

BIRDS IN 2021

Nomenclature and sequence

These follow The British List (9th edition, summarised version dated 29 November 2021, including revisions in line with version 10.2 of the IOC World Bird List) 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 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. Killdeer, Rustic Bunting) 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. Barred Warbler, Red-breasted Flycatcher) 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. Pintail, Little Grebe), 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! Photographs and video-clips are especially welcome and can be emailed to assistantwarden@lundyisland.co.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.

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 2021. Further updates will be added as new observations continue build on the knowledge gained from 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 via assistantwarden@lundyisland.co.uk.



Male Wheatear, Quarter Wall, 23rd April (photo: Dean Jones).

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 particular interest. Observers are strongly encouraged to submit records for the coastal waters of the North Devon mainland, including the Taw & Torridge Estuary, to the Devon Bird Recorder (recorder@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 2021 Lundy Bird Report (as well as other LFS 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 (up until his departure in early October), together with his colleagues (including volunteers) from the island Conservation Team and in the last three months of the year, the newly appointed Assistant Warden, Stuart Cossey.

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, Richard Campey, Chris & Mandy Dee, James Diamond, Rob Duncan, Jamie Dunning, Rosie Ellis, Chas Holt, Richard & Rebecca Taylor, Tony & Ann Taylor, Martin Thorne, Jac Turner-Moss and Justin Zantboer.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF BIRDS IN 2021

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

[Brant Goose]

Lundy vagrant.

A Pale-bellied Brent Goose *B. b. hrota* was swimming in the Landing Bay during the late morning of 10 Sep and remained until 11th when it was seen in flight over Millcombe and the Village during the morning, but was back in the Landing Bay by midday (Dean Jones, Rebecca & Richard Taylor *et al.*). Later in the autumn, flocks of five and 12 Dark-bellied Brents *B. b. bernicla* were seen on 8 Nov, the smaller group heading south past South West Point in the morning, whilst the larger flock, seen from the Ugly, flew west past Rat Island and disappeared behind the south of the island (Martin Thorne). These are the 20th and 21st Lundy records of Brent Goose overall and just the fifth occurrence for the Canadian Arctic-breeding pale-bellied race.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

One that dropped in briefly to Lower Lighthouse Field on 6 Mar was relocated on 7th on Ackland's Moor where it was seen daily up to and including 18th (Dean Jones, Matt Stritch *et al.*). At the end of the year, one arrived on 21 Dec, initially being sighted along the main track north of Quarter Wall, and remained until the end of the year, spending its time together with the White-fronted Goose that arrived two days later, most often in the East Side fields (Stuart Cossey, Rosie Ellis). These are the 12th & 13th records for the island (the most recent previous occurrence being in Oct 2014). The Mar bird was only the third in spring. Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

[Greater White-fronted Goose]

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

An adult that arrived on 23 Dec was seen amidst very murky conditions during the morning in company with the Pink-footed Goose in Tent Field, and in much better light in Brick Field later in the day. It was still present on 31 Dec and, like the Pink-footed Goose with which it continued to keep company, remained into 2022 (Stuart Cossey). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Pink-footed Goose (left) and White-fronted Goose, East Side fields, 26th December (photo: Rosie Ellis).



Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

One flew in over North End at approximately 10:30 hrs on 29 Nov (Jamie Dunning). It was later briefly on Pondsburry and flying over the Village, before leaving from South End at about 11:30 hrs. The 19th LFS record, the most recent previous occurrence being Dec 2019. Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

[Eurasian Wigeon]

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

A female flew east off Quarter Wall Pond on 18 Dec and six were on Pondsburry on 21 Dec, followed by two on 23rd and four on 31st (Stuart Cossey).

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 highest pre-breeding count was 13 on 16 Jan and numbers of fully-grown birds only reached double digits on four other dates (all in Jan/Feb) until late summer. The first ducklings of the year were a brood of 12 at Quarters Pond on 6 Apr, with further broods logged on 21 Apr (12 small ducklings) through May and into Jun. The highest count of the year was 20 on 14 Sep but numbers in Dec were back to where they started the year.

Maximum monthly counts of fully-grown birds

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 13 | 11 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 15 | 20 | 19 | 14 | 13 |

Pintail *Anas acuta*

[Northern Pintail]

Lundy vagrant.

A female was flushed from Rocket Pole Marsh (= Kistvaen Pond) on 20 Dec (Stuart Cossey). The close views allowed the distinctive features to be seen – the long narrow neck and white trailing edge to the primaries. The same or another female was photographed (*right, by Stuart Cossey*) on Pondsburry a few days later on 28 Dec). These are the first records in nearly 45 years, the most 'recent' being a female in Sep 1977.



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 and 2020.

Unusually, 10 were seen on the floodwater near the water tanks on Ackland's Moor on 7 Jan. The highest counts of the first winter period were all from Pondsburry, where there were 26 on 10 Feb (one of the higher totals on record for the island), 24 on 21 Feb, and 21 on 6 Mar. Several drakes were displaying at Pondsburry on 18 Mar. Later in spring there were six on 21 Apr, five on 1 May, and three adults plus three ducklings on 22 May, confirming successful breeding for the sixth time in seven years. Two fully-grown birds with several very small young were seen on 3 Jun, followed by a female and three ducklings on 6 Jun – the final breeding-season record of the year. Following ones and twos during Jul to Oct (including two on Barton Pond in mid-Oct) the highest count in the second winter period was eight on 26 & 29 Dec.

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 | 26 | 21 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 8 |
| 7 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 13 | 2 | 2 | 11 | 4 | 11 | 7 | 17 |

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*
Uncommon passage migrant.

There were three records: six flew east off North End on 11 Sep (Martin Thorne); 30 were rafting off the Landing Bay on 8 & 10 Nov (Martin Thorne); and six distant scoter sp., thought likely to be Common Scoter, were off Brazen Ward on 29 Nov (Jamie Dunning).

Swift *Apus apus* [Common Swift]
Common spring and autumn migrant and non-breeding summer visitor, though generally in small numbers.

Recorded on 61 dates from 23 Apr (one over Jenny's Cove) to 12 Sep (one). The highest spring-passage total was 50 on 22 May, following the clearance of stormy weather on 20th/21st, whilst 30 on 30 Jun were heading south – perhaps to avoid poor weather. Four double-figure counts logged between 14 Jul and 4 Aug, with a maximum of 16 on both 20 Jul & 4 Aug, were the only real indications of autumn passage, and all occurrences after 4 Aug were of single birds only, the last of these on 12 Sep. A bird found grounded next to Government House amidst heavy rain and strong winds on 8 May was taken into care overnight and successfully released in St John's Valley on the following morning.

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 | 50 | 30 | 13 | 16 | 1 | – | – | – |
| – | – | – | 3 | 19 | 14 | 11 | 7 | 7 | – | – | – |

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).

During spring and early summer, single birds were logged on 16 dates from 20 Apr (a calling male that ranged widely from Quarter Wall Copse to St John's Valley) to 30 Jun (one on Threequarter Wall mobbed by Meadow Pipits). A juvenile was present from 25 Jul to 2 Aug, being seen in various locations, but there was no evidence that this was a Lundy-reared individual rather than one dispersing from the mainland. Feathers of a (different) predated Cuckoo were found along the Lower East Side Path on 1 Aug (Holt family). The last of the year was another juvenile on Brick Field fence on 24 Aug (Dean Jones, Adam 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 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| – | – | – | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | – | – | – | – |
| – | – | – | 2 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 2 | – | – | – | – |

Cuckoo, Threequarter Wall, 25th April (photo: Dean Jones).



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.

As usual a summer peak coincided with the main pigeon-racing season, the highest count being 21 on 3 Jul.

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

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| – | – | – | – | 25 | 18 | 21 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | – |
| – | – | – | – | 2 | 20 | 26 | 13 | 9 | 18 | 5 | – |

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Uncommon but regular spring and autumn migrant.

One over Millcombe on 6th was still present the next day, and another flew in off the sea during the afternoon of 15 Mar. Later in spring, further singles were logged on 14, 15, 27 & 30 Apr and 5, 7, 9 & 10 May. There were no further records until mid-autumn when singles birds were logged on 16 dates from 12 Oct to 4 Dec, including a long-staying bird seen frequently in Barton Field in Nov and early Dec. One was being pursued by Peregrines off the East Side on 14 Oct.

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.

Singles were in Quarter Wall Copse on 10 Jan and in Millcombe on 10 Feb, with two there on 19 Feb. After two more from 6 to 9 Mar, seen almost daily from 13th, when there was an influx bringing the total to six, rising to eight on 19th and nine on 31 Mar, followed by 10 on 9 Apr. Successful breeding was confirmed with a fledgling seen in Millcombe on 11 Jul. Numbers dwindled in Sep and remained in single digits for the rest of the year, though records were unusually frequent in Dec, with up to five on 17th & 19th being high counts for the time of year.

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 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 7 | 12 | 12 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 22 | 30 | 31 | 30 | 29 | 26 | 21 | 6 | 15 | 22 |

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

[European Turtle Dove]

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

There were just two records: one next to the Lambing Shed during the late afternoon of 31 May (Rebecca & Richard Taylor); and one at Quarter Wall Copse and Quarry Cottages on 3 Jul (Sam Bosanquet). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

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.

An early spring migrant arrived on 22 Mar and was heard singing above the gas store in Millcombe. This was followed by records on a further 32 dates throughout the spring and early summer, from 16 Apr to 30 Jun, with maxima of five on 29 May and nine on 1 Jun. Song was heard in Millcombe on 17 Apr. Later in the summer a single bird was logged on four dates from 23 to 31 Jul. The only occurrences later in the year were single birds reported on 23 Aug and 22 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 | 5 | 9 | 1 | 1 | – | 1 | – | – |
| – | – | 1 | 2 | 14 | 16 | 4 | 1 | – | 1 | – | – |

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers; bred annually 2007 to 2013 and again in 2015, 2019 & 2020; no proof of breeding for the intervening years.

Notable records early in the year included four in various parts of Millcombe on 10 Jan, one calling at Pondsburry on 26 Feb, and one calling from the slope above Quarry Beach on 14 Mar. Small numbers continued to be logged sporadically through the spring and summer, including singles on 4 Jun & 10 Jul. 'Song' was heard near Quarter Wall on 13 May and breeding in this area was confirmed when an adult and a young bird were heard calling to one another near Quarter Wall on 25 Aug. An adult male was trapped and ringed in the 'Secret Garden' (lower Millcombe) on 14 Oct. Peak numbers during autumn passage included six on 15 & 17 Oct and five on 20 & 28 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 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| 7 | 10 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 25 | 22 | 16 |

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Lundy vagrant.

A summer-plumaged adult was seen and photographed (*right, by Dean Jones*) in the Landing Bay on 30 Jul as the Holt family made their way down to the Jetty (Paul Holt, Dean Jones). This is only the fifth-ever record for Lundy, the most recent previous occurrence being one on the remarkably similar date of 26 Jul 2000.



Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

[Eurasian Oystercatcher]

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

Spring peaks were 33 on 6 Mar and 37 on 10 May, the latter including a roosting flock of 23 along the east coast at Threequarter Wall Bay. The first chicks of the year were seen on Rat Island on 2 Jun. A flock of 27 roosting at Jenny's Cove on 3 Sep provided the maximum post-breeding count.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 8 | 7 | 33 | 9 | 37 | 9 | 14 | 15 | 27 | 20 | 3 | 15 |

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

[Northern Lapwing]

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

A small cold-weather movement early in the year brought sightings on eight dates from 8 to 20 Jan, with a maximum of eight on 10th & 11th in Tillage and High Street Fields. These were followed by two on 10 Feb and one from 12 to 14 Feb (Dean Jones). There were no further records until autumn when one was hunkering down near Threequarter Wall gate on 14 Oct (Tim Davis & Tim Jones) and three flew over the Airfield on 22 Nov (Stuart Cossey).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

[European Golden Plover]

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

Up to three were logged on eight scattered dates from 9 Jan to 20 Feb, followed by small numbers during spring passage on 15 further dates from 2 Mar to 30 May, with maxima of six on 23 Apr and four in South West Field on 13 May. A stunning breeding-plumaged bird of the northern race *P. a. altifrons* was feeding in Barton Field on 12 May (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). 'Autumn' passage recorded on 23 dates from 16 Jul (one) to 28 Oct (one), with a peak of 20 on the Airfield, together with a Knot, on 13 Sep. At the end of the year, birds were logged on five days in the second half of Dec, with a maximum of 13 (in Tent Field) on 19th.

| 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 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 4 | — | 1 | 2 | 20 | 6 | — | 13 |
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 8 | — | 1 | 3 | 9 | 10 | — | 5 |

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

[Common Ringed Plover]

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

The first spring migrants were three on 23 Apr (including two foraging with five Dunlin in South West Field) followed by four on 24th and six on 25th (all in South West Field), then one at Quarter Wall on 4 May. Autumn migrants, many of which were calling 'flyovers', were logged on 14 dates from 2 Jul (one over North End) to 13 Oct. All were single birds except for two on 21 Aug and 29 Sep. Finally, a late bird was calling during the morning of 20 Nov.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant in small and declining numbers.

The first of the spring was a single bird next to the Old Light on 15 Apr. Thereafter, recorded on a further 29 dates to 18 May (two), with a maximum of seven on both 20 Apr and 12 May. Two on 5 May were in Quarter Wall Copse! In autumn, one on Rat Island on 13 Aug was followed by five in Barton Field on 19 Aug, one on 16 Sep and one on the side of Rat Island on 25 Sep.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

[Eurasian Curlew]

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

Not recorded in late winter or spring. Singles on 28 & 30 Jun and on seven dates from 1 to 23 Jul were likely early-returning failed breeders. Later migrants included singles on 7, 10 & 12 Aug, two on the Airfield on 3 Sep, and one on 5 Sep. The last of the year was one calling over Tillage Field on 10 Nov.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

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

A bird in partial breeding plumage was photographed resting on the tideline at Hell's Gates on 15 Apr (Peter Newman) – the first Lundy record since May 2017.



*Bar-tailed Godwit,
Hell's Gates, 15th April
(photo: Peter Newman).*

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Rare spring and autumn passage migrant.

One flew south, close inshore past Rat Island, together with three Oystercatchers, at about 07:00 hrs on 8 Aug (Dean Jones).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

[Ruddy Turnstone]

Increasingly uncommon spring and autumn migrant and rare winter visitor.

One was photographed in the Landing Bay on 20 May (Paul Dean) and two were seen there on 22nd (Stephen O'Donnell). In autumn, there were single flyover birds on 24 and 31 Aug (Dean Jones), whilst another spent two days around the Landing Bay on 26th & 27th (Pete Clabburn & Charles Crundwell). At the end of the year, a flock of 12 was photographed in the Devil's Kitchen on 16 Dec (Martin Thorne) – the highest Lundy count for many years, though still some way off the record of 20 in Aug 1972.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

[Red Knot]

Rare passage migrant, with all recent records in autumn, during the period Jul–Sep.

