throughout the rest of the spring, though there were only five double-digit counts, all between 24 Mar and 4 Apr, including the modest peak of 23 on 1 Apr. Song was heard throughout May and early Jun and a pair were seen copulating in Millcombe on 10 Jun. However, just one fledgling was being fed by adults in the same area on 14 Jul (Dean Jones), perhaps indicating that productivity had been adversely affected by poor weather earlier in the month. A second pair were feeding three fledglings in upper Millcombe on 20 Jul – again suggestive of poor productivity. Autumn

passage became evident from the end of the first week of Sep, reaching double digits on 10 Sep with 15, then peaking at 60 on 21st. Numbers in Oct were unusually low, with 15 on 12th being the highest count. At the end of the year there was a late pulse of six on 1 Dec, then further singles on 16th, 25th & 28th. A first-year bird ringed on Lundy in Sep 2019 was caught on Bardsey on 27 Mar (see also *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.88).

Individuals with plumage and calls typical of 'Siberian' Chiffchaff *P. c. tristis* were seen in Millcombe on 1 Dec (one bird) and at several locations on 26 Nov (a small influx of four: two in Millcombe; one in the Terrace willows and on the sidelands above Quarry Beach; and one in the Village next to Quarters). A fifth bird, showing plumage and call characteristics possibly better matching 'Northern' Chiffchaff *P. c. abietinus* was also logged on 26 Nov, together at one point with one of the 'Siberian' Chiffchaffs below the Terrace (all records Dean Jones). In addition, an individual showing plumage and call characters of one of the grey northern or eastern races, possibly *P. c. abietinus*, was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 8 May (Dean Jones). MitDNA analysis of shed body feathers from an individual trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 23 Oct indicated maternal lineage as *P. c. abietinus* (Prof. J. Martin Collinson & Thomas Shannon, University of Aberdeen *per* Dean Jones). A good candidate for *abietinus* was also foraging at Millcombe Pond on 6 Nov (Dean Jones). Records of 'Siberian' Chiffchaff accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	10	23	6	5	6	4	60	15	6	6
4	1	11	27	26	24	13	13	28	27	19	4

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Common spring and autumn migrant, generally more numerous in spring. Breeds sporadically. During spring migration, logged on 27 dates from 9 Apr (one singing in the 'Secret Garden', lower Millcombe) to 29 May (one), with maxima of 19 on 26 Apr and 13 on 7 May. Return passage was noted on nine dates from 21 Jul (one at Quarters Pond) to 20 Sep (two), with maxima of 29 on 6 Aug and six on 10 Sep. The report *Bird Ringing on Lundy* (see p.88) contains details of an adult ringed in Ireland in 2016 that was trapped on Lundy on 8 May, and an adult ringed on Lundy on 26 Apr that was caught in France on 3 Aug.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	19	13	–	2	29	6	–	–	–
–	–	–	12	15	–	3	3	3	–	–	–

Icterine Warbler, Millcombe, 5th September (photo: Richard Taylor) and (right) male Blackcap, Battery Slope, 16th April (photo: Dean Jones).



Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

[Eurasian Reed Warbler]

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.

Ones and twos were recorded on eight dates in spring from 19 Apr (one trapped in Millcombe, already wearing a BTO ring – see below) to 17 Jun (a singing bird in the ‘Secret Garden’, lower Millcombe). There were only two logged in autumn: single birds on 23 Aug and 10 Sep. The bird trapped on 19 Apr had been ringed as an adult near Land’s End in Jul 2019 (see also *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.88).

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris**Nationally scarce migrant.*

A first-year bird was watched (and photographed – see p.39) at close range in St John’s Valley during the morning of 6 Sep (Tim Jones *et al.*). Record accepted by DBRC – the sixth occurrence for Lundy.

Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta**Nationally scarce migrant.*

A first-year bird was mist-netted in Millcombe (on the slope up to the Ugly) mid-morning on 31 Jul (Dean Jones). It was not seen in the field, either before capture or after release. Another was watched and photographed in willow scrub at the Terrace on 31 Aug (Dean Jones). Records accepted by DBRC.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina**Nationally scarce migrant.*

One was feeding actively in lower Millcombe on 5 Sep (Richard Taylor *et al.*). Record accepted by DBRC.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

[Common Grasshopper Warbler]

Common spring migrant; uncommon autumn migrant.

Spring passage migrants were logged on nine dates from 9 Apr (one reeling in St John’s Valley) to 6 May (one), with a maximum of four on 19 Apr (all reeling in Millcombe first thing). The only autumn records were single birds on 10 & 21 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	4	1	–	–	–	1	–	–	–
–	–	–	7	2	–	–	–	2	–	–	–

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

[Eurasian Blackcap]

Common spring and autumn migrant; occasional in winter. Successful breeding confirmed for the first time in 2016, then again in 2018 & 2019.

The first migrants in spring were two logged on 17 Mar. The highest counts were 75 on 9 Apr and 110 on 11th, with 16 additional double-digit counts during the month. A trickle of movement continued throughout May and most of Jun, whilst two pairs got down to the serious business of nesting in Millcombe, where fledglings were first seen on 24 Jun, in the upper part of the valley, followed by a different brood being fed in the Walled Gardens on 9 Jul. The outcome of a third breeding attempt in the tree nursery at Quarter Wall Copse is unknown (Dean Jones). This is the third year in a row of successful breeding, the first time that more than one pair has bred, and the first time that a breeding attempt outside Millcombe has been recorded. Autumn passage became evident from the fourth week of Aug, when 10 were logged on 23rd. Counts showed two distinct peaks, one in the first half of Sep (150 on 10th) and again in early Oct (100 on 3rd). The first of these probably coincides with the main departure of the British and Irish breeding population for Mediterranean and sub-Saharan wintering grounds, whilst the second peak is more likely to involve the arrival of Blackcaps that breed in central and north-west Europe and spend the winter in Britain and Ireland. The last of the year was a single bird on 30 Nov.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	5	110	10	5	5	14	150	100	32	–
–	–	7	30	31	28	20	16	30	27	11	–

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.

