



Plate 169. *White-winged Tern, adult, Loch of Tankerness, Mainland, Orkney, 8–10 & 27 August 2007*
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Scottish Birds Records Committee report on rare birds in Scotland, 2005–08. Part 2

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on behalf of the Scottish Birds Records Committee

Continued from Scottish Birds 30: 99–123.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* 59: 8: 67

Table 19. Accepted records of White-winged Tern in Scotland, 2005–08.

2005 BBRC

2 birds: Angus & Dundee 1, Clyde 1.

2007

Angus & Dundee Loch of Kinnordy, adult, 29 May, photo (D. Gilbert, H. Morton, T. & J. Williams).

North-east Scotland Loch of Skene, juvenile/first-winter, 21–29 October, photo (H.A. Adlesee *et al.*).

Orkney Loch of Tankerness & Mill Sand, Mainland, second-summer, 22–23 July, photo (K.E. Hague).

Orkney Loch of Tankerness, Mainland, adult, 8–10 & 27 August, found dead, photo (K.E. Hague *et al.*).

2008

Highland Inverness Airport, Inverness district, adult, 11–12 August (H. Loates, T. Patrick *et al.*); same Allanfeearn, Balloch, Inverness district, 21–22 August, photo (D.C. Jardine *et al.*).

North-east Scotland Loch of Strathbeg, adult, 11 August, photo (D. Parnaby *et al.*).

White-winged Tern is a rare visitor to Scotland, mostly observed along the east side of the country from late spring to late autumn.

It was removed from the list of species considered by BBRC in January 2006 (Fraser *et al.* 2007a). The number of individuals observed in Scotland to the end of 2004 was 59 (adjusted from Forrester *et al.*

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2007, with an erroneous 2004 Orkney record removed), with a further two seen in 2005 (Fraser *et al.* 2007a, 2007c). Another six were found during the period 2006–08, consisting of adults and a second-summer in spring and summer, and a juvenile/first-winter in late autumn. Two of the sightings during the period were on Orkney, an area responsible for many past records. Both birds were found by the same observer at the same site in the same year, but were of different ages.

(Breeds on marshy lakes in central and eastern Palearctic areas, migrating south to winter in Africa, the Indian subcontinent and Australasia.)

Greater Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla* 286: 28: 314

Table 20. Accepted records of Greater Short-toed Lark in Scotland, 2005–08. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 21.

2005

Sea area Forties *Buchan Alpha* oil platform, 57°54'N 00°01'E, 22 May, photo (B. Baker *et al.*).

2008

Argyll The Reef, Tiree, adult, 12–29 August, photo (J. Bowler, D. Orr-Ewing *et al.*).

Outer Hebrides Bàgh a' Bhaile (Village Bay), St Kilda, 23 May (W.T.S. Miles).

Greater Short-toed Lark is found annually in Scotland in very small numbers, mostly in spring and autumn, but with almost all observations on Fair Isle, Shetland and Orkney. It is rare elsewhere, particularly on the mainland.

During the period 2005–08, in addition to the three occurrences in Table 20, 13 were found on Fair Isle, eight in Shetland, and four on North Ronaldsay (Orkney), where records of this species are judged by local committees. All were seen during the spring and autumn migration periods, from 22 April to 1 July and from 14 September to 24 October respectively.

Table 21. Accepted records of Greater Short-toed Lark in the Northern Isles, 2005–08.

2005	Number of birds		Date range	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
Fair Isle	1	1	24 May	15–22 October
Orkney	-	2	-	25 Sep–14 Oct
Shetland	-	-	-	-
2006				
Fair Isle	4	3	6 May–17 Jun	23 Sep–14 Oct
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	1	3	10–18 May	30 Sep–24 Oct
2007				
Fair Isle	2	1	5–13 June	4–13 October
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	2	-	19 Sep–14 Oct
2008				
Fair Isle	1	-	22–24 April	-
Orkney	1	1	16 Jun–1 Jul	17 October
Shetland	-	2	-	14 Sep–15 Oct

Birds seen in Scotland are likely to be either spring overshoots or displaced autumn migrants from the Continent. Those seen on St Kilda (Outer Hebrides) and the *Buchan Alpha* oil platform in the North Sea fit this pattern, being found in late May. However, the individual on Tiree (Argyll), present for 18 days from mid-August, may instead have been summering. The *Buchan Alpha* (Baker 2005) and Tiree individuals were both firsts for the respective recording areas.

(Eight or nine subspecies. Breeds widely in dry, sandy areas from southern and eastern Europe to the Middle East and western China, with populations migrating to winter in India, the Middle East and Africa.)



Plate 170. Wood Lark, Peffer Sands, Scoughall, Lothian, 15–24 February 2008 © Mark Darling.