A juvenile was seen in flight over the Campsite and later photographed at Rocket Pole Pond on 30 Aug (Pete Clabburn & Charles Crundwell). A juvenile was roosting on Rat Island during the evening of 3 Sep (Jamie Dunning). Finally, one was with Golden Plover on the Airfield on 13 Sep (Louisa Bartlett, Chris Dee *et al.*). These are the first records for the island since 2018.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Rare passage migrant, with all recent records in either May or Sep; has occurred in winter.

A bird still in non-breeding plumage was along the main track on 19 Apr (Dean Jones). Two were on the eastern side of Rat Island on the afternoon of 16 May (Dean Jones & Rob Waterfield). These are the 16th and 17th spring records for the island.

Sanderling, main track, 19th April (photo: Dean Jones).



Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

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

Spring passage migrants were recorded on 12 dates from 18 Apr (one at Rocket Pole Pond) to 22 May (one), with a peak count of 14 on 27 Apr (comprising a flock of 12 flying past Old Light in the early morning, plus two at Rocket Pole Pond). In autumn, recorded on 14 dates from 24 Jul (one) to 13 Oct (one) with a maximum of seven, flying past Rat Island, on 5 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 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| – | – | – | 14 | 2 | – | 1 | 7 | 1 | 1 | – | – |
| – | – | – | 6 | 6 | – | 1 | 9 | 3 | 1 | – | – |

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Rare spring and autumn migrant; very rare in winter.

One was photographed on the rocky perimeter of Rat Island, a few metres away from a bottling Grey Seal, on 30 Oct (*photo, right, by Rosie Ellis*). Three were in the Devil's Kitchen on 13 Dec (Martin Thorne) and, unusually, one was flushed from pools by Quarter Wall on 20 Dec (Kevin Waterfall).



Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Very rare autumn migrant.

One was seen and heard during the early evening of 5 Sep as it circled over the Village, calling repeatedly for about ten seconds before flying off to the south-west. Though it was already dark, it was thought possible the bird was attracted by artificial light (Dean Jones).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

[Eurasian Woodcock]

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

Singles on 29 Jan (flushed from the 'Secret Garden', lower Millcombe), 19 & 21 Feb, and 3 Apr (flushed from a small patch of heather in Middle Park). The start of autumn passage was later than normal, with singles on 26 & 27 Oct – the only records that month. Ones and twos were logged on 14 dates in Nov (5th to 25th), mainly from Millcombe and elsewhere along the East Side. One narrowly evaded a Peregrine by diving into cliff-top scrub on 24 Nov. Four were around the Campsite before dawn on 15 Dec (Martin Thorne), followed by one on 19th – the last of the year.

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 | 2 | 4 |
| 1 | 2 | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | – | 2 | 14 | 2 |

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, mainly late September to March.

One foraging close to the water tanks on Ackland's Moor during the evening of 7 Jan (Dean Jones) was the only record for the first winter period, and there were no further occurrences until autumn. Two at Pondsburry on 13 Oct were followed by four there, plus one at Middle Park Pond, on 14th, and singles at Pondsburry and Middle Park Pond on 15th. Two or three, possibly as many as five, were flushed by torchlight in Lower Lighthouse Field during the evening of 27 Nov (Jamie Dunning), and one was at Pondsburry on 29 Nov. Finally, singles were flushed near Quarter Wall Pond on 18 Dec (Kevin Waterfall) and from Rocket Pole Marsh (= Kistvaen Pond) on 28 Dec (Stuart Cossey).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

[Common Snipe]

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

The highest count from the first winter period was 24 foraging in the farm in-fields on the evening of 29 Jan (Dean Jones). The last of spring were singles on 12 & 16 May, above North Light and at Pondsburry, respectively. The first autumn migrants were singles on four dates from 3 to 23 Aug and on three scattered dates in Sep. Logged numbers didn't rise until mid-Oct when there were 10 on 14th and 28 on 15th (of which 25 'dazzled' at night).

One caught on the night of the 7/8 Jan turned out to be a retrap that had been ringed on Lundy by Ellie Zantboer in October 2016 (see *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.98, for details).

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

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 24 | 15 | 8 | 4 | 1 | – | – | 1 | 1 | 28 | 6 | 2 |
| 5 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 2 | – | – | 4 | 3 | 9 | 13 | 7 |

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.

Single spring-passage migrants were logged on 28 & 29 Apr (by the Jetty on both dates) and 25 May (calling near Shutter Rock). Autumn migrants were similarly sparse, with one in the Landing Bay on 8 Aug, two calling along the east coast on 23 Aug, and further singles on 5 & 21 Sep, calling at night along the West Side, and in the Devil's Kitchen, respectively.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Rare spring migrant; uncommon autumn migrant.

Autumn passage migrants were logged on five dates: two flew over the Village on 23 Jul (Philip & Helen Lybery); one was at Aztec Bay (west coast) on 26th (Eleanor Grover, Sophie Smith *et al.*); one flew south past the Landing Bay on 18 Aug (Dean Jones); three were logged overhead on 31st (Jamie Dunning); and one flew over the Village during the early morning of 3 Sep (Jamie Dunning).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

[Common Redshank]

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.

Single birds were logged at Pondsby on 28 Aug (Pete Clabburn) and over the Village on 30 Aug (Dean Jones). One was feeding at a pool on the West Side on 12 Dec (Jaclyn Pearson).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Very rare autumn migrant.

A noisy individual flew low over the Jetty and Rat Island at about 13:30 hrs on 9 Aug. Another flew low over the Village at about 08:00 hrs on 15 Aug, circling low between the Castle and the Village, allowing good views before it gained height and left the island to the south-east (both records Dean Jones). A remarkable 'double whammy' given that the most recent previous occurrence was as long ago as 2000!

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

[Common Greenshank]

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.

One calling flew over the Village on 26 Aug (Dean Jones).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

[Black-legged Kittiwake]

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

Counts of 1,000 or more were logged on seven dates between 13 & 23 Jan, peaking at 2,300 on 16th – nearly all adults, with very few young birds seen (Dean Jones). The Feb peak was 733 on 15th. Small numbers were noted ashore in Jenny's Cove on 20 Mar and 190 were on the water from Jenny's Cove to St Mark's Stone on 8 Apr.

Nest-building had commenced at the Aztec Bay colony on 6 May, the first egg was seen on 15 May and the first chicks on 11 Jun (Eleanor Grover). The all-island RSPB-led seabird survey in Jun found a total of 284 apparently occupied nests (aon) – an encouraging rise of 19% since 2017, though the long-term trend remains sharply downwards, with a 70% fall in the number of

ation since 1981. Some 124 active nests were identified in the two productivity study colonies at Aztec Bay and Three-quarter Wall combined, but the great majority of these ultimately failed and only 23 chicks fledged, representing just 0.19 chicks per nest, considerably down on the 2020 productivity value of 0.66 and the lowest since the current studies began in 2017. Most nests failed at the chick-rearing stage, and multiple instances of inter-sibling aggression and one case of sibicide (killing of one chick by the other) were observed. This suggests that adults may have been struggling to find sufficient food to provision their young (Jones & Grover 2021).

In autumn and early winter, peak numbers offshore were 500 on 17 Oct, 1,000 on 4 Nov and four counts of over a thousand from 4 to 8 Dec, including 3,000 on 4th and 2,500 on 6th.

A breeding, colour-ringed bird, found by Eleanor Grover whilst surveying Puffins at Jenny's Cove on 18 Jul, had been ringed as a chick in Brittany, France in 2009. A second colour-ringed individual, seen by Eleanor at Jenny's Cove on 19 Jul, is also known to have been ringed as a chick in Brittany, in this case in 2013, but it was not possible to read the full colour-ring combination, so the exact date and site of ringing are unknown. A third colour-ringed bird, with a partially read ring-code, was loafing at Aztec Bay on 3 Jun; this individual had also been ringed as a chick in Brittany (see *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.97, for further details).

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| 2,300 | 733 | 170 | 190 | 245 | 182 | 110 | 30 | 20 | 500 | 1,000 | 3,000 |

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*
Uncommon visitor throughout the year, mainly July to October; occasional cold-weather influxes. Particularly scarce in 2021. A second calendar-year (= first-summer) bird feeding in Barton Field at sunrise on 27 Apr was followed by an adult off the Landing Bay during stormy conditions on 21 May. In autumn, a juvenile in the Landing Bay on 21 Jul and a first-winter bird off the western end of Quarter Wall on 14 Oct were followed by further singles off the East Side on four dates between 17 & 24 Oct.



*Black-headed Gull, Barton Field, 27th April
(photo: Dean Jones)*

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*
Lundy vagrant.

A first-winter bird was foraging with Kittiwake flocks offshore from the Landing Bay on 5 Feb, followed by an adult feeding east of Rat Island on 15 Feb (Dean Jones) – only the 10th and 11th records for the island. It is also the second winter running that this Lundy rarity has graced the waters off the east coast, following similar sightings of single first-winter and adult individuals in early 2020.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*
Uncommon but increasingly regular non-breeding visitor.

Records on five dates during the first winter period and early spring comprised a single adult on 2 Jan, two adults on 23 Jan & 4 Feb (of which one on the latter date was in full breeding plumage with a complete black hood), and further singles on 5 & 6 Mar. There were no further records until autumn when an adult was off Millcombe on 11 Oct, followed by an influx of 12 off the East Side on 17th and 13 on 18th, comprising eight seen from Old Light and five from the Ugly. Eleven of the 13 were adults. Later in Oct there were eight on 20th, three on 21st and “a few” on 23rd.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

[Mew Gull]

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; mainly Sep to Apr.

Early in the year, recorded on 13 dates from 2 Jan to 19 Mar, with a maximum of seven, feeding off the East Side with other gulls, on 5 & 6 Mar. In autumn two were off the East Side on 17 Oct, followed by five the next day (four off the East Side, one off Old Light; all first-winter individuals) and further ones and two on three dates to 28th. In Dec, there were six on 19th and two from 20th to 22nd, all off the East Side or North End.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Breeds; present in all months, but fewer in winter.

Numbers appear to have been low throughout most of the year, with the highest count recorded in the LFS logbook being just 29 during a walk of the whole island perimeter on 6 Mar (Dean Jones). The first eggs were seen on 1 May on Goat Island and there were chicks on Miller's Cake on 4 Jun. Fledglings were seen at The Battery from 14 Jul. The RSPB-led seabird survey in Jun found a total of 21 apparently occupied nests – a huge fall in numbers of 55% since 2017.

Maximum count for each month

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 20 | 14 | 29 | 24 | 17 | 12 | 17 | 19 | 16 | 26 | 26 | 90 |

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

[European Herring Gull]

Common but declining breeding species; present all year; generally fewer in winter, but significant influxes can occur during storms and cold snaps.

Higher counts during the first winter and early spring periods included 349 on 24 Jan and 506 on 6 Mar. The first chicks were seen near St Peter's Stone on 26 May (Dean Jones). The RSPB-led seabird survey in Jun found a total of 248 apparently occupied nests – a slight increase of 8% since 2017, but a worrying 43% lower than the 2013 total.

A sub-adult showing characteristics of the nominate race *L. a. argentatus*, known as 'Scandinavian' or 'Northern' Herring Gull, was resting on the water off Miller's Cake on 23 Jan (Dean Jones), whilst an adult of the same race sheltering from south-westerly gales with other large gulls was photographed in Lower Lighthouse Field on 20 Feb (Dean Jones). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Maximum count for each month

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 349 | 300 | 506 | 230 | 300 | 90 | 189 | 199 | 20 | 300 | 119 | 250 |

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Lundy vagrant; possibly under-recorded prior to recent records.

A third calendar-year (= second-winter) bird was photographed roosting with other gulls next to the floodwater on Ackland's Moor on 20 Feb (Dean Jones). A second calendar-year bird was close in off the East Side on 15 Dec (Stuart Cossey). These are only the 9th & 10th records for the island, following an unprecedented five records in 2020.

*Right: Second-winter Yellow-legged Gull (centre)
with nearby Herring and Great Black-backed
Gulls, Ackland's Moor, 20th February
(photo: Dean Jones).*

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Declining breeding species; common passage migrant; generally less frequent in winter, but weather-related influxes may occur and spring passage can be well underway in Feb.

Higher counts during the first winter and early spring periods included 22 roosting next to the water tanks on 29 Jan, 30 on 23 Feb, and 40 passage migrants flying north offshore on 16 Mar. Breeding birds were back on territory along the east coast on 21 Feb. The first chicks logged were above Miller's Cake on 11 Jun and fledglings were seen below the Quarries on 14 Jul. The RSPB-led seabird survey in Jun found a total of just 91 apparently occupied nests (aon) – a further drop of 31% since 2017 and a massive decline of 79% since the peak of 444 aon in 2004, in a trend that is beginning to look as though it could be terminal.

One was caught and ringed in the Lodge garden in Nov. A colour-ringed individual photographed in High Street Field on 26 Mar had previously been found in very poor condition on Malaga Beach, southern Spain on 28 Nov 2019 and subsequently taken into care before being ringed and released in Feb 2020 (see *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.103, for full details).

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 22 | 30 | 40 | 41 | 59 | 30 | 40 | 113 | 10 | 27 | 3 | 20 |

Great Skua (Bonxie) *Stercorarius skua*

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

One passed off South West Point on the morning of 20 Mar (Dean Jones). In autumn there were six on 11 Sep, including two off South West Point and four harassing Kittiwakes off North Light (Martin Thorne), whilst one flew south off Millcombe and settled on the water during the morning of 28 Oct (Justin Zantboer).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

[Pomarine Jaeger]

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

At least one dark-morph bird was seen from the Ugly at 13:20 hrs on 18 Oct (Tim Jones).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

[Parasitic Jaeger]

Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

Two – a pale-morph adult and a dark-morph bird – were pursuing Kittiwakes off the East Side at Tibbetts on 26 Sep (Shaun Robson & Marie Smith). Two pale-morph birds seen off the East Side were flying west on 17 Oct. Two (one pale, one dark) moved south past Old Light at 09:28 hrs on 18 Oct (Andy Jayne), the same day as at least two dark-morph birds were off the East Side, seen from the Ugly, at 13:20 hrs (Tim Jones). A dark-morph bird was off the East Side on 20 Oct (Tim Jones).

Unidentified skua species *Stercorarius* sp.

One flying south and seen from the Ugly on 27 Oct was thought probably to be an Arctic Skua but was too distant to identify with binoculars only (Eleanor Grover).



Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

[Common Murre]

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

Higher counts from the late winter and spring included 1,320 on ledges between Jenny's Cove and St Mark's Stone on 23 Jan; 1,110 at Jenny's Cove on 4 Feb; 1,356 ashore at Jenny's Cove on 7 Mar; and c.2,500 on 7 May. The first egg of the season was noted at Jenny's Cove on 27 Apr (Eleanor Grover). Flooding of some ledges due to two days of unusually heavy rain at the end of May led to the loss of a number of eggs (e.g. 13 eggs lost in one section of the study plot at St Mark's Stone). The first chick was seen at the study plot on 31 May, with the first 'jumplings' logged on 20 Jun. All but two young had left St Mark's Stone by 11 Jul. There was a record number of breeding attempts in the study plot – with some 232 apparently occupied sites, but productivity appeared to have been slightly down (Dean Jones). The RSPB-led survey of cliff-nesting seabirds in Jun recorded a spectacular total of 9,880 individuals – some 59% higher than during the last full survey in 2017 when 6,198 were counted.