In spring, logged on seven dates from 19 Apr (one in the 'Secret Garden', lower Millcombe) to 29 May. Most records were of single birds but there were two on 26 Apr and 7 May. Autumn migrants (all single birds) were noted on nine dates from 6 Aug to 4 Nov (trapped and ringed in Millcombe – Chris Dee). Although this is an unusually late date there have been records during the first week of Nov in seven previous years, most recently on 4 Nov 2011. The latest ever was on 27 Nov 1994.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	2	2	–	–	1	1	1	1	–
–	–	–	4	3	–	–	1	3	4	1	–

Lesser Whitethroat *Curruca curruca*

Uncommon but virtually annual spring and autumn passage migrant; has bred (2002).

Single spring passage migrants were logged on 18, 26 & 27 Apr and 10 & 29 May, the first of these along the Terrace. The bird on 26 Apr was trapped and ringed. The only autumn record was of an unusually late bird photographed at Quarter Wall Pond on 4 Nov (Andy Jayne), just a day after one of the island's latest ever Common Whitethroats (see below).

Whitethroat *Curruca communis*

[Common Whitethroat]

Common migrant in spring and autumn; has bred.

The first of the spring was a female in Millcombe on 13 Apr. Thereafter there were records on most days until the fourth week of Jun, with modest peaks of 14 on both 26 Apr and 7 May but no other double-digit counts. Singing males were holding territory in Jun (four singing on 4th) and Jul and a pair bred successfully on the sidelands above White Beach, feeding nestlings there on 16 Jun, with a further recently fledged brood being fed on the sidelands just south of Kaaksburg Bay on 24 Jul (Dean Jones). Return passage was noted from 31 Aug (five) until 23 Sep (one), with a maximum of just 10 on 10 Sep. There were no Oct records, so the appearance of a very late bird in Millcombe on 3 Nov (Andy Jayne & Dean Jones) came as quite a surprise, being only the second Nov record for the island (the first as long ago as 1959!).

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	14	14	4	5	5	10	–	1	–
–	–	–	14	26	20	14	7	11	–	1	–

Dartford Warbler *Curruca undata*

Lundy vagrant.

One was in gorse, heather and bracken scrub about 200m south-south-west of Pondsby during the early afternoon of 10 Sep (Tim Jones *et al.* Photo below by Richard Taylor). One was seen briefly in gorse near the Rocket Pole on 20 Sep (Richard Campey). There is no way of knowing for sure if these sightings refer to one or two individuals, though it seems likely that two birds were involved. These constitute the 10th & 11th records for the island.



Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

[Common Firecrest]

Uncommon spring passage migrant, more regular and more numerous in autumn; has wintered.

In spring there were three on 14 Mar, followed by one on 24th (trapped and ringed in the 'Secret Garden', lower Millcombe) and two on 25th, then a single male in Millcombe on 5 & 6 Apr (ringed on 6th). Autumn migrants were noted from 19 Sep, with records on a further 60 dates to the end of the year, though one lingering into Dec (and on into Jan 2021) probably accounted for most, if not all, sightings after the third week of Nov. The highest counts were five on 20 & 21 Sep and four on 18 & 27 Oct.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	3	1	–	–	–	–	5	4	2	1
–	–	3	2	–	–	–	–	8	20	26	7

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus**Common spring and autumn migrant, most numerous in autumn; has bred; occasional in winter.*

During the first winter period there were ones and twos on 26 dates from 2 Jan to 4 Mar, including one singing in Millcombe on 3 Jan. The first small arrival of spring migrants was five on 5 Mar, after which passage was noted on a further 41 dates, peaking at 18 on 24 Mar and concluding with one on 1 May. Autumn movements kicked off with singletons on 28 & 31 Aug, followed by 15 on 4 Sep. From then on, records were virtually daily until mid-Nov, peaking at 20 on 27 Sep, 40 on 5 Oct and 83 on 9 Oct – a very modest maximum compared with the mass arrivals that occur in some autumns. Numbers dwindled in the second half of Oct, when 16 on 22nd was the highest count, whilst Nov brought low single digits only, with frequency declining from mid-month. The last of the year were two on 2 Dec.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	2	18	6	1	–	–	1	20	83	6	2
13	9	22	23	1	–	–	2	26	31	20	2

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

[Eurasian Wren]

Common breeding resident; ringing evidence of dispersal to mainland.

The highest count of the year, during a walk of the whole island perimeter, was 33 on 16 Jun (Dean Jones). Adults were carrying food to nestlings in Millcombe on 6 Jun and good numbers had fledged by 18th. An adult was carrying food near Brambles, for a presumed second brood, on 11 Aug. There was no island-wide count during the post-breeding period of late-summer and autumn when numbers are typically at their highest.

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9	12	17	15	17	33	10	20	23	20	16	9

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

[Eurasian Treecreeper]

*Uncommon late summer and autumn visitor; very rare outside this period.*One was in Millcombe from 7 to 11 Sep (Rebecca Taylor *et al.*).**Rose-coloured Starling** *Pastor roseus*

[Rosy Starling]

Nationally scarce migrant.

An adult, mixing with a small flock of juvenile Common Starlings, was around Millcombe early in the day on 21 Jun. It was rather flighty, providing only brief views on the wing, before it finally settled briefly in sycamores near Brambles, then disappeared towards the Village, not to be seen again (Dean Jones). Record accepted by DBRC.

Rose-coloured Starling, Millcombe, 21st June
(photo: Dean Jones).



Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

[Common Starling]

Common breeding resident; common migrant, particularly in late autumn when large influxes may occur.
A count of 200 on 8 Mar suggested a modest movement of passage migrants through the island, but other counts in late winter and spring were in line with the estimated size of the island's breeding population. Adults were nest-building on 12 Apr and taking food to chicks in nests around the Village on 2 May. Some 56 active nests (the same total as in 2019) were located around the Church, Village and Old Light between 8 & 12 May, with most containing noisy chicks (Dean Jones). The first fledglings were seen in the farmyard on 21 May and a flock of 40 young had built up in Brick Field by 29th. Two or three late nests – potentially second broods for pairs that fledged chicks early in the season as all had held large, noisy chicks in May – contained young ready to fledge at the end of Jun (Dean Jones). The first notable arrival in autumn came on 14 Oct, when numbers reached 350, followed by 500 on both 15th & 16th. Counts fell away during the second half of Oct but surged during early Nov, with a huge influx of 4,000 on 4th, rising to 4,750 on 5th. The last instance of numbers clearly well in excess of the 'resident' population came on 22 Nov, when 326 were logged.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
134	129	200	100	108	70	97	77	200	500	4750	170
6	14	19	5	8	7	16	8	22	15	9	10

White's Thrush *Zoothera aurea*

British vagrant.

A typically wary and elusive individual was seen in Millcombe during the early morning of 7 Oct but could not be relocated after about 08:30 hrs (Dean Jones). However, it was trapped and ringed on the morning of 9th, when it was aged as a first-year bird, though its wing length was in the overlap zone between male and female (Nik Ward). Thereafter, it was seen intermittently in Millcombe over the next two weeks, mainly frequenting the wooded area on the south side of the valley, though often seeming to 'disappear' for long periods and usually being seen briefly – either in flight or perched in dense cover – though a few lucky observers had more prolonged views of it perched. It was retrapped on 17th (Rob Duncan), when it was found to be in good health, having put on significant body fat, and seen feeding in the relative open near Government House on 22nd. There has been one previous Lundy record – a first-year male, also in Millcombe, that was first seen on 15 Oct 1952 and remained on the island until 8 Nov. Record accepted by BBRC.

White's Thrush, mist-netted in Millcombe, 9th October (photo: Dean Jones).





Female Ring Ouzel near Old Light, 14th April (photo: Dean Jones).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Uncommon but regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.

In spring, logged on 11 dates from 21 Mar to 22 Apr, with a maximum of four on 18 Apr. Return passage migrants were recorded on nine dates from 3 Oct (two) to 5 Nov (one), with a maximum of six on 15 Oct.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	4	–	–	–	–	–	6	1	–
–	–	1	10	–	–	–	–	–	8	1	–

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

[Common Blackbird]

Common breeding resident; irregular spring migrant and common late-autumn migrant; occasional winter influxes during hard weather.

There were hints that a few spring migrants were passing through in early Mar when 21 were logged on 6th. One was carrying nesting material on 14 Mar. Ten breeding territories were identified (four in Millcombe, one in the Village, one in St Helen's tree nursery, one at Quarter Wall Copse, one at Quarter Wall and two along the Terrace). In addition, singing males were located at Gannets' Combe and Threequarter Wall Bay in May. All but one of the early-season pairs failed, most likely due to the very dry spring making it challenging for the adults to provision chicks with sufficient food. The exception was at Quarter Wall Copse, where two fledglings were seen on 29 May. Second-brood attempts, starting in Jun, were more successful, but most pairs only managed to rear one or two young to fledging (the first in Millcombe on 14 Jul) and these appeared to struggle to develop as quickly as usual. Some birds were still in juvenile plumage, only partially moulted, quite late into the autumn (Dean Jones). Although some autumn movement was probably already under way in Sep, the first real evidence of passage came in mid-Oct when 20 were logged on 7th and 23 on 14th, followed by major influxes of 90 on 15th and 80 on 16th. The majority on the latter date were new arrivals, watched dropping into the island at dawn, rather than birds simply remaining from 15th. Numbers were low during the remainder of Oct, but there were 33 on 4 Nov, followed by a further mass arrival of 128 on 5th. Thereafter, numbers dropped back once more, 24 on 30 Nov being the next highest count to the end of the year.

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
12	6	21	11	14	16	8	9	16	90	128	10

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Regular migrant, generally in small numbers, in early spring; much more frequent and more numerous in late autumn; winter visitor in variable numbers, with occasional hard-weather influxes.

Ones and twos were recorded on nine scattered dates in the first winter period and during spring passage, the last of these being one on 11 Apr. The first autumn migrants were five on 12 Oct, building rapidly to 20 on 14th, 130 on 15th and 200 on 16th (alongside significant influxes of Redwings and Blackbirds). Though passage continued to be logged regularly until 2 Dec, daily totals were on the low side, with the exception of 66 on 18 Oct and 69 on 5 Nov. The last of the year were four on 16 Dec.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	1	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	200	69	6
–	2	5	2	–	–	–	–	–	14	14	3

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Common migrant in early spring and, especially, late autumn; winter visitor in variable numbers, with occasional hard-weather influxes.

Following scattered singles in Jan there was clear evidence of a small spring passage through the island, with 19 records between 26 Feb (one) and 13 Apr (one), including a maximum of 16 on 2 Apr. One in Barton Field on 9 Apr showed plumage characteristics typical of the Icelandic race *T. i. coburni* (Dean Jones). In autumn, after single birds on 28 Sep and 5 Oct, logged almost daily from 7 Oct to 9 Nov, with maxima of 200 or more on six dates, the peak being 400 on 14 Oct. Sound recording during the nights of 11/12 Oct (from the Barn) and 13/14 Oct (from the Castle) detected 45 and 66 Redwing calls, respectively (James Diamond, Tim Jones). Passage continued more sporadically through Nov and into the first week or so of Dec. There were two further isolated records of three on 16 Dec and one on 31st.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	8	16	–	–	–	–	1	400	234	14
5	1	8	10	–	–	–	–	1	21	21	8

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Regular migrant in small numbers in early spring; more numerous and more frequent in mid-to-late autumn; winter influxes during hard weather. Bred sporadically prior to 2010.