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea* 68 (1950–2004): 6: 74

Table 22. Accepted records of Wood Lark in Scotland, 2005–08.

2006

Fair Isle Upper Stoneybrek, 5 November (P.A. Baxter).
Shetland Foula, 31 March to 13 April, photo (G. & D. Atherton).

2007

Shetland Noness, Mainland, 9–13 October, photo (P.M. Ellis *et al.*).
Shetland Out Skerries, 27 October to 3 December (P.R. Flint).

2008

Fair Isle Midway & Lower Stoneybrek, 6–18 November, photo (D.N. Shaw).
Lothian Peffer Sands, Scoughall, 15–24 February, photo (M. Holling *et al.*).

Wood Lark remains a rare bird in Scotland, almost exclusively found on Shetland and Fair Isle in late autumn and early winter, with a slight increase in records in recent years.

Before the 1930s it was seen regularly in Fair Isle, and small groups occasionally overwintered, but only 68 birds were found in Scotland between 1950 and 2004 (adjusted from Forrester *et al.* 2007). There were another six in Scotland during the period 2005–08, although it is possible that the two Shetland records in 2007 refer to the same individual. Autumn vagrants most likely originated from northern Continental populations, which are known to move large distances south to winter in Mediterranean areas. However, the source of the Foula (Shetland) and Peffer Sands (Lothian) individuals in February and March is less obvious. The population in England is currently undergoing a significant expansion in range and size, with birds returning to breeding territories from late February (Wotton & Gillings 2000). It is possible, therefore, that both these birds originated from England. Wood Larks have been

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found attempting to establish breeding territories in Scotland on two occasions in recent times, although nesting was not proven (Forrester *et al.* 2007). The Peffer Sands individual was present in potential breeding habitat, which may account for it remaining for ten days.

(Two subspecies breed from the Middle East through eastern and southern Europe to England north to Yorkshire, where the population is increasing. Most populations move south to wintering areas, with more northerly populations moving the farthest.)

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* 40: 12: 52

Table 23. Accepted records of Red-rumped Swallow in Scotland, 2005–08.

2005 BBRC

3 birds: North-east Scotland 1, Shetland 2.

2006

Angus & Dundee Red Castle, Lunan Bay, 12 November, photo (K. Edwards, G. Smith *et al.*).

North-east Scotland Old Rattray Farm, Strathbeg, 23 May (T. Marshall *et al.*).

Shetland Baltasound, Unst, 6 May, photo (M.G. Pennington *et al.*).

Shetland Foula, 7–8 May, photo (G. & D. Atherton).

Shetland Hoswick, Mainland, adult, 28 August to 18 October, photo (P.M. Ellis *et al.*).

2007

North-east Scotland Collieston, 16 April (P.S. Crockett).

Outer Hebrides Port Nis (Port of Ness), Lewis, adult, 28 October, photo (T. ap Rheinallt *et al.*).

2008

Outer Hebrides Scolpaig, Rubha Ghriminis (Griminish Point), North Uist, 6 June (D. & M. Galloway).

Shetland Symbister, Whalsay, 5 June, photo (B. Marshall *et al.*).

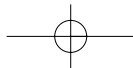
Red-rumped Swallow is seen annually in Scotland in very small numbers from April through to November along the east coast and on islands.



Plate 171. Red-rumped Swallow, Baltasound, Unst, Shetland, 6 May 2006 © Mike Pennington.

It was removed from the list of species considered by BBRC in January 2006 (Fraser *et al.* 2007a). To the end of 2004, 40 birds were recorded in Scotland (Forrester *et al.* 2007), with a further three seen in 2005 (Fraser *et al.* 2007b), and nine during 2006–08. Most of these nine individuals were found in late spring and early summer with fewer in late autumn, following the established pattern of occurrence for presumed displaced migrants. More unusual was the lingering individual at Hoswick, Mainland (Shetland), which remained for six weeks from late August; this may have been because it was in heavy moult and lacking flight feathers during part of its stay.

(Eleven or 12 subspecies. Breeds widely from southern and eastern Europe eastwards across the Palearctic region, and in sub-Saharan Africa. Northern populations are migratory, wintering in Africa and southern Asia. In recent years its range has expanded into more northern and western areas.)



Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris* 45: 3: 48

Table 24. Accepted records of Tawny Pipit in Scotland, 2005–08.

2005

Fair Isle Bunes, 23–31 May, photo (R.J. Butcher *et al.*).

2007

Outer Hebrides Smeircleit (Smerclate), South Uist, 16 June, photo (J. Bruce, M. Pollitt).

2008

Shetland Dalsetter, Mainland, 24–26 May, photo (R.M. Mellor *et al.*).

Tawny Pipit is a very rare bird in Scotland with just three records during the period 2005–08, all being presumed spring overshoots on islands.