Maximum count for each month*

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1,320 | 1,110 | 1,356 | 750 | 2,500 | 9,880 | 1,152 | 2 | 23 | 75 | 17 | 80 |

*From Oct to Dec, up to 1,440 unidentified auks were periodically counted offshore; these will doubtless have comprised a mix of both Razorbills and Guillemots.



Razorbill *Alca torda*

Common and increasing breeder, though still in smaller numbers than formerly; scarcer between August and February, with most remaining well offshore.

The first seen ashore on the breeding cliffs were three at the southern end of Jenny's Cove on 4 Feb (Dean Jones), with the first large-scale occupancy being 400 on land at Jenny's Cove on 27 Feb (Dean Jones). The first egg of the season was noted at Jenny's Cove on 29 Apr (Eleanor Grover). As for Guillemot, the RSPB-led survey of cliff-nesting seabirds in Jun recorded a large increase since the last full survey in 2017: a total of 3,533 individuals in 2021 compared to 1,735 just four years previously, representing an astonishing doubling of numbers over that period.

| Maximum count for each month* | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 35 | 400 | 599 | 250 | 1,100 | 3,533 | 150 | 4 | 20 | 188 | 6 | 20 |

*From Oct to Dec, up to 1,440 unidentified auks were periodically counted offshore; these will doubtless have comprised a mix of both Razorbills and Guillemots.

Unidentified auk species *Uria/Alca* spp.

| Maximum count for each month | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 600 | 300 | 1,000 | 60 | 50 | – | – | – | 6 | 1,440 | 300 | 300 |

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

[Atlantic Puffin]

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

The first of the year were three on the water with other auks at Jenny's Cove on 6 Mar, with four the following day (Dean Jones). There were no further records until seven on 17 Mar (including the first on land at Jenny's Cove) and an impressive Mar count of 75 (of which 25 ashore) on 21st. Later maxima in spring included 167 (of which 121 ashore) at Jenny's Cove on 8 Apr, 104 on 17 May and 210 on 31 May. Observations of the productivity study slope at Jenny's Cove located 346 active burrows, up by 33% from 261 in 2020. Adults were first seen delivering fish to burrows on 26 May, the first 'puffling' was seen on 30 Jun (a day earlier than the first in 2020), and the last provisioning of chicks was logged on 29 Jul. Some 214 chicks were recorded in the productivity plot, giving an overall productivity value of 0.62 chicks per active burrow, up from 0.51 chicks per burrow in 2020 (Jones & Grover 2021). The all-island RSPB-led survey of cliff-nesting seabirds in Jun recorded a new post-rat eradication record total of 848 individuals, some 126% higher than the 375 counted during the last comparable survey in 2017. There were still at least 250 birds present on 22 Jul, but numbers fell rapidly after that and the last of the breeding season was one in Jenny's Cove on 1 Aug. In late autumn, three were seen off North End on the unusual date of 24 Nov (Stuart Cossey).

| Maximum count for each month | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| – | – | 75 | 167 | 210 | 848 | 625 | 1 | – | – | 3 | – |

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

[Red-throated Loon]

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

During the first winter period and early spring, recorded on 36 dates from 6 Jan (one) to 4 Apr (two), with maxima of 10 on 7 Jan and nine on 22 Feb. Interestingly, there had been no records in Nov/Dec 2020, so the early Jan 2021 records were the first of the winter. A similar pattern was evident in 2019/20 with just three scattered records in Nov/Dec followed by frequent records from Jan onwards.

Left: Auk ledges in Jenny's Cove, 8th May (photo: Dean Jones).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

[Common Loon]

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers, mainly Oct to Mar.

Wintering birds and spring-passage migrants were recorded on 25 dates between 2 Jan and 21 May. All records were of single birds, with the exception of two off the Terrace on 14 Mar. All were off the East Side between the Landing Bay and Halfway Wall Bay. In autumn, two were in the Landing Bay on 28 Oct (Justin Zantboer). These were followed by records on a further 17 dates to the end of the year, mainly of ones and twos, but there were three on 14 Dec and four on 19th. Two that flew in and settled in the Landing Bay on 8 Nov “*created quite a bow wave*” and could be heard from the Ugly as they called (Martin Thorne).

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 | – | – | – | – | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| 8 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 4 | – | – | – | – | 3 | 7 | 12 |

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

[European Storm Petrel]

Uncommon passage migrant; apparently increasing numbers during the breeding season; size of the breeding population currently estimated at 50 or more breeding pairs.

Three together flew past Rat Island during the late afternoon of 21 May after two days of very wet and windy conditions, westerly gusts reaching 60 mph. Surveys located 16 birds on 2 Jul and a further 17 on 14 Jul (see below). One was ringed on the West Side during the night of 5/6 Sep and six were trapped at North End on 8 Sep (Dean Jones).

The Conservation Team visited North End on 2 Jul to look for occupied nest sites by playing recordings of Storm Petrel calls down suitable-looking entrance holes and crevices. A total of 13 birds responded, though more were present, evidenced by many distinctively smelly burrows! Excitingly, some of the responses came from areas where birds have not been found previously, including some of the old walls built by Trinity House over a century ago. As not all breeding ‘stormies’ respond to call playback, a statistical correction factor (calculated from research conducted at colonies elsewhere) has to be applied to derive a more accurate population estimate. Taking this adjustment into account, the last survey at North End, conducted by the RSPB in 2018, yielded an estimate of 11 apparently occupied sites (AOS). Applying the same methodology to this year’s survey produced an estimate of 31 AOS – nearly three times the 2018 figure. Also on 2 Jul, Chris Baillie made another exciting discovery whilst exploring boulder scree below the Battery at dusk. Here Chris saw a number of adults – six estimated, but possibly up to eight – in an area often considered as providing good potential nesting habitat. Occupancy was confirmed shortly afterwards by 17 responses to call playback on 14 Jul. Also taking into account the discovery in early Jun (by the RSPB seabird survey team) of a further new breeding site along the East Side, Lundy is now known to hold at least 50 breeding pairs of Storm Petrels – a superb result in a relatively short period of time following the eradication of rats. Extensive surveys conducted in 2010 failed to find any birds at all.

Storm Petrel ringing in 2021 (contributed by Tony Taylor)

After the successes of 2020, it was only possible to target Storm Petrels at the colony near North Light on two nights. These were in early Jul and Sep, either side of the dates that have been most productive in recent past years.

In Jul, five new birds were ringed and four others recaptured. Two had originally been ringed on Lundy, in 2019 and 2020. The others had both been ringed near Land’s End, Cornwall, in Aug 2018. In Sep, the North Light site produced another four new birds, one Lundy-ringed bird from 2019 and one ringed on Skomer Island, Pembrokeshire, in late Jul 2021. One further bird was caught and ringed in early Sep, while Manx Shearwaters were being targeted with a mist-net at their main colony north of the Old Light.

While the totals were low compared with 2020, these results add to our knowledge of the petrels visiting Lundy. Some are long-term regulars, probably breeding there, while others are wanderers from elsewhere, perhaps younger birds prospecting for future breeding sites.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

[Northern Fulmar]

Common breeder; recorded in all months, but scarce between mid-Sep and mid-Nov and almost absent during Oct moult at sea.

The highest count from the first winter period was 120 on ledges on 16 Jan. There were 146 on 17 May, though no record of the area(s) covered by this count. There were 34 apparently occupied nest sites in the Gannets' Rock productivity study plot, where the first chicks were logged on 27 Jun and the first fledglings on 16 Aug. Productivity there was identical to the previous year at 0.47 chicks fledged per nest site – 16 chicks fledged from 34 active nest sites in 2021, compared with 17 chicks from 36 sites in 2020 (Jones & Grover 2021). The all-island RSPB-led seabird survey in Jun found a total of 265 apparently occupied nest sites – an increase of 17% since the last full survey in 2017 and the highest total yet recorded on Lundy, representing a rise of nearly 50% from pre-rat eradication numbers. After the first week of Sep there were singles only on 16th and 18th, then a complete absence from 19 Sep to 9 Nov during the post-breeding moult period. Numbers rose during late autumn and early winter, reaching 20 on 17 Nov, 30 on 24 Nov, 39 on 14 Dec, and 87 on 26 Dec.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 120 | 64 | 66 | 62 | 146 | 69 | 68 | 20 | 7 | – | 30 | 87 |

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea*

Lundy vagrant

One flew south towards Hartland Point during a seawatch from Montagu Steps on 10 Nov; another, or possibly the same individual, was seen about 25 minutes later. One was off South West Point on 15 Dec (all records Martin Thorne).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Common breeder and passage migrant; usually seen from March to September; occasional records in Oct/Nov. Exceptional in winter.

One was watched offshore from the Landing Bay, foraging among Kittiwakes, for about 15 minutes on the highly unusual date of 13 Jan (Dean Jones). The first arrivals of spring were in early Mar, with one off The Battery on 6th, followed by low single-digit counts until 15th, then 160

Manx Shearwater, Lundy crossing, 11th May (photo: Richard Campey).



on 20th and 222 flying past Rat Island in 30 minutes during stormy weather on the morning of 26th. Birds were heard calling over the island during the evening of 30 Mar and an adult was calling repeatedly from its burrow along the western edge of South West Field during the afternoon of 14 Apr. Peak daytime counts later in the season included a raft of 500 off the West Side during the evening of 27 May. Adults were incubating eggs in six of the nestboxes at the Old Light colony on 1 Jun. The first chick was recorded on 16 Jun (estimated to be about a week old) and all six boxes held healthy chicks, of which five were still at the 'fluffy grey down' stage when checked again on 4 Aug. The year's highest number counted offshore in daylight hours was a modest 800 on 13 Aug but does not reflect the true size of the island's breeding population. One was off the Ugly on 18 Oct, followed by three on 21st and the last of the year, two on 8 Nov, were calling at night and coming close inshore just north of the western end of Quarter Wall (Eleanor Grover).

Manx Shearwater ringing in 2021 (contributed by Tony Taylor)

With shearwater chicks being targeted for just one week in early September, the number ringed was 107, along with another four young birds that had made their first flight but not yet left the island. This is the lowest chick total since 2007, but reflects the relatively few nights spent in the colonies, and the fact that many had already fledged by that stage of the season.

In contrast, the total of 186 adults ringed in the year was impressive, largely thanks to several nights spent searching for them in June, when weather conditions were ideal for catching breeding adults as well as pre-breeders prospecting for nest sites. In addition, 76 birds that had been ringed on Lundy in previous years were recaptured. They included 47 originally ringed as adults, and 19 of these have now continued returning to Lundy for five years or more. The remaining 29 provided particularly valuable data as they had been ringed as chicks and so were of known age. The oldest of these hatched in 2013 but over half of them were from 2018 alone, reflecting the fact that most young shearwaters start looking for burrows and partners at three years of age.

Seven of the shearwater nestboxes were occupied. Six were used by the same pairs as in previous years, with all of these successfully rearing chicks. The seventh contained one of its previous occupants, with a new partner. Typically, a pair takes time to establish a strong bond before attempting breeding; these two birds did not lay but there is a strong likelihood they will do so in 2022. Though the sample size provided by the boxes is still small, the results so far suggest that adult survival rates and breeding success on Lundy are both very high.

See also *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.98.

| Maximum count for each month | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 1 | – | 222 | 40 | 500 | 16 | 300 | 800 | 27 | 3 | 2 | – |

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*
Scarce autumn visitor and passage migrant.

Two, viewed from the Ugly, flew west past Rat Island, approximately five minutes apart, alongside numerous Manx Shearwaters, at around 07:30 hrs on 7 Aug, a day of strong westerly winds and heavy rain (Dean Jones). Four were off North Light on 11 Sep (Martin Thorne).

Gannet *Morus bassanus* [Northern Gannet]
Common offshore, especially from spring to autumn, with peak numbers usually in late summer; less frequent in winter; formerly bred (until early 1900s).

Higher counts during the first half of the year included 26 on 14 Jan and 30 on 9 & 31 May. By far the biggest counts of the year were 282 on 18 Oct and 332 on 20th – the latter during westerly gales and torrential showers. A count of 80 on 28 Dec was unusually high for so late in the year.

| 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 | 13 | 17 | 10 | 30 | 4 | 8 | 43 | 36 | 332 | 30 | 80 |
| 15 | 9 | 20 | 10 | 21 | 5 | 13 | 24 | 24 | 27 | 21 | 23 |

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

[Great Cormorant]

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

Spring migrants were logged on just ten dates from 23 Mar (three circling high over the Landing Bay) to 13 Jun (one), with a maximum of seven (flying north over the Jetty) on 25 Mar. A juvenile was recorded on 25 Jul. Southbound flocks of migrants were noted on three dates in Sep: 13 on 8th, eight on 11th and 10 on 16th. The last of the year was a single juvenile seen on Rocket Pole Pond on six dates from 25 to 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 |
| – | – | 7 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 13 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| – | – | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 10 | 4 | 6 |



Juvenile Shag, Landing Bay, 11th September (photo: Richard Taylor).

Shag *Gulosus aristotelis*

[European Shag]

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

There were single-digit counts only in the first half of Jan, rising to 12 on 16th and 15 on 29th, then 41 on 10 Feb (including a raft of 33) as breeding birds arrived to take up their territories. Later in spring a raft of 105 was in the Landing Bay, sheltering from south-westerly gales, on 13 Mar. Birds were nest-building along the East Side on 23 Mar. The RSPB-led seabird survey in Jun found a total of 96 apparently occupied nests (aon). This represents a 74% increase since the last full survey in 2017, but is 14% below the 2013 total of 112 aon (the highest recorded in the current survey series, dating back to 1981). Fledglings were swimming around South West Point on 13 Jul. The highest post-breeding counts were 110 on 31 Jul and 100 on 4 Aug (compared to a maximum of 167 on 9 Aug 2020, perhaps suggesting poor breeding productivity in 2021). Numbers dwindled rapidly from late autumn, with 12 the highest count after early Nov.

| Maximum count for each month* | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 15 | 41 | 105 | 49 | 27 | 47 | 110 | 100 | 51 | 50 | 20 | 12 |

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Lundy vagrant.

One, first seen from Millcombe at about 10:00 hrs on 29 Oct, circled over the Landing Bay and was mobbed by a Great Black-backed Gull before dropping down out of sight somewhere between St Helen's Copse and Quarter Wall Copse. Justin Zantboer, the astonished but quick-thinking observer, managed to take a video-clip (albeit blurry and distant!) on his phone of what is only the second-ever occurrence for Lundy after one in May 1987. Record accepted by DBRC.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Uncommon visitor; most regular from midsummer to early autumn.

After singles on 12 May (being harried by gulls and corvids as it flew along the east coast) and 20 Jun there were late-summer and autumn sightings on 45 dates from 8 Jul (one) to 21 Nov (one), with the year's peak of three on 22 Sep and 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 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | – |
| – | – | – | – | 1 | 1 | 14 | 2 | 13 | 12 | 4 | – |

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

[Great Egret]

Colonising UK breeder; Devon rarity. Only one previous Lundy record, in 2020.