Ones and twos that probably overwintered on the island were recorded in Jan & Feb. These were followed by a very light but distinct spring passage, with up to four birds logged on 28 dates in Mar & Apr, the last of these being one singing in Millcombe on 28 Apr. Although song was heard regularly during fine weather in spring there was no evidence of any breeding territory, and Song Thrushes were sadly absent from May to Aug inclusive, the first autumn migrants being singles logged on 2 & 21 Sep. Passage was noted almost daily in Oct, but numbers were modest and it was not until the first week of Nov that the highest counts were recorded, with 24 on 4th and 35 on 5th. There was a notable winter count of 11 on 31 Dec.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	2	4	4	–	–	–	–	1	18	35	11
9	8	14	14	–	–	–	–	2	26	19	4

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Rare spring migrant; uncommon autumn migrant; rare summer and winter visitor.

The only spring record was of one in Barton Field on the late date of 22 May. Logged on five days in autumn: on 14 Oct (singles in Millcombe and above Pilot's Quay, two on sidelands at Jenny's Cove); one on 15 Oct; two on 22 Oct (over Millcombe), four on 4 Nov (two flying high towards the mainland first thing, then one in Barton Field, and one with Fieldfares near the Old Hospital). A last singleton graced Millcombe on 6 Nov.



Spotted Flycatcher, Millcombe, 1st May (photo: Dean Jones).

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Common but declining spring and autumn passage migrant on the UK 'red' list of birds of conservation concern; irregular breeder, last confirmed in 2017.

Spring passage extended from 23 Apr (three in Millcombe) to at least 1 Jun (four), with peaks of 26 on 6 May and 12 the next day. All other counts were in single figures. A pair settled to nest in the Casbah (just south of Millcombe House) and were incubating four eggs at the end of Jun and feeding small nestlings by 6 Jul. Sadly, a spell of cool, wet and very windy weather at this time meant the adults were unable to find sufficient insect food and the chicks were found dead in the nest on 10 Jul. This was only the second confirmed breeding attempt of the 21st century, following a successful nest at Quarter Wall Copse in 2017. Return passage was evident from 6 Aug when there was an influx of 13. Numbers were generally low, the highest subsequent count being 10 on both 24 Aug and 1 Sep. Two were fly-catching from cliffs above Long Roost on 9 Aug. The last of the year, a single bird, was on the relatively early date of 23 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	3	26	4	2	13	10	–	–	–
–	–	–	4	19	23	7	10	16	–	–	–

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

[European Robin]

Common breeding resident in small numbers; uncommon spring migrant; common autumn migrant in moderate numbers.

There were possible hints of spring passage in Mar when 12 were counted on 6th, though this would actually be well within the size of the island's breeding population in 2020. Nine breeding territories were located (four in Millcombe, one in St Helen's Copse, one above White Beach, two at Quarter Wall Copse and one on the Terrace). Adults were gathering nesting material in Millcombe on 3 Apr, collecting food in the Walled Gardens on 30 Apr, and the first fledglings were seen in the same area on 19 May (Dean Jones). A second brood of fledged young was being fed at Quarter Wall Copse on 15 Jul. A protracted period of post-juvenile dispersal and autumn passage was recorded from 31 Aug, when 12 were logged. Though numbers were very much up and down, further influxes included 15 on 11 Sep, 16 on 27 Sep, 22 on 30 Sep, 25 on 9 Oct, 40 on 12 Oct and six other counts of 20 or more in the second half of Oct, before declining during Nov. There was a notable midwinter count of 11 on 31 Dec.

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8	4	12	7	5	7	6	12	22	40	16	11

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

Nationally scarce migrant.

First-winter birds were found in Quarter Wall Copse on 6 Oct (Paul & Jackie Holt, Dean Jones) and 18 Oct (Dean Jones). Plumage differences apparent in photographs confirmed these to be two different individuals. Records accepted by DBRC.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

[European Pied Flycatcher]

Uncommon spring migrant; common autumn migrant, usually in small numbers; occasional records in midsummer.

The only spring migrants were a male in Millcombe and female in the Terrace willows on 11 Apr, followed by a male at Jenny's Cove on 17 Apr, two females on 23rd and a male and a female bathing in the stream below the Casbah on 9 May. Autumn passage was logged on 22 dates from 9 Aug (one in Millcombe) to 23 Sep (one). The highest counts were six on 31 Aug and 10 on 1 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	2	2	–	–	6	10	–	–	–
–	–	–	3	1	–	–	5	17	–	–	–

Red-breasted Flycatcher, Quarter Wall Copse, 6th October and (right) female Pied Flycatcher, High Street, 23rd April (photos: Dean Jones).



Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Common late-autumn migrant, usually in small numbers; uncommon spring migrant; has overwintered.
 The only record during the first winter period was one on the camping field gate on 10 Jan. Spring migrants were seen on five days from 3 Mar (a female at Benjamin's Chair) to 7 Apr (a female on the Terrace), with a peak of three on 27 Mar (all females, along the West Side between Old Light and Jenny's Cove). Autumn passage was logged on 12 dates, from 19 Oct (one) to 1 Dec (one). The highest count was four on 22 Nov.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	–	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	4	1
1	–	4	1	–	–	–	–	–	5	6	1

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

[Common Redstart]

Common but declining spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.

In spring, ones and twos were recorded on 10 dates from 9 Apr (a male on a Barton Field fenceline) to 9 May. Autumn passage was particularly sparse, being logged on just seven dates from 7 Sep (one) to 23 Oct (one), with a peak of three on 19 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	2	2	–	–	–	3	1	–	–
–	–	–	9	1	–	–	–	5	2	–	–

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Uncommon spring migrant; more regular in autumn; occasional records in midsummer.