In line with the geographical distribution of previous observations in Scotland (Forrester *et al.* 2007), two of the sightings were on Shetland and Fair Isle. The bird seen on the Outer Hebrides was more unusual, being only the sixth for the recording area. It is perhaps surprising that this species is so rarely observed in Scotland, when compared with the closely related Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*, whose nearest breeding areas are much more remote. This may be explained by the fact that in Continental Europe, Tawny Pipit breeds in more southerly areas and thus Scotland is well north of its normal migration paths.

(Nominate *campestris* breeds in dry, sandy areas from southern and eastern Europe to western Siberia; two other Asian subspecies. Winters in Africa, the Middle East and India.)



Plate 172. Tawny Pipit, Dalsetter, Mainland, Shetland, 24–26 May 2008 © Jim Nicolson.



Plate 173. Red-throated Pipit, Parks & Furse, Fair Isle, 11–16 May 2006 © Rebecca Nason.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* 142: 8: 150

Table 25. Accepted records of Red-throated Pipit in Scotland, 2005–08.

2006

Fair Isle Parks & Furse, 11–16 May, photo (J.M. Reid *et al.*).

Fair Isle Easter Lothar, 12–15 October, photo (N. Green, P.A. Harris *et al.*).

Shetland Foula, 26 May to 1 June, photo (G. & D. Atherton, M. Gray, J. McMillan *et al.*).

2008

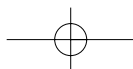
Fair Isle Wirvie, 30 May (G., J. & J. Griffiths, D.N. Shaw *et al.*).

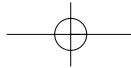
Fair Isle Boini Mire, 23 September (J. McCallum *et al.*).

Highland Handa Island, Sutherland, 12 May, photo (C. Townsend *et al.*).

Shetland Foula, 19 September (P.R. Gordon, M.S. Scott *et al.*).

Shetland Clevigarth, Mainland, 5 October, photo (P. Derbyshire, H. Moncrieff, J.M.A. Osbourne, M.S. Scott *et al.*).





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Red-throated Pipit is a spring and autumn vagrant in Scotland, found almost exclusively on islands, with most sightings on Fair Isle and Shetland. It was dropped from the list of species considered by BBRC in January 2006 (Fraser *et al.* 2007a). The number of accepted Scottish individuals stood at 142 to the end of 2004 (adjusted from Forrester *et al.* 2007), with none seen in 2005.

Since then the established pattern of incidence has continued and of the eight birds found in 2006–08, almost all were on Fair Isle and Shetland in spring and autumn. More unusually, one was on Handa Island, Sutherland (Highland), although at a typical date during the spring migration period.

(Breeds widely in northern boreal Palearctic, migrating to winter in Africa and south-east Asia.)

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* 86: 12: 98

Table 26. Accepted records of Water Pipit in Scotland, 2005–08, with late acceptances from 2004 not included in Forrester *et al.* (2007).

2004

Lothian Skateraw, 10 April, photo (M.A. Wilkinson).

Lothian Barns Ness, 16–17 April, photo (M.A. Wilkinson *et al.*).

2005

Ayrshire Hunterston Sands, 30 December to 31 Mar 2006, photo (M. McGinty *et al.*).

2006

Ayrshire Maidens, 24 November to 1 April 2007, photo (A. Hogg *et al.*).

Lothian Musselburgh, 5 March, photo (C.N. Davison *et al.*).

Lothian Skateraw, 2 April, photo (C.N. Davison *et al.*).

Lothian Musselburgh lagoons, 4 November to 4 March 2007, photo (P.R. Bould, B.A. Hickman *et al.*).

2007

Isle of May 3 May, photo (A.R. & H.T. Mainwood).

2008

Ayrshire Doonfoot, 5 March to 11 April, photo (D. Cree *et al.*).

Borders Dunglass, 17 February to 13 April, photo (D.K. Graham).

Clyde Crom Mhin marsh, Endrick Mouth NNR, two, 1 December, with one remaining to 25 March 2009, photo (I. Fulton, C.J. McInerny, J.J. Sweeney *et al.*).

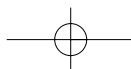
Lothian Scoughall, 24–26 March (M.A. Wilkinson).

North-east Scotland Meikle Loch, 14 April (P.S. Crockett *et al.*).

Water Pipit is a rare winter visitor to Scotland, often found at coastal sites on beach seaweed, with a late-autumn arrival in November–December, followed by a second peak in spring, attributed tentatively to passage birds. The largest numbers are recorded during March–April. More than 75% of records to the end of 2004 were in Ayrshire and Lothian, with few occurrences in other areas (Forrester *et al.* 2007).