One flew south off the East Side mid-morning on 17 Oct and headed south-south-east over Rat Island and Surf Point before veering more south-westerly past South Light and the Castle and then heading towards the Cornish coast (Tim Jones *et al.*). This is only the second record for the island, following a group of three off South End on 8 Dec 2020. Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Scarce passage migrant.

Two were seen at the Devil's Kitchen on 29 Aug (Jamie Dunning). One flew past North Light on 12 Dec (Jaclyn Pearson).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

[Western Osprey]

Scarce, but now almost annual passage migrant.

One was seen in flight off Quarry Beach during the afternoon of 8 May, coming as a huge surprise on a day of persistent rain and blustery winds. It was initially picked up due to the cries of the many gulls and Carrion Crows mobbing it. With a Peregrine in tow as well, the bird headed for shore – only to experience a near miss with Lundy Warden Dean Jones standing on the path to Quarry Beach! – before heading back out to sea.

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.

The first of the year were singles during spring passage on 20 Mar (a female over Millcombe), 31 Mar (a male) and 5 & 22 Apr, followed by one on the unusual date of 29 Jun. Autumn passage migrants were relatively thin on the ground, being recorded on 25 dates from 8 Sep (a single male) to 23 Nov, with two on 23 Sep and 14 Oct the only instances of more than one in a day.

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 | 1 | – |
| – | – | 2 | 2 | – | 1 | – | – | 7 | 13 | 5 | – |

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

[Western Marsh Harrier]

Rare passage migrant in spring and during late summer and autumn.

A female or immature first seen over Pondsburry on 24 Jul (M. Smith) remained on the island for some time, being logged periodically up to and including 12 Aug (multiple observers). It was mostly seen either around Pondsburry or quartering the slopes and combes in the north-east of the island. However, it travelled further south on 11 Aug, when it was photographed – perched on a recently deceased sheep on Ackland's Moor – by Marisco bar manager Ash Garfoot from his bathroom window in Old Light Cottage! Later in the autumn one flew in off the sea from the south-east, appearing to make landfall somewhere around the Terrace, at 08:50 hrs on 15 Oct. It was later quartering near Pondsburry at 11:05 hrs and then at various locations across the island, before thermalling and heading off for the Welsh coast in mid-afternoon (Paul Holt, Tim Jones *et al.*).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant and rare winter visitor.

Three autumn records of 'ring-tail' (female or immature) birds: one over Tent Field during the afternoon of 20 Sep (Chris Dee); one watched quartering and dropping into roost at Pondsburry on 5 Oct (J. Ross); and one in flight over Tillage and Brick Fields on 10 Oct (Paul Holt).

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

[Common Buzzard]

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

A strikingly pale individual was seen daily from 7 to 15 Apr when it ranged widely over the southern half of the island (Rosie Ellis, Dean Jones *et al.*).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant and rare winter visitor.

Singles (perhaps one and the same individual) were logged during spring passage on 12 May, flying out of Gannets' Combe (Michael Williams), and during the evening of 17 May, flushed from the Rocket Pole area (David Nadin). One was over the sidelands near Montagu Steps at about 09:00 hrs on 15 Dec (Stuart Cossey).

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

[Eurasian Hoopoe]

Nationally scarce migrant.

During the afternoon of 27 Apr, two were on and around the Terrace, at times chasing each other, much to the delight of visiting day-trippers (names unknown) who later alerted Rob Duncan & David Kightley who were ringing in Millcombe. Island staff who shot along to the Terrace after sending off MS *Oldenburg* were treated to spectacular prolonged views of at least one Hoopoe that remained foraging in the area until dusk (Ben Arkless, Jo Farrow, Dean Jones & Matt Stritch). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Hoopoe, Terrace, 27th April (photo: Dean Jones).





Wryneck, Terrace, 29th August (photo: Dean Jones).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

[Eurasian Wryneck]

Nationally scarce migrant.

One was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 29 Aug (Jamie Dunning & Dean Jones). A very showy, unringed individual was photographed as it perched prominently on the Terrace Trap on 5 Sep (D. Doorly, Dean Jones). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

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

A female was trapped and ringed in Millcombe during the evening of 24 Apr (Rob Duncan, David Kightley *et al.*), remaining until 26th when it was seen in the courtyard Sycamore outside Old House North. A juvenile male turned up in the willows at 'Rüppell's Quarry' on 7 Sep (Dean Jones) and had moved to St Helen's Copse and then Millcombe by 8th, where it remained until 15th, being trapped and ringed on 14th (Chris Dee *et al.*). Half of Lundy's 34 records of this once exceptional rarity have been since 2010.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

[Common Kestrel]

Common visitor in small numbers, mainly in spring and autumn; has bred (most recently in 2005 & 2020).

Not recorded until the second half of Apr, when single birds were logged on eight dates from 17th (a male hunting along South End) to 29th. Single male and female birds were present on several dates during the first half of May, then two (sexes unspecified) on 27 & 28 May. Only scattered singles were logged in Jun and there was never any evidence of a territory-holding pair. Later in the summer, six were logged on 26 Jul, including three along the West Side south of Halfway Wall, whilst the remains of a Kestrel predated by a Peregrine were found along the Lower East Side Path on 2 Aug. Five were hovering together over the Upper East Side Path on 5 Sep and three were logged on five other dates in Sep, but there were ones and twos only from Oct to Dec, the last of the year a single bird on 21 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 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| – | – | – | 8 | 13 | 8 | 16 | 21 | 27 | 17 | 2 | 6 |

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers; very rare in summer.

There were no overwintering birds on the island. During spring passage, single birds were recorded on 18 dates from 24 Mar (one flushed at Quarter Wall) to 18 May. The first of autumn

passage was an adult male perched below the Terrace on 28 Aug, followed by singles on three scattered dates in Sep. The main autumn passage occurred as usual in Oct, though numbers were relatively low, involving ones and two only, except for three on 14th. One was seen regularly through Dec and into the start of Jan 2022, indicative of an overwintering bird. On 24 Dec it was repeatedly stooping on and harrying a Goldfinch, before finally catching the unfortunate passerine and flying off with its meal towards the Upper East Side Path (Stuart Cossey).

| 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 |
| – | – | 3 | 9 | 6 | – | – | 1 | 3 | 22 | 15 | 14 |



Hobby *Falco subbuteo* [Eurasian Hobby]
Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant.
 Three records: one flew past the island off South West Field during the afternoon of 29 May (Rebecca & Richard Taylor); an adult (*photo, above, by Philip Lymbery*) was hunting over Barton and St Helen’s Fields at 09:50 hrs and near St Helen’s Copse at 15:00 hrs on 23 Jul; and one flew south past Millcombe during the late morning of 8 Sep (Tony Taylor).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* [Peregrine Falcon]
Breeds; recorded in all months in recent years.
 There were five territory-holding pairs, of which three fledged a total of six young (Dean Jones). The highest count of the year was eight on 13 Oct.

| Maximum count for each month | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 2 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 5 |

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

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*
British vagrant.
 Lundy’s tenth Red-eyed Vireo, and the third during the last four years, was found by Jac Turner-Moss at about 08:30 hrs on 16 Oct, just above the walled gardens of Millcombe, where he was ringing alongside Rob Duncan. Just moments later, but before other nearby birders arrived, the bird dropped out of sight. Happily, after a few slightly anxious minutes’ wait, it was relocated in ‘Smelly Gully’ (lower Millcombe) by Tim Davis. It was then seen well by most observers, at times prominently perched in full sun, before again disappearing for a short time. It reappeared near Millcombe House before taking several long flights around the valley at around 10:15 hrs, moving between the tree nursery adjoining the ‘Secret Garden’, the tops of Turkey Oaks west of Brambles, and the Battlements Sycamores. Record accepted by BBRC.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

[Eurasian Golden Oriole]

Nationally scarce migrant.

An elusive sub-adult male was calling and singing in Millcombe in the early morning of 11 May. As more observers arrived and were able to watch and listen in different parts of the valley, it became clear that two birds were in fact present – the relatively greenish sub-adult seen earlier and a much brighter-yellow, more adult individual. Both birds remained in the vicinity of Millcombe and St Helen's Copse until 14th, with the brighter bird also seen on the morning of 15th (Dean Jones *et al.*). This is the fourth consecutive year that Golden Oriole has occurred on Lundy, with at least 16 individuals occurring in the past decade alone. Records accepted by DBRC.

Chough *Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

[Red-billed Chough]

Lundy vagrant; bred until the late nineteenth century.

Two were seen over the Landing Bay by Richard Dann, standing on the Jetty, on 23 Oct. Hailing from the Welsh coast, Rich sees Choughs daily over his garden, but was amazingly lucky to run into two on Lundy at the start of his very first visit to the island! This is the first sighting since 2013. Record subject to acceptance by DBRC.

Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*

[Western Jackdaw]

Rare spring migrant; very rare autumn migrant and winter visitor.

Single birds were logged on 13 dates from 1 Mar to 1 Apr, followed by two on 2 & 3 Apr and further singles 14, 15 & 17 Apr (Dean Jones *et al.*). All sightings were in the south of the island, mainly High Street Field and Ackland's Moor but also in Brick Field and the Campsite. In autumn, four were over the South End and Village on 9 Oct (Paul Holt). One was reported along the Goat Path (above the Beach Road) on 17 Dec (Kevin Waterfall).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus**Rare spring migrant; very rare autumn migrant and winter visitor.*

Two, foraging with Carrion Crows in South West Field on 30 Mar, were followed by one in Tillage Field, also alongside Carrion Crows, on 26 Apr (both records Dean Jones).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone**Breeds; present throughout the year.*

The highest count prior to the breeding season was 43 on 3 Jan. Five were seen leaving the island on a northbound trajectory on 22 Mar, whilst a pair was nest-building in Millcombe on the same date. The first fledglings were logged on 2 Jun in Millcombe. Maximum post-breeding counts were between 22 and 29 from early Aug to late Dec, when 44 were logged on 28 Dec (Matt Stritch).

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 43 | 36 | 35 | 21 | 23 | 14 | 10 | 26 | 22 | 24 | 29 | 44 |

Raven *Corvus corax*

[Northern Raven]

Breeds; present throughout the year; occasional influxes from the mainland.

A territorial pair at the South End were gathering nesting material in the first week of Feb. Nine were together over Millcombe on 10 Apr and nine, plus two young in the nest at South End, were also logged on 11 & 13 May. The South End chicks fledged on 22 May – an unusually late date for a traditionally early nester. Peak autumn counts were 14 on 17 Sep and 15 on 13 & 14 Oct, followed by 23 on 11 Nov – by far the highest count of the year.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 6 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 11 | 9 | 14 | 15 | 23 | 11 |

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

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

A bird ringed on 15 Oct 2020 and which showed plumage characteristics suggesting that it might belong to the Irish-breeding race *P. a. hibernicus* (see *LFS Annual Report 2020*, p.66) overwintered on the island and was logged on 18 dates from 10 Jan to 12 Mar, mainly in Millcombe but also at Quarter Wall Copse on 17 Feb.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

Lundy vagrant.

An early spring migrant foraging in Barton Field on 27 Feb (*photo below by Dean Jones*) was only the second Feb record for Lundy, the first dating back nearly 70 years to 1952! Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

[Eurasian Skylark]

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

Single-digit counts were logged until an influx in the last week of Jan brought 22 on 23rd and 18 on 25th & 29th. The highest late-winter and early-spring counts were 44 on both 12 Feb and 7 Mar. Song was heard intermittently from 7 Jan. At least 52 breeding territories (singing males) were mapped out in 2021 (Dean Jones). Successful breeding was confirmed when chicks were being fed in Middle Park on 16 Jun. Autumn passage peaked in mid-Oct, with maxima of 70 on 13th and 65 on 16th, numbers dwindling rapidly thereafter with single-digit counts only from 18 Oct to the end of the year.

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

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 22 | 44 | 44 | 26 | 43 | 50 | 17 | 9 | 27 | 70 | 9 | 3 |
| 17 | 27 | 30 | 30 | 31 | 30 | 30 | 24 | 22 | 28 | 19 | 15 |

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Common spring and autumn migrant; occasional in summer.

One at Pondsburry on 26 Feb was the second-earliest ever for Lundy (after one on 24 Feb 2019). The next was not until a more seasonally punctual bird on 18 Mar, followed by three other single-digit counts to 25th but then an exceptionally high Mar count of 212 on 29th. The only other counts of 100 or more were 100 on 18th and 200 on 20th Apr, followed by 150 on 1 May. Fourteen on 30 Jun (the only record that month) seem likely to have been early-returning migrants, possibly failed breeders. These were followed by records on a further 30 dates, with maxima of 32 on 4 Aug, 25 on 26 Aug and 27 on 15 Sep, the last of the year being a single bird on 10 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 | 212 | 200 | 150 | 14 | 5 | 32 | 27 | 1 | – | – |
| – | 1 | 7 | 21 | 13 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 19 | 1 | – | – |

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

[Barn Swallow]

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

The first arrival of spring, a single bird flying low over the Village on 16 Mar, was followed by two on 17th, a further singleton on 27th, and then an exceptionally early three-digit total of 162 on 29 Mar – a record Mar count for Lundy. Higher counts in Apr were 232 on 8th, 400 on 18th, 5,000 on 25th (including 1,449 moving north past the western end of Threequarter Wall in an hour – Dean Jones & Zoë Barton), 600 on 27th and 400 on 29th. May kicked off with a surge estimated at 3,500 on 1st. The next highest count was 700 on 7th. Unfortunately, poor weather in the second week of May meant that many were struggling to feed – some were warmed up in the Lodge bathrooms and later released. Both Swallows and martins were grounded on the Landing Bay beach on 8th and several were found dead in the gas store and Casbah in Millcombe on and around 10th.

It was something of a relief when a returning pair took up their nesting territory in the Church porch once more from 14th. However, poor weather struck again on 20 May when passage hirundines were grounded on the Beach Road and along the tracks in Millcombe. The highest count in the second half of May was 140 on 27th and the final double-digit count of the season was 13 on 2 Jun. In all, three pairs made breeding attempts: in the Church porch where seemingly one young fledged, while a subsequent attempt there failed at the egg stage; another pair tried at Government House but failed; and another next to the Black Shed also failed and moved on. There was no indication of nesting at either Quarry Pond or the pigsty in 2021.