Perhaps the poorest year yet for this 'red-listed' species of UK conservation concern. In spring there were ones and twos on five days between 19 Apr (two in South West Field) and 8 May, whilst autumn passage brought single birds only on seven well-scattered dates from 9 Aug (one between the water tanks and Airfield) to 12 Oct.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	2	2	–	–	1	1	1	–	–
–	–	–	3	2	–	–	2	2	3	–	–

Male Whinchat, Old Light track, 22nd April (photo: Dean Jones).



Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

[European Stonechat]

Breeds in small numbers but set back in hard winters; uncommon spring migrant and regular autumn migrant; sporadic in winter.

There was a remarkable fall of spring-passage migrants on 5 Mar when at least 36 were distributed around the island, including 12 concentrated in a small area of South West Field. Obvious passage continued until the middle of Mar, after which most observations appeared to involve Lundy's small breeding population. Four pairs successfully fledged chicks from nests sited next to the Beach Road, north of St Helen's Copse, along the Terrace and at Tibbetts. Three of these pairs were feeding young on 13 May and the fourth was feeding young on 23 May. A fledged second brood was being fed along the Lower East Side Path on 15 Jul (Dean Jones). Although there was likely a turnover of dispersing young in summer, autumn movement was only really apparent from the third week of Sep (a count of 12 on 21st). The highest totals came in Oct, with 22 on 8th and 26 on 22nd.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4	4	36	3	6	8	7	7	12	26	8	1
7	8	23	18	20	15	13	8	22	24	12	2

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

[Northern Wheatear]

Summer visitor; breeds; common spring and autumn migrant.

The first migrants of spring – two on 20 Mar followed by a single-digit trickle over the next six days – were a little later than in many recent years. The first more significant arrivals were 26 on 27 Mar, 18 on 1 Apr and 44 on 7 Apr. The peak during spring passage was 92 on 15 Apr, whereas the highest count of the year, 102 on 16 Jun, reflected the presence of family parties noted during a walk of the whole island perimeter (Dean Jones). Whilst some adults were still gathering nest material on 2 May, the first adults carrying food to nests were seen at the Quarries on 20 May, and the first fledgling (at Halfway Wall) was logged on 30th, with numerous fledged young present along the South End and West Side by 7 Jun (Dean Jones). During autumn migration an arrival of 60 on 12 Sep was by far the highest count of the season. The last record concerned a flurry of six on 21 Oct.

Birds showing plumage characteristics of 'Greenland Wheatear' *O. o. leucorhoa* were logged between 9 Apr and 10 May, with a maximum of at least eight on 23 Apr. One was also noted on 29 Sep (all records Dean Jones).

Tony Taylor has provided the following update on the long-running 'Retrapping Adults for Survival' (RAS) study of Lundy's breeding Wheatears: "*The usual three weeks of fieldwork in late May and early June were not possible because of the Covid lockdown. However, thanks to some dedicated searching by Dean Jones and other islanders, 34 different individuals colour-ringed in previous years were identified. These included 24 birds from 2019 and a further 10 from the preceding three years. Since fieldwork effort was not directly comparable with other years, the BTO was unable to calculate adult survival rates, but the records will still be very valuable in tracking the histories of the individuals involved.*"

Request. Please continue to record any Wheatear colour-ring sightings in the LFS logbook. Photos of colour-ringed birds are particularly valuable and can be sent to gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	26	92	54	102	45	36	60	6	–	–
–	–	11	27	28	20	20	20	23	10	–	–

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common breeding resident; present throughout the year; only one confirmed instance of emigration to the mainland and no confirmed immigration.

Maximum count for each month (as entered in the LFS logbook)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
59	57	38	42	55	70	39	69	50	36	–	41

The first fledglings of the year were seen on 14 May.

PhD researcher Jamie Dunning has contributed the following report on behalf of the long-running House Sparrow research programme:

Our project monitoring the House Sparrows on Lundy turned 20 in 2020 (excluding the addition of historic back-data), and it is this long-term monitoring, as well as the population's geographic isolation, which makes the Lundy Sparrow Project so valuable to ecological research. These specific factors allow us to study the genetics of the population without the frequent introduction of new genetic information from immigration/emigration, as would be the case on the mainland. This genetic pedigree, which underpins much of our research, has allowed us to continually record the pairings, infidelities and divorces, births and deaths of more than 10,000 individual sparrows. Complete genetic pedigrees are rare in wild systems because they require continued monitoring without missing a single generation. However, while the Lundy project weathered the foot-and-mouth epidemic of 2001, fieldwork in 2020 presented a particular challenge owing to the coronavirus pandemic.

Lucy Winder and I arrived in mid-June to an island in lockdown, having already missed the first two waves of House Sparrow broods. Despite this, we monitored 35 broods up to August, from which 99 chicks fledged (although some of these birds were captured as post-fledglings). Given the late start, it is difficult to compare with data from previous years. In 2019 we ringed 217 chicks from 103 broods, so the number of broods in 2020 may have been slightly down.

As of autumn 2020, we began using LFS rings for the sparrows we catch, which we hope will unify our project with other bird monitoring on the island. Indeed this also means that it is easier for visiting LFS ringers to contribute to our colour-marking work, and their efforts probably helped us catch up on what we missed early on in the breeding season.

We returned in October and November to catch, colour-mark and DNA sample those birds that we missed as fledglings. Some of these individuals can be retrospectively allocated to natal broods, based on unique genetic information derived from the parents. Despite the increased effort, we caught far fewer birds (73, including 29 ringed prior to 2020) than during the previous year's winter trip (192), which may suggest a poor breeding season, or high mortality in the early autumn of 2020.

As the preceding few seasons were particularly good, it is not unexpected that the breeding population was smaller in 2020.

We now hope, without the uncertainty of spring 2020, that our 2021 field season will proceed more normally. The apparently small breeding population may mean that we missed fewer sparrows than we feared, and that those we did miss were subsequently caught, ringed and DNA-sampled in the autumn.

We would like to thank the Conservation Team on Lundy, the Landmark Trust and the LFS for their continued support, especially over the course of what was a difficult year for everyone. Here's to warm weather and more sparrows in 2021.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Breeding resident in small numbers; small influxes of passage migrants detected occasionally in autumn.

The highest day-total of the year was 14, logged on 2 & 6 Mar and again on 11, 12 & 30 Oct. Whilst these numbers could be accounted for by the island's breeding population alone, it is likely that some dispersing or passage birds move through the island in both spring and autumn. Twelve breeding territories were located – the highest for some years (five in Millcombe, two in St Helen's Combe, one above White Beach, one at Quarter Wall Copse, two along the Terrace and one at South Light). Several adults were feeding nestlings in 'Smelly Gully' (lower Millcombe) on 24 May and the first fledglings were seen there on 30th, with some pairs embarking on second broods before the end of Jun and feeding fledglings again in Millcombe on 14 Jul (Dean Jones).

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9	8	14	12	9	12	5	8	12	14	12	4

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

[Western Yellow Wagtail]

The British race M. f. flavissima is an uncommon spring migrant, regular early autumn migrant in small numbers and occasional summer visitor. It was formerly much more numerous, particularly in autumn. The continental race M. f. flava 'Blue-headed Wagtail' occurs occasionally in spring; all other races are vagrants.

Spring migrants were recorded on nine dates from 10 Apr (two males foraging around sheep in High Street Field) to 26 May (one), with a maximum of three on both 28 Apr and 6 May – and also including one, unusually, at Jenny's Cove on 22 Apr. Autumn singles were logged on seven dates from 31 Aug to 22 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	3	3	–	–	1	1	–	–	–
–	–	–	5	4	–	–	1	6	–	–	–

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Uncommon spring migrant; common autumn migrant in small numbers; occasional summer records; rare in winter.

The only spring-passage records were of single birds on four scattered dates between 8 & 27 Mar, followed by one in Millcombe on the unusual date of 27 May. A strong autumn passage was recorded on 46 dates from 29 Aug (one) to 30 Nov (one), with a maximum of seven on both 15 Sep and 21 Oct. During the two peak months there were 28 'bird-days' (used here to mean accumulative total of daily counts) in Sep and 51 bird-days in Oct.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	–	1	–	–	1	7	7	1	–
–	–	4	–	1	–	–	1	14	26	5	–

Pied / White Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii* / *M. a. alba*

[White Wagtail]

Pied Wagtail: nests most years in small numbers; common spring and autumn migrant; rare in midwinter.

White Wagtail: occurs annually during both spring and autumn migrations.

After three scattered records in Jan and early Feb, spring passage commenced with a trickle of birds during the second half of Feb, peaked during the first half of Mar and continued at least until early May. The highest count of confirmed Pied Wagtails was 15 on 5 Mar, whilst the highest combined count of Pies and untraced 'flyover' *albas* was 23 on 11 Mar. Three Pied Wagtail breeding territories were located (Millcombe, Village allotments and Lambing Shed). A male was collecting food for nestlings in the Village on 15 May and the first two fledglings were seen in Millcombe on 7 Jun. One pair located its second nest of the season in a compost bin at Paradise Row towards the end of Jun (Dean Jones). Autumn passage was evident from the tail-end of Aug and peaked during the first half of Sep. The highest day-total was 63 on 7 Sep, all unidentified *alba* wagtails, whilst the maximum number of confirmed Pied Wagtails was 21 on 18 Sep. The last of the year was one on 26 Nov.

Maximum combined counts of Pied Wagtail & unidentified alba wagtail for each month, with proportion confirmed as Pied in bold (top); number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1(1)	5(5)	23(17)	114(10)	10(8)	10(10)	3(3)	9(5)	63(0)	15(10)	5(5)	–
2	7	27	27	30	17	20	25	30	19	7	–

Confirmed White Wagtails were recorded on 17 days during spring passage, from 20 Mar to 14 May, with a maximum of nine on 26 Apr (seven in Brick Field, two in Barton Field), and on 13 dates in autumn, from 31 Aug (one) to 7 Oct (one), with a maximum of five, in Barton Field, on 18 Sep.

White Wagtail: Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	9	2	–	–	1	5	1	–	–
–	–	2	13	2	–	–	1	11	1	–	–



Male Yellow Wagtail, High Street Field, 10th April (photo: Dean Jones).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Breeds; very common passage migrant in spring and autumn; uncommon in winter.

As is usual, very few were present in Jan and the first half of Feb. The first obvious pulses of spring migrants were towards the end of Feb, including 16 on 21st and 36 on 23rd. Passage peaked in the first half of Mar when there were five counts of 100 or more, the maximum being 214 on 3rd. Adults were gathering nesting material in South West Field on 16 Apr and continued to do so into early May, though chicks were already being fed in other nests in the same area on 8 May. The first fledglings were seen around the Quarries on 31 May, with second-brood fledglings noted from 22 Jul (Dean Jones). A steady but unspectacular autumn migration was most evident in mid-Sep when numbers exceeded 200 on four dates between 10th & 20th, including the peak count of 400 on 11th.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	36	214	98	69	89	55	60	400	190	24	9
3	17	27	28	29	22	26	23	30	30	25	14

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.

Spring passage was logged on 13 dates from 10 Apr (one over Millcombe) to 21 May; all records concerned ones and twos only. In autumn there were four on 9 Aug followed by a long gap until the next on 31 Aug. The highest count was eight on 10 Sep, whilst the last of the year was a single bird on 24 Sep.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	-	2	2	-	-	4	8	-	-	-
-	-	-	7	6	-	-	2	10	-	-	-

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

British vagrant.