Small pulses of southbound migrants in Aug and early Sep increased to 53 on 10 Sep, followed by 145 on 12th, 253 on 15th and 1,500 on 16th, with further waves of 800 on 18th, 500 on 21st and 400 on 24th. Wet and windy weather once again saw many tired and bedraggled individuals perched on vegetation or sitting on the ground along the East Side on 30th. Movements continued throughout Oct, including five counts of 100 or more in the first half of the month (maximum 203 on 9th), and into early Nov when there were still five on 2nd. The last of the year was one on 6 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 |
|-----|-----|-----|-------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| – | – | 162 | 5,000 | 3,500 | 13 | 11 | 28 | 1,500 | 203 | 5 | – |
| – | – | 6 | 30 | 31 | 30 | 31 | 30 | 30 | 31 | 5 | – |

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

[Common House Martin]

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

Following two over Tibbetts on 17 Mar and one on 31st, numbers were low during the first half of Apr, with a maximum of just 15, but rose to 40 on 18th and 400 on 25th. Migration peaked with an exceptional 1,500 on 1 May – the second highest total on record for the island after an estimated 3,600 on 20 May 2008. Passage continued throughout May, the next highest totals logged being 80 on 7th, 90 on 26th and 75 on 27th (but see Swallow account above for comments on the impact of adverse weather conditions during spring migration). A trickle of northbound movement continued during the first fortnight in Jun and there were a few scattered occurrences of ones and twos later in the summer. Autumn passage migrants were logged on 34 dates in Sep and Oct, with peaks of 40 on 8 Sep, 50 on 21 & 22 Sep, 55 on 1 Oct and 65 on 11 Oct. The last of the year were three on 26 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 | 400 | 1,500 | 13 | 2 | 2 | 50 | 65 | – | – |
| – | – | 2 | 24 | 26 | 13 | 4 | 1 | 15 | 19 | – | – |

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Very rare autumn migrant and exceptional in spring/early summer; has overwintered once (2008/09).

Two in Quarter Wall Copse on 18 Mar were only the fifth Mar occurrence for Lundy. They were watched foraging for a while before heading north towards the Terrace and out of sight. One in Millcombe from 21 to 31 Mar – in the same tree as a Treecreeper on 21st – was trapped and ringed on 30th. (All records Dean Jones.)

Long-tailed Tit, Millcombe, 25th March (photo: Dean Jones).



Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant, occurring with declining frequency.

One photographed at Quarter Wall Copse on 14 May was feeding at ground level in unseasonably cool and damp conditions, slowly working its way north along the sidelands (Tim Jones). In autumn, single birds were logged on five dates from 1 to 9 Sep – in Millcombe on 1st & 2nd (Jamie Dunning & Dean Jones) and in the Terrace willows on 7th (Eleanor Grover), with possibly the same bird in Quarter Wall Copse on 8th & 9th (Dean Jones, Paul Dietrich & Peter Ward).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Nationally scarce migrant.

Reflecting a very poor autumn for this species in the UK and across Western Europe more generally, there were records on just seven dates from 11 to 22 Oct, all in or around Millcombe and St Helen's Copse. Two were present on 14th & 15th, with single birds on the other five dates (James Diamond *et al.*). Three were trapped and ringed (Rob Duncan *et al.*).

Sulphur-bellied Warbler *Phylloscopus griseolus*

Not previously recorded in Britain; the Lundy record is only the second for the entire Western Palearctic, following one in Denmark in 2016.

One first heard singing near Old Light during the early morning of 8 Jun (David Price) was later relocated in Millcombe, where it remained, singing periodically, until evening – long enough to be seen by several dozen birders from the mainland who had chartered boats for the occasion, but not long enough for the many others who planned to make the trip the next day. Following a clear and starry night, offering perfect conditions for onward migration, it quickly became clear on the morning of the 9th that this very special bird had departed. The full details of the bird's discovery, eventual identification as a first for Britain, and the other somewhat surreal events of the day can be found at: www.birdguides.com/articles/rarity-finders-sulphur-bellied-warbler-in-devon. Record subject to acceptance by BBRC and admittance to the British List by BOURC.

Birdwatchers flocked to Lundy on 8th June to add Sulphur-bellied Warbler (inset) to their British lists (photos: Dean Jones).





Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Very common spring and autumn migrant with occasional mass arrivals; breeds sporadically.

Spring passage commenced with one in St Helen's Copse on 18 Mar, followed by 10 on 30th and a notable Mar total of 36 on the last day of the month. Conversely, numbers were low in the first week of Apr before rising to modest peaks of 56 on 9th, 100 on 14th, 73 on 17th and 150 on 18th & 20th. Two very pale 'washed out' individuals trapped and ringed on 27 Apr were thought likely to be from a northern continental breeding population. Movements continued through the first half of May, with the final double-digit count (of 12) on 14th, after which there were sporadic records of up to four birds to the end of the month, followed by ones and twos in the first half of Jun. Song was heard regularly in Millcombe and St Helen's Copse in Jun but there was no suggestion of any breeding attempt. A trickle of migrants returning south towards the end of Jul (e.g. five on 20th) was followed by significant arrivals of 70 on 25th and 230 on 28th. Passage continued throughout Aug and much of Sep, with further influxes including 73 on 1 Aug, 210 on 9 Aug, 70 on 27 Aug and 83 on 5 Sep. Another very pale, northern-type bird was photographed in Millcombe on 3 Sep (Dean Jones). A total of 20 on 18 Sep was rather high for relatively late in the season and proved to be the final double-digit count of the year. The last was a single bird ringed on 12 Oct and still present in Millcombe on 13th.

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

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| – | – | 36 | 150 | 25 | 2 | 230 | 210 | 83 | 1 | – | – |
| – | – | 3 | 26 | 20 | 4 | 31 | 28 | 23 | 6 | – | – |



Chiffchaff, High Street, 18th April (photo: Dean Jones).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

[Common Chiffchaff]

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

During the first winter period, single birds were seen in Millcombe on 16 & 23 Jan. Spring passage got underway in early Mar with two on 3rd – of which one was around Millcombe Pond while the other was feeding with a flock of Meadow Pipits in Tillage Field! The first double-digit counts came during the second half of Mar, with maxima of 22 on 18th (some birds sporting conspicuous 'pollen horns') and 23 on 22nd & 31st. Movements continued throughout Apr but maximum counts were unusually low, peaking at just 19 on 20th. Two pairs made nesting attempts in Millcombe but only one pair fledged young. Adults were seen with nesting material on 26 May (likely a second nest after an earlier failure), delivering food to nestlings on 3 Jul and feeding a fledgling in the 'Secret Garden' (lower Millcombe) on 8 Jul. A later brood of three fledglings was being fed in Millcombe on 21 Aug. A trickle of autumn migrants was apparent in the first half of Sep but the first real influx was not until a fall of 100 on 18th (coinciding with an arrival of 150 Blackcaps). Numbers were unremarkable in Oct, peaking at 20 on 9th & 14th and 30 on 17th. The last double-digit count was 12 on 2 Nov but there were still six on 20th and five on 23rd. In Dec, single birds were logged in varied locations on seven days from 3rd to 26th, with two present on 5th.

Presumed *tristis* Chiffchaffs were recorded in Millcombe in Oct on 13th, 15th (two, of which one trapped and ringed), 16th (two trapped and ringed) and 22nd (two trapped and ringed). Shed body feathers from three of those ringed were retained for DNA analysis. At the end of the year, a possible *tristis* was by Paradise Row on 21 Dec, with a definite, calling bird by Millcombe Pond on 24 Dec (both Stuart Cossey). Record of 'Siberian' Chiffchaff on 24 Dec accepted by Devon Bird Recorder (call required for acceptance). Acceptance of ringed individuals pending DNA results.

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 | – | 23 | 19 | 15 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 100 | 30 | 12 | 2 |
| 2 | – | 21 | 29 | 30 | 30 | 22 | 12 | 23 | 29 | 24 | 8 |

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Common spring and autumn migrant, generally more numerous in spring. Breeds sporadically. Spring-passage migrants were logged on 52 dates from 9 Apr (one at 'Rüppell's Quarry') to 18 Jun (one), with maxima of 17 on 30 Apr, 15 on 1 May and 19 on 6 May. Return passage kicked off with one on 21 Jul, followed by records on a further 26 dates to 28 Sep (one). The highest counts were all in Aug: eight on 1st, 17 on 9th and 11 on 12th.

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

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| – | – | – | 17 | 19 | 2 | 3 | 17 | 5 | – | – | – |
| – | – | – | 13 | 21 | 18 | 4 | 16 | 7 | – | – | – |

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

[Eurasian Reed Warbler]

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.

Spring-passage migrants were logged on 17 dates from 19 Apr (a ringing control in Millcombe – see below) to 23 Jun (one), with a maximum of five on 30 May (two singing in Millcombe, one at St Helen's Copse and two along the Terrace) though most records were of ones and twos only. The individual trapped on 19 Apr had been ringed as a first-year bird in the Isles of Scilly in Jul 2019 (see *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.103, for full details). A distinctively greyish, 'washed out' individual photographed in 'Smelly Gully' (lower Millcombe) on 15 May was perhaps of eastern origin. In autumn there were records on ten dates from 26 Aug (one) to 14 Oct (one); all of single birds, except for two on 27 Aug.

Unidentified *Hippolais* warbler

Nationally scarce migrant.

A *Hippolais* warbler seen briefly in Millcombe on 2 Jun was thought probably to be an Icterine Warbler, but views were inconclusive and the bird shot off up the valley, never to be seen again (Dean Jones). Record accepted by DBRC.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

[Common Grasshopper Warbler]

Common spring migrant; uncommon autumn migrant.

The first migrant of spring was 'reeling' from thick scrub below the Ugly at 10:30 hrs on 31 Mar – the earliest date yet for Lundy. Passage birds were recorded on 16 additional dates from 9 Apr (one trapped and ringed in Millcombe) to 6 May, with a maximum of four on 18 Apr (all reeling, of which two in Millcombe, with singles on the Terrace and at Quarter Wall Pond). The only autumn records were of single birds on 20 Aug (flushed in St John's Valley) and 3 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 | 3 | – | – | 1 | 1 | – | – | – |
| – | – | 1 | 13 | 3 | – | – | 1 | 1 | – | – | – |

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 2018–2020 inclusive.

The first spring migrant was a singing male in Millcombe on 18 Mar. There were three further records of one to three birds until 24th, followed by a remarkably large influx at the end of the month with 35 on 30th and a Mar record of 144 on 31st. Dean Jones commented at the time that these birds were "scattered across the island, mostly within Millcombe and along the east coast but also the west cliffs, fly-catching from drystone walls and in various nooks and crannies in the Village". Peak numbers in Apr included 68 on 13th, 200 on 18th, 230 on 20th, 165 on 21st and 70 on 29th. A bird trapped on 16 Apr had been ringed at Gibraltar in Sep 2020 (see *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.103, for full details). At least one pair managed to breed successfully: an adult was

feeding a fledgling in the 'Secret Garden' (lower Millcombe) on 1 Jul. The first signs of autumn passage came in the first week of Sep, with seven on 3rd and 12 on 5th. These were followed by 30 on 11th and a fall of 150 on 18th (coinciding with an arrival of 100 Chiffchaffs), then further modest peaks of 50 on 11 & 14 Oct and 40 on 16th, after which numbers declined rapidly. There were single-digit counts only from 23 Oct on into Nov when one on 26th looked like being the last of the year. However, a single male turned up on feeders at Paradise Row on 20 & 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 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| – | – | 144 | 230 | 30 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 150 | 50 | 6 | 1 |
| – | – | 6 | 30 | 27 | 30 | 24 | 18 | 26 | 28 | 13 | 2 |

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.

Spring-passage migrants were logged on 11 dates from 22 Apr (one in the 'Secret Garden', lower Millcombe) to 30 May (two), with a maximum of four on 9 May. Autumn migrants were recorded on 15 dates from 2 Aug (one) to 17 Oct (one). Most records involved single birds, but two were in Millcombe on 12 Aug and 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 | 4 | – | – | 2 | 1 | 2 | – | – |
| – | – | – | 3 | 8 | – | – | 3 | 5 | 7 | – | – |

Barred Warbler *Curucca nisoria*

Nationally scarce migrant.

One spent the day of 14 Nov feeding in the walled gardens of Millcombe, often out in the open and becoming more confiding as the day went on (Eleanor Grover). This constitutes the latest ever record for Lundy. Record accepted by DBRC.

Barred Warbler, Millcombe, 14th November (photo: Eleanor Grover).



Lesser Whitethroat *Curruca curruca*

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

Spring migrants were recorded on 14 dates from 30 Apr (one) to 13 Jun (one), including singing males in St Helen's Copse on 6 & 7 May, in Millcombe on 19 May and at the Terrace on 13 Jun, but there was no suggestion of any breeding attempt. All other records were also of single birds, except for two on 10 & 15 May. The only record in autumn was of a single bird in Millcombe, 11-14 Oct. Trapped and ringed on 11th, it was considered likely to belong to one of the eastern races and shed body feathers were retained for DNA analysis.

Western or Eastern Subalpine Warbler *Curruca iberiae* or *C. cantillans*

Nationally scarce migrant.

A male was in the aspens close to the Gas Store in lower Millcombe during the early morning of 15 May (Tim Jones). It was seen only briefly and could not therefore be assigned definitively to species level. However, it was thought by the observer to most likely be an Eastern Subalpine Warbler. One was found in Millcombe (Steve Richards, when searching for the Sulphur-bellied Warbler) on 9 Jun and was seen again on 11th (Rebecca & Richard Taylor). Records subject to acceptance by BBRC.

Whitethroat *Curruca communis*

[Common Whitethroat]

Common migrant in spring and autumn; has bred, most recently in 2019-2021.

The first of the year were two on 16 Apr (one trapped in Millcombe and one seen at Quarter Wall). Peak counts during spring passage were 16 on 29 Apr and 10 on 6 May – the only double-digit counts of the season. Movements continued through May and into early Jun (e.g. six on 2nd) but records became more sporadic during the second half of Jun. Nevertheless, they included a pair feeding fledglings near the 'Steps of Doom' on 24th – the third consecutive year of successful breeding on the island. The first small arrival of autumn migrants consisted of five on 26 Aug. Numbers peaked at 16 on 7 Sep, 10 on 8th and eight on 18th, whilst the last of the year was a single bird on the rather late date of 17 Oct.

Whitethroat, Millcombe, 5th May (photo: Richard Campey).



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

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| – | – | – | 16 | 10 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 16 | 1 | | |
| – | – | – | 11 | 29 | 15 | 28 | 13 | 22 | 5 | | |

Dartford Warbler *Curruca undata*

Lundy vagrant.

One was calling from gorse clumps at the western end of Quarter Wall about 75m west of the Airfield at 12:15 hrs on 17 Oct. It afforded brief flight views before dropping into bracken and appearing to move away south (James Diamond) – the 12th record for the island, of which five have been from 2015 onwards.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

[Common Firecrest]

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

The overwintering bird from Dec 2020 (see *LFS Annual Report 2020*, p.73) was logged regularly in Millcombe, and occasionally in Quarter Wall Copse, during Jan and Feb and was heard singing in Millcombe most days from 21 Feb. It remained until 19 Mar but seemed to move on at the same time as spring passage brought three newcomers to the island on 20th, of which two were trapped in Millcombe and one seen at Quarry Pond. There were no records at all in Apr but a single bird was logged daily in Millcombe, 5-7 May. In autumn, one frequenting Millcombe pines from 28 to 31 Aug was followed by a very sparse passage, with records on just 19 further dates from 5 Sep to 18 Nov. There were three on 12 Oct but otherwise 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 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 1 | 3 | – | 1 | – | – | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | – |
| 17 | 11 | 23 | – | 3 | – | – | 4 | 3 | 7 | 9 | – |

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

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

Spring-passage birds were noted on 42 dates from 17 Feb (one in Quarter Wall Copse) to 28 Apr (one), with the highest numbers recorded in the second half of Mar, peaking at 41 on 20th. Unusually late single birds were logged on 29 & 30 May and 14 Jun. The first autumn migrant was a single bird in Millcombe on 30 & 31 Aug. There was a trickle of passage throughout Sep, numbers only reaching double digits in the last week, rising to 16 on 29th, and it was not until 5 Oct that the first real influx occurred when 46 were logged, followed by 75 on 12th and 30 on 13th & 14th. Numbers declined further during the second half of Oct, and 13 on 2 Nov was the final double-digit count of the year, though up six remained throughout 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 | 41 | 5 | 1 | 1 | – | 1 | 16 | 75 | 13 | 6 |
| – | 3 | 21 | 18 | 2 | 1 | – | 2 | 25 | 31 | 26 | 27 |

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

[Eurasian Wren]

Common breeding resident; ringing evidence of dispersal to mainland.