The calls of one in flight over Millcombe at about 08:00 hrs on 13 Nov were recorded using a mobile phone (Dean Jones). Record accepted by BBRC – the 12th record for the island, the most recent previous occurrence being on 26 & 27 Oct 2017.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

[Eurasian Rock Pipit]

Common breeding resident; extent of migratory or dispersive movements involving Lundy unknown.

The highest count during the first winter period (and for the whole year) was 39 on 18 Jan between South End and along the West Side up to North Light. Song flight was first noted on 22 Feb in the south-east of the island (Dean Jones). The spring peak was 33 on 5 Mar, whilst the autumn maximum was 18 on 16 Oct. Adults were carrying food to nestlings along the south and east sidelands on 20 May and fledged young were noted foraging in the pig pen on 13 Jun (Dean Jones).

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
39	13	33	10	21	23	4	6	17	18	15	5

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

[Common Chaffinch]

Resident, breeding annually in small numbers. Common, at times abundant, on autumn passage; noticeable spring passage rarely recorded; winter influxes in some years.

Only single-digit counts were made during the first half of the year – consistent with the island's small resident breeding population and with no evident sign of any spring passage. Two pairs bred in Millcombe, where a female was gathering nesting material on 5 Apr and delivering food to nestlings on 15 May. The first fledglings appeared in Millcombe on 29 May. A third nest was located in Quarter Wall Copse (Dean Jones). Small post-breeding aggregations, likely involving some dispersal from the mainland, built up from the end of Aug and through Sep. Numbers reached the low 20s early in Oct, followed by a sudden mass arrival of 500 on 14th, but there were only four other three-figure counts during the rest of the month, all of 300 birds or fewer. A second wave saw numbers peak at 950 on 4 Nov and 400 the next day – the final three-figure count of the season – though small flocks continued to pass through until the end of the first week in Dec.

Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4	2	8	4	9	7	4	14	16	500	950	11

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon spring migrant; annual autumn migrant in variable numbers; occasional in winter.

There were no records for the first winter period or during spring passage. The first autumn migrant was logged on the relatively early date of 23 Sep, followed by records on a further 13 days from 15 Oct (4) to 22 Nov (1), with a maximum of six on 4 Nov.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

A single female on 16 Apr was “resting on the allotment wall after a run-in with the Pied Wagtail pair. The bird was seen again later in the afternoon foraging in Millcombe Wood” (Dean Jones *et al.*). It reappeared on Sue Waterfield's feeders on 18 Apr. Two flew over Millcombe and then south over the Castle towards the mainland on the morning of 15 Oct (Tim Davis, James Diamond *et al.*). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

[Eurasian Bullfinch]

Rare spring migrant; very rare autumn migrant.

In spring a female was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 25 Mar and a pair were foraging in Millcombe on the highly unusual date of 31 May (Dean Jones). In autumn a male and female were in Millcombe on 27 Oct, the female being seen on four further dates up to and including 5 Nov (Dean Jones *et al.*). A male ringed on Lundy in Apr 2015 was found dead in mainland North Devon on 1 Dec (see *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.88).

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrina*

Nationally scarce migrant.

A brown, second-calendar-year male was singing for about 20 minutes in Millcombe during the early morning of 1 Jun (Dean Jones). Record accepted by DBRC.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

[European Greenfinch]

Rare spring migrant; uncommon autumn migrant; occasional visitor in summer and winter.

Single birds on 13 Mar (a male in Millcombe) and 3 Apr (a female calling loudly from the Laundry garden privet) were the only records during spring passage. In autumn, migrants were logged on 14 dates from 3 Oct (4) to 4 Nov (1), with a maximum of six on 16 Oct.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

[Common Linnet]

Common breeder; spring and autumn migrant, most numerous in autumn; occasional in winter.

There were no records of overwintering birds. Spring passage started with one calling over Tillage Field on 7 Mar. There were further ones and twos after mid-month, but it was not until 23 Mar that more significant movements began, with double-digit counts logged on most days to the end of the month. Passage peaked in mid-Apr at 143 on 16th. Nest-building was first noted on 12 Apr but several pairs



Female Crossbills, Millcombe, 19th June (photo: Dean Jones).

were still gathering nesting material on 7 May. The first fledglings were logged on 2 Jun in South West Field (Dean Jones). Post-breeding flocks began to build up in late summer, with maxima of 96 on 15th Jul, 204 on 9 Aug and 250 on 11 Sep. Thereafter, autumn passage produced eight further three-figure counts to mid-Oct, the last of these being 123 on 16th, dropping away sharply to a trickle of single-digit counts from the end of Oct, through Nov and early Dec, to the last of the year, a single bird on 11 Dec.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	20	143	58	76	96	204	250	130	6	2
–	–	13	30	30	25	27	27	27	22	7	3

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant in variable numbers; rare in winter.

Unusually there was just one record of a single bird in spring, on 7 Apr. Autumn passage was logged on 28 dates from 10 Sep (one) to 8 Nov (one), with maxima of five on 21 & 23 Sep, six on 27 Sep and four on 5 Nov. There were no records for either winter period.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	6	3	4	–
–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	8	15	5	–

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

[Red Crossbill]

Rare summer and autumn migrant, occurring highly irregularly, but in large numbers during ‘invasion’ years.

One flew over Millcombe on 3 Jun, followed by two females, also in Millcombe on 19-21 Jun (Dean Jones). One was calling in flight over the Terrace on 21 Sep (Sam Bosanquet). In Oct nine flew south over Millcombe on 14th, followed by up to seven around the valley on 15th – including four perched in the Battlements sycamores (Dean Jones *et al.*), and finally a female in Millcombe on 22nd (Dean Jones).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

[European Goldfinch]

Breeds occasionally; common spring and autumn migrant; irregular in summer and winter.

Between one and three presumed overwintering birds were logged on scattered dates during Jan and Feb. Records were more frequent in late Feb and the first half of Mar, suggesting a trickle of spring passage, but it was not until the second half of Mar that a count of 19 on 17th confirmed movements were properly under way. Passage was steady but unspectacular, with no large numbers recorded. At least six breeding territories were located, including four in Millcombe and single pairs at Quarter Wall Copse and the Terrace (Dean Jones). A pair was gathering nesting material in Millcombe on 7 May, with the first fledglings seen there on 31st, and many fledged young noted on 7 Jun. Adults were again collecting nest-lining material in Millcombe, in preparation for a second brood, on 1 Jul. Numbers were consistent with the breeding population until autumn passage got going from mid-Sep. The highest counts were logged in Oct when there were four days with more than 100, the maximum being 183 on 15th. Only low single-digit counts were logged after the first week in Nov, with the exception of 11 on 1 Dec.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	3	19	24	38	21	20	28	74	183	18	11
8	8	26	30	31	27	30	27	28	28	26	11

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

[Eurasian Siskin]

Late autumn migrant in greatly varying numbers; very rare in spring.

There were only two records during the first eight months of the year: a single bird in Millcombe on 22 Apr and a male (on feeders at Paradise Row) on the unusual dates of 5 & 6 Jun. In autumn there was a markedly early and strong start to passage from 4 Sep, including 40 on 6th and 120 on 9th. Smaller movements were logged on most days during the remainder of Sep and throughout Oct (maximum 46 on 30th), then more sporadically in Nov, with the last a single bird on 1 Dec.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	120	46	10	1
–	–	–	1	–	2	–	–	22	31	14	1

Lapland Bunting *Calciarius lapponicus*

[Lapland Longspur]

Uncommon but regular autumn migrant; rare spring migrant; very rare in winter. Devon rarity.

One was in Brick Field on the exceptional date of 13 Feb (Dean Jones) – the only previous Feb record was in 1954! Autumn migrants were logged by multiple observers on 12 dates from 12 Sep (two in South West Field and one over the Terrace) to 5 Nov (one), with the majority between mid-Sep and mid-Oct. There was one further day-total of three, over Threewall on 8 Oct; all other records were of ones and twos only. Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis**Uncommon but regular autumn migrant in small numbers; uncommon spring migrant; rare in midwinter.*

There was a very unusual midwinter record of two, in flight over the Terrace, on 24 Jan (Dean Jones). Autumn passage was distinctly sparse, with records of single birds on just 12 dates from 17 Sep to 6 Dec at locations scattered across the island from Rocket Pole to North End (multiple observers). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla**Nationally scarce migrant.*

A first-winter bird was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 19 Oct (Rob Duncan, Dean Jones). Record accepted by DBRC.

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica**British vagrant.*

A female was in Millcombe for a short period during the morning of 10 May (Dean Jones). Writing for the Lundy Birds blog at the time, Dean reported that: "It was a rather quiet start in Millcombe first thing, with very few migrants moving up the Valley and into the mist-nets. As the forecast predicted, the wind picked

up and the nets had to be furled. It was then – as I was tying up the last of the nets in the Secret Garden – that I heard a bird ‘zitting’ high up on the Sycamore in the heart of the garden. Luckily, I could just about see its head through the canopy and, as I raised my binoculars, I was immediately met with a beautiful chestnut-and-white face pattern – the markings of a female Rustic Bunting! The bird then flew around the Valley for a few minutes or so, perching briefly again in the trees next to Millcombe House before flying towards St John’s Valley and out of sight.” Record accepted by BBRC – the seventh for the island.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

[Common Reed Bunting]

Regular autumn migrant in very small numbers; rare and irregular spring migrant; very rare in winter. There were four scattered records of single birds during the winter and early spring months, from 19 Jan (calling from gorse near the Old Hospital) to 23 Apr (a female in Millcombe). Thereafter, not recorded until autumn passage brought records on 12 dates from 20 Sep (one over Jenny’s Cove) to 8 Nov (one). There were three on 5 Nov (two at Quarter Wall and one at Rocket Pole); all other days involved ones and twos. The last of the year were two on the unusual date of 22 Dec.

Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	2	3	2
1	1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	7	4	1

References

Davis, T.J. & Jones, T.A. 2007. *The Birds of Lundy*. Harpers Mill Publishing for Devon Birds and LFS, Berrynarbor, Devon EX34 9TB. www.birdsoflundy.org.uk

Jones, D.W. 2020. *Cliff nesting seabird productivity on Lundy 2020*. Lundy, Bristol Channel, Devon EX39 2LY.

BIRDS SEEN ON THE CROSSING TO OR FROM LUNDY

Records of birds seen close to the island are incorporated in the main list, above. Other reports of interest for the ‘open sea’ part of the crossing are given below, but we do not cover the North Devon shoreline or the Taw & Torridge Estuary. Records for these areas should be submitted to Devon Birds (www.devonbirds.org), preferably via BirdTrack.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One on the crossing from Lundy to Bideford on 6 Aug (Dean Jones & Zoë Barton). One on 23 Jul (Josh Harris *et al.*). One on the crossing to Bideford on 8 Aug (Josh Harris).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Two on the crossing from Lundy to Bideford on 6 Aug (Dean Jones & Zoë Barton).

ESCAPE

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

An escaped, notably rufous bird, wearing jesses, was perched on the allotment wall outside Paradise Row during the evening of 16 Apr. The following day it was seen at Jenny’s Cove in the afternoon “battling through the strong winds and hordes of upset gulls” (Dean Jones) and later flying over the Village (Sue Waterfield). Record accepted (as relating to an escaped bird) by Devon Bird Recorder.

Escaped Black Kite, Paradise Row, 16th April (photo: Dean Jones).