Monthly maxima for the first winter period and spring were broadly consistent with those in the autumn and second winter period, suggesting little overall change during the year. Peak counts were 31 on 14 May and 30 on 14 Oct. Birds were nest-building in Millcombe on 15 May, an adult was carrying food there on 10 Jun, and the first fledglings were seen on 23 Jun.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 14 | 12 | 15 | 15 | 31 | 11 | 20 | 20 | 15 | 30 | 23 | 16 |

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

[Eurasian Treecreeper]

Uncommon late summer and autumn visitor; very rare outside this period.

One was foraging on Sycamores in Millcombe on 21 Mar, at one point in the same tree as a Long-tailed Tit (Dean Jones).



Starling, Old Light, 1st May (photo: Richard Campey) and (right) Rose-coloured Starling, Bull's Paradise, 14th June (photo: Dean Jones).

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

[Rosy Starling]

Nationally scarce migrant.

An adult was around the Campsite, Bull's Paradise and the Lambing Shed area during the morning of 14 Jun, a day when the island was shrouded in fog. It flew off into the murk at about 11:00 hrs and was not seen again (Matt Stritch *et al.*). Record accepted by DBRC.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

[Common Starling]

Common breeding resident; common migrant, particularly in late autumn when large influxes may occur.

The highest count during the late winter and spring was 113 on 24 Feb. One was delivering nesting material to the roof of the General Stores on 16 Jan and ejected eggs were found behind the same building on 31 Mar. At least 53 active nests containing noisy chicks were located in the Village, around the Farm and at Old Light towards the end of Apr (Dean Jones). The first fledglings were seen at the Lambing Shed on 2 May, somewhat surprisingly a full 19 days earlier than the first of 2020. Adults were building a nest in the roof of the Laundry on 19 May, in preparation for a second brood, and fledglings were seen in the Laundry Garden on 15 Jun. The first noticeable influxes of autumn migrants came in mid-Oct with 345 on 11th, 500 on 16th and 400 on 17th, but these totals were dwarfed by 1,500 or more on 14 Nov. A notable mid-Dec count of 377 was logged on 16th.

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

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| 90 | 113 | 83 | 102 | 70 | 60 | 61 | 107 | 72 | 500 | 1,500 | 377 |
| 10 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 11 | 6 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 31 | 29 | 31 |

Report on a new project to colour-mark Lundy-breeding Starlings

(contributed by Jamie Dunning, Imperial College London)

Over the course of the Lundy Sparrow Project's many years of monitoring, the island's Starling population has been an ever-present sidenote, occupying the same broad niche, i.e. nesting inside the Village's farm buildings and ancient wall structures, and roosting under the warmth of the Lambing Shed lights. Like House Sparrow, Starling is a familiar species on and off Lundy, while also sadly declining. However, unlike the sparrows, which are unable to leave the island easily and with no new birds arriving – making the population 'closed' – the Starling has a much more fluid migratory ecology. During the winter, the approximately 60 or so breeding pairs are either joined, or replaced, by migratory flocks from northern Europe. These flocks may then recruit individuals from – or indeed be recruited into – the Lundy population. In 2021, with a grant from the LFS, Dean Jones and I began colour-ringing the Starling 'by-catch' from sparrow-trapping operations in the Village. Together with LFS ringers, we agreed a protocol to colour-ring only adult Starlings caught during the breeding season, thereby ensuring as far as possible that we were marking Lundy-breeders, rather than birds just passing through the island (although all individuals captured, regardless of age or time of year, will receive a standard BTO metal ring).

We ringed adults caught in whoosh-nets and mist-nets, but also chicks in nests, the latter located in almost every open building on the island. Several pairs had a second brood after successfully rearing their first brood, something we were able to confirm from the parents' rings. Some notable nest-sites included those inside a cardboard box (courtesy of Sophie Smith), on a plate left inside an open cupboard, inside a wellington boot, and inside an old rat trap!

We now hope to continue, alongside the LFS, to colour-mark Starlings in 2022 in order to learn more about the ecology of the population that breeds on Lundy. For this project to yield results we are relying on birders visiting the island to report colour-ringed Starlings. The rings are – in line with current island branding! – in Lundy blue with a three-letter alpha-numeric code in white; the first digit is always an 'L' (for Lundy). Sightings can be submitted to Lundy Warden Rosie Ellis, through the LFS logbook, or directly to jamiedunning8@gmail.com.



Female Starling with nesting material, and fledgling (photos: Dean Jones).

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. The highest count of the first winter period was 16 on 10 Jan. At least four were singing from Millcombe and St Helen's Copse on 22 Feb, but most of these proved to be wintering or passage birds. However, a lone territory-holding male sang his heart out in Millcombe throughout the spring and (more sporadically) well into Jul. Although two individuals were logged on 17 May and the singing male was seen together with a second bird, perched in a Sycamore in upper Millcombe on 27 May, there was no subsequent evidence of a pair, or any sign that a breeding attempt was made. Very grey-looking individuals at Quarter Wall on 14 Apr, and at VC Quarry on both 17 Apr and 17 May, were thought likely to be continental birds (Dean Jones). The first of autumn passage was logged on 23 Sep. Following records of up to three birds on five dates from 6 to 12 Oct, a large influx of 65 on 13 Oct coincided with a major arrival of Redwings. Numbers rose to 80 the next day, followed by 30 on 15th, 35 on 16th and 20 on 17th, with single figures only from then to the end of the year, apart from 11 on 2 Nov and 12 on 16 Dec.



Song Thrush, Millcombe, 7th April (photo: 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 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 16 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 80 | 11 | 12 |
| 20 | 19 | 12 | 28 | 31 | 29 | 13 | 2 | 1 | 21 | 20 | 27 |

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

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

The only spring records were of a single bird logged on four dates from 16 to 22 Apr (feeding together with a Fieldfare in Barton Field on 16th), followed by a presumed second individual in Barton Field on 29 Apr. Thereafter, none until the first of the autumn, a single bird on 13 Sep. In a strong subsequent showing, there were two on 13 & 14 Oct, then further records of single birds on 18 dates from 16 Oct to 16 Dec (multiple observers). The number of individuals is unknown, though grouping of records suggests around six.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

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

Higher counts during the first winter period and spring passage included 11 on 9 Jan and 26 on 21 Mar. The last were singles on 1 & 3 Apr (the latter on the West Side by the site of the 'Forgotten Heinkel') and 2 May (at the top of Millcombe). The first autumn migrant was a single bird on 11 Oct. This was followed by a huge influx of at least 1,000 at first light on 13 Oct. There were 300 on 14th, 200 on 16th and another sizeable arrival of 500 on 22 Oct, with further notable counts in Nov of 250 on 2nd and between 100 and 200 on six further dates to 24th. The Dec maximum of 56 was logged on 2nd, with small numbers remaining to the end of the year. A bird of the Icelandic race *T. i. coburni* was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 22 Oct. It was a particularly large and heavy, dark-plumaged individual with a wing-length of 124mm and weighed in at 72.7g – in spite of having a fat-score of zero. Most of the 36 other Redwings handled that day had weights below 60g (Rob Duncan).

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

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| 11 | 2 | 26 | 1 | 1 | — | — | — | — | 1,000 | 250 | 56 |
| 22 | 5 | 13 | 2 | 1 | — | — | — | — | 20 | 29 | 31 |

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

[Common Blackbird]

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

Higher counts during the first winter period and spring passage included 16 on 16 Jan and 18 on 31 Mar. An aberrantly plumaged male, with one or two strikingly white tail feathers, was at VC Quarry on 4 Feb. In Millcombe the first song was heard on 16 Jan, a female was collecting nest material on 8 Apr, and a male was carrying food on 18 Apr. Coverage of most of the suitable breeding habitat on the island on 14 May yielded a count of 25 birds, including a singing male in gorse 150m south-south-west of Pondsburry, a pair in a gorse clump north of the Airfield near 'Pointless Wall', and a pair carrying food near the Terrace Trap on 14 May. Fledglings were seen in the Laundry Garden on 14 May and in lower Millcombe on 18 May. The first noticeable arrivals of autumn migrants in mid-Oct coincided with influxes of Redwings and Song Thrushes, but numbers were low, with a maximum of just 25 on 14th & 15th. It was not until the second half of Nov that more substantial counts were logged, including 38 on 15th, 73 on 22nd and 35 on 23rd. Thirty-four on 19 Dec was by far the highest subsequent count.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 16 | 11 | 18 | 11 | 25 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 10 | 25 | 73 | 34 |

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.

There were no records during the first winter period. A trickle of spring migrants involved 11 on 20 Mar and four on 22nd, followed by single birds on eight dates from 2 to 20 Apr. The first autumn migrant was calling in flight over St John's Valley on the rather late date of 22 Oct. Numbers were lower than in many recent years, with 97 on 8 Nov, 63 on 11th and 67 on 12th by far the highest counts logged – only four other days yielding more than 20. The Dec peak of 16 came on 2nd, with single-digit totals logged most days thereafter until the last two of the year on 24th.

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

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| — | — | 11 | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | 11 | 97 | 16 |
| — | — | 2 | 8 | — | — | — | — | — | 3 | 24 | 17 |

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Uncommon but regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.

During spring passage, ones and twos were logged on 16 dates from 2 to 23 Apr – the first a fine male by the Lambing Shed. Other locations were VC Quarry; various places along the West Side, including Quarter Wall, the Earthquake, Jenny's Cove and Threequarter Wall; and Paradise Row, Stoneycroft and Benjamin's Chair in the south of the island. A male at Stoneycroft on 20 Apr was heard singing briefly. A disappointingly sparse autumn passage was one of the poorest of recent years, producing records on just six dates from 13 Oct to 2 Nov. Most were of single birds but there were three on 14 Oct (two along the East Side and one at Jenny's Cove) and two on 22nd.

Right: Ring Ouzel, VC Quarry, 8th April (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; breeding attempt failed in 2020.

Spring passage was noted on 27 dates from 27 Apr (one in Millcombe) to 22 Jun (one), the highest count being a lowly 10 on 10 May. All other spring counts were in single digits, 70% of them five birds or less. There was no evidence of a breeding attempt, though one was aggressively defending a territory at the southern end of Quarter Wall Copse on 4 Jun. Autumn migrants were logged on 47 dates, beginning with a single bird on 24 Aug. There was a significant arrival a couple of days later, comprising 24 on 26th, 35 on 27th and 19 on 28th. Passage continued throughout the first three-and-a-half weeks of Sep, with a notable peak of 60 on 7th (mainly in Millcombe and along the East Side, but also on top of the island, including a group of seven feeding from the fencing around the water tanks), decreasing to 22 on 8 Sep and just one on 9th, but with further arrivals including 22 on 18th. There were sightings in Millcombe and St Helen's Copse on 13 days in Oct, mostly of single birds, including a long-staying individual, but with two present on 9th, 16th and 21st. The last was an exceptionally late individual trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 27 Oct (Rob Duncan *et al.*)

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 | 1 | – | 35 | 60 | 2 | – | – |
| – | – | – | 2 | 21 | 4 | – | 8 | 26 | 13 | – | – |

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

[European Robin]

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

Numbers logged during the first nine months of the year were consistent with the island's small breeding population. There was no detectable spring passage, though the fact that 10 on 10 Jan was the highest count until Sep might hint at the presence of winter visitors. One with nesting material was seen in Millcombe Wood on 13 Apr and adults were delivering food to nestlings in Millcombe on 15 May. The first fledglings were seen next to Millcombe Pond on 28 May. Hints of autumn passage in the second half of Sep, when there were 10 on 16th and 23rd, was followed by a significant mid-Oct influx (coinciding with arrivals of thrushes) that peaked at 50 on 14th, and between 20 and 40 logged on six other dates from 11th to 17th.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 10 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 50 | 11 | 14 |



Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

Nationally scarce migrant.

Following a wild night of torrential thundery showers with lightning and a westerly gale, it was something of a surprise when a first-winter Red-breasted Flycatcher turned up at about 09:30 hrs on 20 Oct, feeding along the sheltered northern edge of Millcombe Wood between the Casbah and Brambles. At times it perched prominently in the open, but more often moved rather elusively among the branches and bunches of Turkey Oak and Sycamore leaves. It spent much of the day in Millcombe but turned up in St Helen's Copse later in the afternoon (Tim Jones *et al.*). A second bird was seen in the walled gardens of Millcombe on 2 Nov (Eleanor Grover). Writing for the Lundy Birds blog at the time, Eleanor related: "*Checking through a group of feeding Chiffchaffs revealed a surprising find: not a warbler at all but a Red-breasted Flycatcher. Flitting about in the trees, it paused only to seemingly smirk at the camera being pointed at it, before dropping down into thicker branches and being lost from view. A delightful little bird, it appeared and then disappeared all in the space of the time it took to check the mist-nets and, unfortunately, was not resighted again.*" 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 first of spring was a male at the Quarries (specifically 'Rüppell's Quarry') on 9 Apr, followed by a further male on 17 Apr and two on 20 Apr. The only later spring records were of a female in Millcombe on 6 May and a male singing in Millcombe on the unusual date of 2 Jun (Rebecca & Richard Taylor, Tony Taylor). Autumn passage got underway with a significant influx at the end of Aug, including eight on 25th, 20 on 27th and 10 on 28th. Good numbers were maintained into early Sep, with a further peak of 10 in Millcombe and scattered along the East Side on 3rd. The last of the year was in the willows at 'Rüppell's Quarry' on 14 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 | 1 | 1 | – | 20 | 10 | 2 | – | – |
| – | – | – | 3 | 1 | 1 | – | 6 | 15 | 3 | – | – |

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochrurus*

Common late-autumn migrant, usually in small numbers; uncommon spring migrant; ones and twos occur irregularly in winter.

A male at Benjamin's Chair and the nearby Tent Field on 9 & 10 Jan was followed by a female in the same area on 21 Jan, whilst the male reappeared there on 8 Feb. Single spring passage migrants were logged at various locations (including above the Battery, Punchbowl Valley, Jenny's Cove, the sidelands above Pyramid Rock, VC Quarry, Barton Field, Campsite, Paradise Row and Square Cottage) on 11 dates from 6 Mar to 30 May; the five records from 19 Apr to 30 May were all of females. The first of the autumn was on 11 Oct. There were records on a further eleven dates to 11 Nov, with a maximum of nine on 15 Oct (including four together at North Light), followed by one on scree above the Landing Bay on 13 Dec (Martin Thorne).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

[Common Redstart]

Common but declining spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.

The first of spring were two males on 14 Apr (South West Field and Lower East Side Path). There were six further spring-passage records, all between 16 & 26 Apr, with a maximum of three (two males and a female at scattered locations) on 17th. Autumn migrants were logged on ten dates from 3 Sep (two) to 17 Oct (one, a male along the wall between the Lambing Shed and Stoneycroft, first seen on 15th), with a maximum of four on 8 Sep.



Male Whinchat, Quarter Wall, 28th April (photo: Dean Jones).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

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

Depressingly, spring migrants were limited to single birds on just three dates: 23 & 28 Apr (both at Quarter Wall) and 14 May (near Threequarter Wall). In autumn, singles on 25, 28 & 30 Aug were followed by better numbers in Sep than for most recent autumns, with 10 on 3rd (including four together near the Stonecrusher) and a peak of 12 (including six at Quarter Wall) on 4th. Finally, one was near Pondsburry on 14 Oct.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

[European Stonechat]

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

A notable winter count of six on 23 Jan was followed by the first obvious influx of spring migrants when 13 were logged on 25 Feb, the next highest total being nine on 17 Mar. An adult was delivering food to chicks in South West Field on 15 Apr (Eleanor Grover) and four recently fledged young were seen near Pondsburry on 19 May (Ben Arkless & Dean Jones). A pair with at least one fledgling was above White Beach on 21 May and a second brood of fledglings was seen in the same area on 12 Jul. Elsewhere in mid-May there were territorial pairs at the Terrace and along the Lower East Side Path, plus singing males by Threequarter Wall gate and in Gannets' Combe (Tim Jones), but there was no further evidence of breeding at any of these sites. The first noticeable influx of autumn produced 15 on 5 Sep and numbers peaked at 30 on 14 & 15 Oct, with single-digit counts only from 18 Oct to the end of the year.

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 | 13 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 7 | 15 | 30 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 10 | 20 | 15 | 23 | 22 | 24 | 19 | 27 | 30 | 20 | 23 |

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

[Northern Wheatear]

Summer visitor; breeds; common spring and autumn migrant.

The first spring migrants were two males on 7 Mar, at Jenny's Cove and South West Field, respectively. Up to six were logged on six further dates to 25th, including the first female of the year at Jenny's Cove on 21st, after which there were larger arrivals of 11 on 27th (among them the first returning colour-ringed bird – a female) and 27 on 31st. Peak counts in Apr were all below 50, except for 58 on 14th and 62 on 26th. The maximum in May was 50 on 13th & 14th. Presumed Greenland Wheatears *O. o. leucorhoa* were logged on seven dates in Apr, from 14th to 23rd, the maximum count being six between the Castle and Sunset Buttress on 14th (Tony Taylor). These

were followed by two trapped and ringed in South West Field on 29 May and further singles ringed on 30 May and 6 Jun (Rebecca & Richard Taylor). The first fledglings were logged along the West Side on 24 May and overall productivity seemed to be high. A Carrion Crow appeared to be hunting recently fledged chicks on the sidelands between South West Point and Montagu Steps on 7 Jun (Rebecca & Richard Taylor). The highest counts during autumn passage were logged in Sep, including 40 on 3rd, a fall of 110 on 7th (by far the highest count of the year) and 70 on 11th. The final double-digit count of the year was 18 on 20 Sep, the last sighting of all a single bird on 20 Oct. A further presumed Greenland Wheatear was seen on 6 Oct (Chris Baillie).

Wheatear colour-ringing in 2021 (contributed by Tony Taylor)

With no Wheatears colour-ringed in 2020, the BTO Retrapping Adults for Survival project resumed with relatively few previously colour-ringed birds still in the breeding population and many unmarked birds to be captured and ringed. The timing of breeding for many pairs was also disrupted by spells of bad weather in spring, meaning that many pairs were not at the ideal stage for trapping during the usual three weeks of fieldwork in late May and early June. Even so, 48 birds were newly colour-ringed, and 19 birds ringed in 2019 or before were re-sighted. The results suggest a mean of 43% adult survival per year between 2019 and 2021, and the 2021 breeding population in the study area was estimated at 48 pairs. Both these figures are a little lower than in 2017-19, but they are minimum values, less reliable than usual because of the relatively large number of unringed birds that remained at the end of the season. In 2022 it should be possible to restore the very high levels of confidence that were achieved pre-pandemic. (See also *Bird Ringing on Lundy*, p.101.)

Request. Please 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 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| – | – | 27 | 58 | 50 | 45 | 32 | 25 | 110 | 6 | – | – |
| – | – | 11 | 29 | 31 | 28 | 28 | 25 | 28 | 13 | – | – |

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

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

A male was taking nest material into a nestbox in the farmyard on 16 Jan (Dean Jones). The first fledglings of the year were seen in the workshop on 1 May (Jamie Dunning). The highest count recorded in the LFS logbook was 120 on 1 Aug.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 51 | 43 | 30 | 32 | 20 | 14 | 40 | 120 | 42 | 80 | 130 | 90 |

House Sparrow studies in 2021 (contributed by Jamie Dunning, Imperial College London)

The 2021 field season was the 20th year that the Lundy Sparrow Project has monitored the House Sparrows breeding on the island. The project maintains a genetic pedigree, a genealogy connecting all of the sparrows which hatch on Lundy to their ancestors, since 2001. Pedigrees from wild populations (or systems) are valuable to evolutionary ecologists because they allow the study of the genetic mechanisms which shape the behaviour and ecology of the population, which can be applied well beyond Lundy and House Sparrows.

Following a difficult season in 2020, when the uncertainty around access and the ongoing Covid pandemic forced us to reduce our field effort, we arrived in April 2021 to nestboxes already lined with nesting material and horsehair, and a small number of pairs already with full clutches of

eggs. The aim of our field season was, as always, to colour-mark individual sparrows so that they can be identified in future without the need for recapture, and to collect genetic material to add another generation to our pedigree.

Between Janet Chik (University of Groningen), myself and a handful of specially trained field assistants, we monitored 115 broods, 34 pairs having a second brood, and 15 a third brood. From these we ringed 185 chicks (averaging 1.6 per brood; but note that not all broods were successful in rearing young that survived to the point of ringing at about 12 days old). We also managed to capture and ring 93 birds outside of nestboxes, a mix of unringed sparrows from 2020, as well as chicks from 'wild' nests, and 129 retraps of previously ringed birds.

A generous grant award from the Lundy Field Society in 2020 enabled us to replace some of the ancient sparrow nestboxes around the village. Our thanks also to Eleanor Grover, Ben Arkless and Adam Waters for their help in building boxes during stormy weather. In 2021 we also moved to using BTO metal rings obtained by the LFS, bringing our project in line with existing monitoring of other species on the island. LFS bird ringers also contributed by rounding up unringed sparrows in Millcombe (which had at least two pairs again).

During 2021, the Lundy Sparrow Project submitted a series of papers on measuring the fitness of individuals and on the social behaviour and sex lives of sparrows on Lundy. We also welcomed a new PhD student, Sophie Wilkins (University of Sheffield) to the island and the wider project. Sophie will be taking over fieldwork, and looking at the individual genetics of our sparrows, in the second half of the 2022 field season.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

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

The highest counts during the spring were 12 on 23 Mar and 14 on 14 May. One trapped and ringed on 30 Mar was carrying quite a lot of fat and was thought to be a possible passage migrant (Dean Jones). Adults were seen removing faecal sacs from a nest site in 'Smelly Gully' on 15 May, the first fledglings logged there on 27 May. The autumn maximum was 15 on 14 Oct. The peak counts in both Jan and Dec were identical, indicating no overall change during the year.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 9 | 8 | 12 | 8 | 14 | 6 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 15 | 9 | 9 |

Duncock in full song, Millcombe, 14th March (photo: Dean Jones).



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.

Following the first two on 15 Apr (a male by the Lambing Shed and a female in Tillage Field), spring passage migrants were logged on a further 20 dates until the last on 12 Jun. All of these were single birds, except for two on 7 & 14 May. A breeding-plumaged male in St Helen's Field on the unusual date of 21 Jul was a particularly early-returning migrant. More concerted autumn passage got going at the end of Aug, with records on four dates, peaking at five (of which four together in Brick Field) on 31st. Better numbers than in any recent year were logged throughout the first three weeks of Sep, with maxima of five on four dates from 3rd to 8th, 15 on 15th and seven on 20th. The last was one on 26 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 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 15 | – | – | – |
| – | – | – | 9 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 20 | – | – | – |

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

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

Spring passage migrants (mostly calling flyover birds) were recorded on 13 dates from 21 Feb (one) to 23 Apr (one) with a maximum of four on 18 Mar. Autumn migration was noted from 5 Sep (three) to 30 Oct (one) with a maximum of eight on 14 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 | 4 | 1 | – | – | – | – | 3 | 8 | – | – |
| – | 3 | 7 | 3 | – | – | – | – | 16 | 14 | – | – |

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 singles around or over the farm on 7 Jan and 5 Feb, spring passage commenced during the second half of Feb when between one and four birds were logged almost daily from 15th. Movements continued throughout Mar & Apr, with maxima (Pied, White and un-raced birds combined) of nine on 18 Mar (six Pied) and 12 on 19 Apr (10 Pied). One (Pied) was gathering nesting material in Barton Field on 11 May and the first fledglings were logged on 22 Jun on the wall by the pigsty along the main track. Autumn passage was evidenced by the arrival of White Wagtails from the end of Aug (see below), but numbers only reached double digits in the second week of Sep. The peak count (all races combined) was 33 on 16 Oct, of which the great majority were calling flyover birds. Ones and twos lingered throughout Nov & Dec.

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) | 4(4) | 8(6) | 10(10) | 4(4) | 5(5) | 7(7) | 7(7) | 15(1) | 33(3) | 2(2) | 2(2) |
| 1 | 14 | 29 | 30 | 23 | 22 | 29 | 29 | 30 | 29 | 13 | 12 |

Confirmed White Wagtails were recorded on 21 days during spring passage, from 18 Mar (one above Benjamin's Chair) to 16 May (one), with a maximum of 3 on 21 Apr, and on eight days in autumn, from 31 Aug (one by the water tanks) to 1 Oct (one), with the maximum of two being logged on 3 & 10 Sep.



Juvenile Meadow Pipit, Halfway Wall, 2nd July (photo: Dean Jones).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

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

Between one and three birds were logged regularly from the start of the year until the last week of Feb when an influx of spring migrants brought 42 on 21st, rising to 88 on 25th. Passage continued throughout Mar, with maxima of 105 on 7th, 138 on 17th, 243 on 20th (including a flock of 82 in Brick Field), and 167 on 21st, but dropping back to below 100 during the last week of the month. The highest Apr count was of 98 on 3rd. Bred successfully: the first display flight was noted below the Ugly on 22 Feb; a pair was nest-building above the Beach Road on 7 May; adults were carrying food near Quarter Wall on 15 Jun; and the first fledglings were seen at Halfway Wall on 20 Jun. In autumn the first three-figure count was 178 on 20 Sep, rising to a peak of 400 on 13 Oct and 350 the following day. Numbers fell rapidly after mid-Oct, with only four counts higher than 20 from 18 Oct to the end of the year, though records remained unusually frequent throughout Nov & Dec, perhaps reflecting the generally mild weather conditions.

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 | 88 | 243 | 98 | 76 | 30 | 40 | 76 | 178 | 400 | 30 | 13 |
| 13 | 16 | 30 | 30 | 29 | 30 | 28 | 29 | 29 | 31 | 28 | 25 |

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.

A very early spring migrant was calling in flight over Millcombe mid-morning on 31 Mar (the same date as a notable influx of warblers and other spring migrants). Thereafter, spring passage was logged on a further 20 dates from 14 Apr (one over Castle Hill) to 15 Jun (one), with a maximum of four on 27 Apr (three of which were foraging together at Quarry Cottages in the evening). Autumn migrants were logged on 29 dates from 8 Aug (one) to 15 Oct (one), with maxima of six over the Millcombe and Village area on 28 Aug, eight on 3 Sep and nine on 8 Sep – the great majority during this period being calling birds passing overhead, though there was a flock of four in upper Millcombe on 8 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 | 1 | – | 6 | 9 | 2 | – | – |
| – | – | 1 | 12 | 6 | 2 | – | 10 | 17 | 2 | – | – |

Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*

British vagrant. Not previously recorded on Lundy.

One was heard calling in flight over the Lodge garden and then seen feeding amongst rushes in Barton Field during the late afternoon of 2 Dec (Jamie Dunning, Eleanor Grover, Sophie Smith). Record subject to acceptance by BBRC.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

[European Rock Pipit]

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

There were some notable counts in Jan, including 16 on 10th, 29 on 16th, 32 on 23rd and 21 on 24th, mostly feeding in the farm fields, followed by 20 on 4 Feb and 14 on 17 Mar. Bred successfully; song-flight first noted on Lametor on 28 Jan. The peak autumn count was 26 on 15 Oct.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 32 | 20 | 14 | 7 | 13 | 7 | 15 | 3 | 8 | 26 | 12 | 10 |

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.

Counts throughout Jan, Feb and early Mar were consistently no higher than four, representing the island's tiny resident population. As is often the case, there was just the merest hint of spring passage: 12 flew north shortly after dawn on 15 Mar, with 13 logged the next day, followed by eight on 18th & 20th, after which it was back down to the core breeding population until the autumn. Two pairs were thought to have nested, in Millcombe and in St Helen's Copse. Song was first heard in Millcombe on 25 Feb and a pair was feeding nestlings there on 7 May; however, the nest failed at the chick stage during the often cool, wet and windy conditions during the first half of the month. Probably the same pair was copulating by Millcombe House terrace on 11 May and nest building in the brambles below the terrace on the same day. Successful breeding was confirmed when two fledglings were seen in Millcombe on 20 Jun. The first signs of autumn passage were detectable from late Sep (10 on 24th but numbers were low in Oct, 400 on 17th by far the highest total logged. Passage was also unusually extended, and though numbers reached triple figures for the last time with 125 on 29 Oct, movements continued throughout Nov and much further into Dec than normal, with relatively late peaks of 78 on 22 Nov, 65 on 9 Dec and 26 on 24 Dec.

Maximum count for each month

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 4 | 4 | 13 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 10 | 400 | 78 | 65 |



Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

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

There were no records during the first nine months of the year. The first autumn migrant, a male on 11 Oct, was the vanguard of an exceptionally strong passage, with records on a further 42 dates – far more than in any other recent year – until 9 Dec. Peak numbers were 10 on 23 Oct, 12 on 28 Oct, 41 on 10 Nov and three counts of between 19 and 23 birds from 19 to 22 Nov. Nine on 9 Dec (the last of the year) was an unusually high Dec count for Lundy.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

A female, found in Millcombe on 9 Jun by visiting birders searching for the Sulphur-bellied Warbler, remained until 10th when it was in Turkey Oaks and Sycamores behind Bramble Villa (Dean Jones, Rebecca & Richard Taylor). At the end of the year, one calling from the edge of Millcombe Wood above Bramble Villa was seen briefly as it flew off on the exceptional date (for Lundy) of 22 Dec (Stuart Cossey). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

[Eurasian Bullfinch]

Rare spring migrant; very rare autumn migrant.

Three records: a female was feeding on Blackthorn in Millcombe on 3 Apr (Dean Jones); in autumn, a female was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 21 Oct (Rob Duncan *et al.*); a vocal individual dropped into Millcombe on 28 Oct but difficult light conditions made it impossible to sex it (Justin Zantboer).

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrina*

Nationally scarce migrant.

Two records. A first-summer male was first heard singing from Sycamores behind the gas store in lower Millcombe at around 08:00 hrs on 30 May (Dean Jones). After providing brief views through the canopy, the bird flew off up the valley following a run-in with a territorial pair of Goldfinches and went into stealth mode for the rest of the day. It wasn't seen again until the evening when it turned up miraculously in a whoosh-net fired by resident House Sparrow researcher Jamie Dunning, whilst targeting what he thought were half-a-dozen unringed sparrows in the Village at the Lodge garden – what a surprise he had when he started to extract the birds he'd caught! The rosefinch was duly ringed and released but was not seen subsequently in the field. A first-winter bird trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 5 Sep (Rebecca & Richard Taylor, Tony Taylor *et al.*) was seen on most days up to and including 12th when it was retrapped. Records accepted by DBRC.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

[European Greenfinch]

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

The only record during the first nine months of the year was a single bird in Millcombe on 13 May. In autumn there were records on 17 dates from 1 Oct (two) to 9 Nov (one), with a maximum of eight on both 2 Oct and 2 Nov.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

Lundy vagrant.

One was at the 'turning circle' and perched on the nearby wall at Old Light during the late afternoon of 6 Oct (Chris Baillie) – the first for Lundy since one near the Castle on 28 October 2003. Record subject to acceptance by DBRC.

Left: Brambling, Millcombe, 19th November (photo: Eleanor Grover).

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

[Common Linnet]

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

Singles on 21 Jan (on the fence-line of St Helen's Field) and 3 Feb were followed by the first signs of spring passage in late Feb when four were logged on 26th. A trickle of movement continued throughout Mar but it was not until the very end of the month that counts broke double digits with 11 on 30th and 17 on 31st. Numbers increased rapidly in Apr, reaching peaks of 62 on 2nd and 118 on 10th, with five other counts of 50 or more during the month. A further relatively late pulse of migration brought 105 on 2 May. Pairs were nest-building in the Millcombe/St John's Valley area on 16 May and the first fledgling was seen in Barton Field on 15 Jun. Post-breeding flocks began forming in Jul, with a peak of 119 on 26th, building to 230 on 1 Aug and 180 (including a single flock of 170 in Middle Park) on 27 Aug, but it was not until Sep that the highest counts of the year were recorded, with 300 on 14th and 372 on 20th. Numbers fell rapidly in the second half of Oct, with the Nov maximum of nine logged on 2nd and thereafter only three further records to the end of the year.

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 | 17 | 118 | 105 | 40 | 119 | 230 | 372 | 200 | 9 | 3 |
| 1 | 4 | 14 | 30 | 31 | 30 | 30 | 28 | 29 | 23 | 3 | 2 |

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*

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

Spring passage migrants were recorded on 29 dates from 4 Apr to 4 Jun. The great majority of records were of one to three birds (including two on Sue Waterfield's feeders at Paradise Row on 9 Apr), with a maximum of four on 23 May. A male was singing from Turkey Oaks above the 'Secret Garden' on 10 May and, intriguingly, on 13th a female was seen holding what appeared to be nest material in her bill, whilst perched on Tent Field wall just west of Benjamin's Chair (both records Tim Jones); however, there was no further evidence of a breeding attempt being made. One appeared on the unusual date of 15 Jul. An exceptionally poor autumn yielded just two records of single birds, on 12 & 27 Oct.



*Lesser Redpoll, Barton Field, 3rd May
(photo: Richard Campey).*

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 | 4 | 1 | 1 | — | — | 1 | — | — |
| — | — | — | 8 | 25 | 2 | 1 | — | — | 2 | — | — |

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

[Red Crossbill]

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

Four records: one was flying around the Millcombe area on 30 May (Richard Taylor, Tony Taylor); two were seen and heard in the valley on 28 Jun (Sam Bosanquet); one landed briefly in Millcombe pines on 24 Jul (Eleanor Grover); and in the autumn 12 flew south over upper Millcombe at 13:15 hrs on 17 Oct (James Diamond).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

[European Goldfinch]

Common spring and autumn migrant; irregular in summer and winter. Formerly an occasional breeder, has bred successfully in all years since 2014.

Two on 2 Jan and a single bird on 12 Feb were followed by a trickle of spring migrants in the last week of Feb and the first two weeks of Mar, but passage did not really get going until after mid-Mar when there were 19 on 18th and 15 on 30th. Apr numbers peaked at a very modest 25 on 11th but it was early May before counts of 28 on 2nd and 29 on 4th provided the highest totals of the spring. The first fledglings were seen in Millcombe on 19 May. Numbers began building up post-breeding in Jul, reaching 30 on 28th, followed by 39 on 18 Aug. Migration built towards the end of Sep, peaking at 90 on 29th and again on 13 Oct. As for several other species (e.g. Pied Wagtail, Meadow Pipit, Chaffinch), there were unusually frequent records in Dec, perhaps as a result of prevailing mild conditions.

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 | 19 | 25 | 29 | 13 | 30 | 39 | 90 | 90 | 26 | 9 |
| 1 | 6 | 25 | 30 | 31 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 28 | 31 | 27 | 29 |

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

[Eurasian Siskin]

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

An unusual year with spring-passage migrants logged on 47 dates from 6 Mar (one over Millcombe) to 16 Jun (three), with maxima of six on 10 Apr and five on 17 Apr. Although birds were seen throughout the spring, with both males and females present at times, and a male was heard singing from Millcombe Wood on 16 Jun, there was no real indication of breeding. There was an unusual midsummer record of one on 4 Jul, then none until a major influx in autumn which brought an estimated 500 on 17 Oct, followed by another influx of at least 500 on 23rd. Many of the mid-Oct arrivals that were trapped and ringed showed relatively low weights at first; the average weight of birds handled on 15 Oct was 10.8g, rising to 12.5g on 21 Oct (Rob Duncan). During a three-week stint from 7 to 29 Oct, Rob and his team ringed an amazing total of 535 Siskins, accounting for more than half of all birds ringed during that time! Records were frequent in Nov, though numbers later in the month never approached the 117 logged on 2nd. The only Dec records were singles on 9th & 10th.

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 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | – | – | 500 | 117 | 1 |
| – | – | 7 | 22 | 13 | 4 | 1 | – | – | 23 | 24 | 2 |

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

[Lapland Longspur]

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

Three long-staying birds were in High Street Field from 4 Feb, last seen together on 2 Mar, with two lingering until 5th and the last remaining individual logged on 6th. During its stay, one of the birds, which appeared to be an adult male, progressively developed more and more signs of breeding plumage. Remarkably, on 18 Feb, they were joined briefly by two additional birds which also showed quite well-developed breeding plumage, making a total of five. This series of records includes not only the highest-ever spring count for the island, but also the longest-staying known individuals. The first of autumn was a single bird at Quarter Wall on 11 Oct, followed by two on 13th (flushed at Rocket Pole, then flying towards the Airfield), two on 14th (South West Field and over North End, respectively) and further singles on 16th (over the main track), 17th (Airfield/Pondsbury area) and 23rd on Old Light track (multiple observers). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Uncommon but regular autumn migrant in small numbers; uncommon spring migrant; rare in midwinter. Devon rarity.

A very confiding male logged on 17 dates from 7 Jan to 26 Feb spent most of its time foraging along either the main track between High Street gate and Quarter Wall gate, or on the track up to Old Light along the edge of South West Field. In autumn and early winter, recorded on 16 dates from 5 Oct (two along the main track near Widow's Tenement) to 23 Dec (one north of Halfway Wall), with maxima of six on 8 Oct (a flock calling flight over North End and heading east out to sea – Eleanor Grover). All other records were of ones and twos. Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.

One found in St John's Valley during the early morning of 28 Apr (when the island was being battered by a blustery north-easterly) was relocated there in much calmer conditions on 30th, where it remained until 2 May (Dean Jones *et al.*). At the end of the year, one sheltering in the lee of Tillage Field wall on 5 Dec flew off calling towards the Upper East Side Path (Stuart Cossey). These are the first Lundy records since May 2009 and only the 20th and 21st overall for the island – 17 of which have been in spring. Records accepted by DBRC.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

Lundy vagrant; formerly a regular visitor and bred in the first half of the twentieth century.

A male (above, photographed by Dean Jones) was foraging on the main track next to the Lambing Shed in the early afternoon of 26 Apr (Dean Jones) – only the fifth record in the last ten years, the most recent of which was at Quarter Wall on 29 Apr 2017. Yellowhammers were once a breeding species on Lundy, up until the 1950s at least, and then recorded as migrants almost annually up until the 1970s. Since then, however, there have been widespread population declines due to changing agricultural practices on the mainland (more than 50% decline in the last 25 years), such that Yellowhammer is now a very rare visitor to the island.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

Nationally scarce migrant.

One was flushed from the edge of Barton Field with a loose feeding flock of Meadow Pipits on 20 Sep (Dean Jones). Record accepted by DBRC.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

Nationally scarce migrant.

One was photographed feeding outside Little St John's on 23 Oct (Trevor Dobie) – about the 20th for Lundy and the fourth in the last five years following other Oct birds in 2017, 2019 and 2020. Record accepted by DBRC.

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*

British vagrant.

An adult female or first-year male was found in Barton Field just before 14:00 hrs on 1 Jun (Tony Taylor). The bird continued to feed there for the best part of 40 minutes, allowing most of the resident and visiting birders on the island to see it. The bunting then flew off down the field and, despite some searching, was not relocated. The eighth Lundy record and the second spring record after one in May 2020. Record accepted by BBRC.



Rustic Bunting, Barton Field, 1st June
(photo: Richard Taylor).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

[Common Reed Bunting]

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

The only late-winter/spring-passage records were of two on three dates between 17 and 26 Feb (all in the vicinity of Quarter Wall and Pondsburys), one at Quarter Wall on 29 Mar, one in the Laundry Garden on 1 Apr, one in Millcombe on 9 Apr, and one photographed at Halfway Wall on 10 Apr (all records Dean Jones). In a meagre autumn and early winter showing, one was at Quarter Wall on 17 Oct (Andy Jayne), followed by ones and twos at Pondsburys on four dates from 25 Nov to 26 Dec (Stuart Cossey).

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 | – | – | – | – | – | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| – | 3 | 1 | 2 | – | – | – | – | – | 1 | 2 | 3 |

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).

RECORDS EXCLUDED FROM THE MAIN REPORT

The following reports are considered unsubstantiated owing to a lack of supporting details. To enable any of these reports to be confirmed, please forward further information to gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra* – a raft of 30 offshore on 9 Oct.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* – one on 23 Oct.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* – singles on 21 & 25 Oct.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater* – three on 17 Sep.

Great Tit *Parus major* – one in Millcombe on 10 Sep.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* – a reportedly first-winter bird in Millcombe on 8 Oct.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* – one on gorse above Miller's Cake on 14 Nov.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* – five on 11 Oct.

ESCAPE

Yellow-crowned Bishop *Euplectes afer*

Reports over the radio on 24 Aug of a bright yellow finch-like bird on the fence of the Lodge garden had members of the LFS Conservation Team running up the hill to investigate. By the time they got there, however, the mystery bird had disappeared. Luckily the finder, Paul Scofield, had managed to get some record shots (right) on his mobile phone. These turned out to reveal a



Yellow-crowned Bishop, a species native to many sub-Saharan countries of Africa, occurring also in parts of Spain and Portugal where escapes from captivity have established a feral population. This was almost certainly the same individual seen on the coast of the North Devon mainland at Heddon's Mouth, east of Combe Martin, on 31 Jul and again on 3 Aug. Although undoubtedly of captive origin, it is incredible that the Bishop made the jump across the sea to Lundy. Popping up again after the initial sighting, the bird remained until 7 Sep, frequenting South West Field, Lighthouse Field and Tent Field area, often providing an exotic splash of colour outside Quarters.

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 the Devon Bird Recorder at recorder@devonbirds.org.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

About 20 seen during the first half of the crossing from Ilfracombe on 12 Oct (Richard Campey, Tim Davis *et al.*). A drake was seen about 30 minutes out from the island en route from Ilfracombe on 26 Oct (Dan, Ellie & Justin Zantboer).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

One was circling the *Oldenburg* at sea level at 11:10 hrs, just over halfway across during the crossing from Ilfracombe to Lundy on 12 Oct (Richard Campey, Tim Davis *et al.*).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

One flew over the *Oldenburg* shortly after departing Ilfracombe on 12 Oct (Richard Campey, Tim Davis *et al.*).

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Seven passed close to the bow of the *Oldenburg* about halfway across from Bideford to Lundy on 11 Sep (Martin Thorne) – the same day that Martin later saw four off North Light and one was seen on the return crossing to Bideford (Tony Taylor).

BIRD RINGING ON LUNDY

Tony Taylor (ammataylor@yahoo.co.uk)

With the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic less severe than in 2020, it was possible to carry out plenty of work on all the long-term ringing projects currently under way on Lundy. In addition to the single-species studies, the ringing of migrant passerines in spring and autumn was very productive. The overall ringing total for the year was 4,446, the highest since 2009.

With LFS rings now being used for the ICL and Sheffield University House Sparrow Project, an offshoot has been a new colour-ringing study looking at the breeding biology of Lundy's Starlings, a species that is declining in the UK. Starlings and House Sparrows breed in similar habitats and Starlings are often caught incidentally when the sparrows are targeted, so much of the ringing work on both species can be carried out at the same time. Jamie Dunning has provided further details on these two projects in the Bird Report (see pp.80 and 86, respectively). Progress with the ongoing studies on Manx Shearwaters, Storm Petrels and Wheatears is discussed below.

While the increased use of LFS rings on House Sparrows and Starlings clearly contributed towards the year's high total, the numbers of migrant Blackcaps (1,148), Redwings (115) and Siskins (470) ringed broke these species' all-time records for Lundy. Taken together with Willow Warblers (574), they made up over half of all the birds ringed. Other species with three-figure totals were Manx Shearwater, Goldcrest, Swallow, Chiffchaff, Starling, House Sparrow and Meadow Pipit.

Unusual species ringed included a Wryneck and two Common Rosefinches. Others that are relatively common in the UK but rarely ringed on Lundy included a Swift, two Great Spotted Woodpeckers and a Long-tailed Tit. A full list of species totals is given below.

Clockwise from top left: Grasshopper Warbler, Firecrest, male Blackcap and Sedge Warbler (photos: Dean Jones and Richard Taylor).