Two 2004 records omitted from Forrester *et al.* (2007), together with all five in 2005 and 2006, were also in Ayrshire and Lothian, emphasising the established geographical distribution. The next two years, however, saw the proportion of Ayrshire/Lothian records dropping from three-quarters of the Scottish total to around one-third. The Isle of May individual on 3 May 2007 was the latest spring occurrence to date in Scotland. In 2008, spring birds predominated with the exception of two seen in December at Endrick Mouth NNR (Clyde); one of these stayed to March 2009. The rejection rate for descriptions of this species submitted to SBRC is relatively high, and concern about the reliability of some earlier records caused them to be discounted by Forrester *et al.* (2007).

(Nominate *spinoletta* breeds from highlands of Iberia to the Balkans and Turkey, dispersing widely in Europe in non-breeding season; two other Asian subspecies.)



Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* 139: 5: 144

Table 27. Accepted records of Common Nightingale in Scotland, 2005–08. Records from the Northern Isles are summarised separately in the text.

2007

North-east Scotland Garthdee, male in song, 7 May (I. Broadbent, R. Duncan *et al.*).

Common Nightingale is a very rare, almost annual, passage migrant to Scotland. Spring records predominate, and Fair Isle and Shetland account for the vast majority of sightings.

Of the five birds recorded during 2005–08, four were in the Northern Isles where the species is assessed by local committees. One of these was on Fair Isle on 16 June 2005, and two were on Shetland during 9–13 May 2006. The single autumn sighting was of a first-winter that appeared at Northdale, Unst (Shetland) on 14 October 2007, lingering until 22 October, a late date for the species. None were seen in 2008.

The pre-2005 Scottish total of 139 for the species (adjusted from Forrester *et al.* 2007) includes one record of Eastern Nightingale *L. m. golzii* (previously known as *L. m. hafizi*).

(Nominate *megarhynchos* breeds from Morocco and western Europe across North Africa, southern and central Europe, Ukraine and Turkey; *L. m. golzii* from Aral Sea to Mongolia. Winters in sub-Saharan Africa.)

Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola* 53: 2: 55

Table 28. Accepted records of Aquatic Warbler in Scotland, 2005–08.

2006

Fair Isle Boini Mire, first-winter, 16–21 September, photo (D.N. Shaw *et al.*).

2008

Shetland Skaw, Unst, adult, 4 August, photo (M.G. Pennington *et al.*).

Aquatic Warbler is a very rare early-autumn migrant to Scotland with the majority of occurrences on Fair Isle. Only eight have been recorded outwith the Northern Isles; seven of these were on the Isle of May and the single mainland record was at St Abbs (Borders) in 1977 (Forrester *et al.* 2007).

As mid-August is the characteristic arrival period for Aquatic Warbler in Scotland, the first-winter bird on Fair Isle appeared at a relatively late date. In Scotland, birds aged as adults are rare (Forrester *et al.* 2007), so the individual on Unst (Shetland) in August 2008 is notable.

(Breeds from central Europe to Russia, wintering in sub-Saharan Africa.)



Plate 174. Aquatic Warbler, adult, Skaw, Unst, Shetland, 4 August 2008 © Brydon Thomason.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* many: c. 140: many

Table 29. Accepted records of Marsh Warbler in Scotland, 2005–08. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 30.

2005

Highland Isle of Eigg, Lochaber, male in song, 10 June (J. Chester).

2006

Isle of May Juvenile/first-winter, 15–16 September, photo (B. Bates, B. Etheridge *et al.*).

Outer Hebrides Gramasdail (Gramsdale), Benbecula, male in song, 11 June (S.E. Duffield, J.B. Kemp *et al.*).

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2007

Argyll Balephuill, Tiree, male in song, 8–10 June, photo (J. Bowler *et al.*).

Highland Applecross, Ross & Cromarty, male in song, 16–19 June (A. Dickie, R. Maskew).

Isle of May Male, 12–13 June, photo (A.R. Mainwood *et al.*).

North-east Scotland Rattray Head, 31 May (D. & S. Parnaby).

Outer Hebrides Tobha Mòr (Howmore), South Uist, 29 September, photo (S.E. Duffield *et al.*).

2008

Angus & Dundee Springburn Hotel, Arbroath, male in song, 29 May (R. Bramhall *et al.*).

Borders St Abbs Head, male in song, 25–28 May (L. Barber, F. Evans, G. Garner, D.K. Graham).

Lothian Vaults Wood, Broxmouth, male in song, 29 May (T. O’Conner, C. Scott *et al.*).

North-east Scotland Newtonhill, male in song, 30 May (J.M. Collinson).

North-east Scotland Girdleness, male in song, 4 June (P.S. Crockett *et al.*).

Marsh Warbler is a scarce annual migrant to Scotland with most occurrences involving singing males in late spring; very rarely, birds remain to breed.

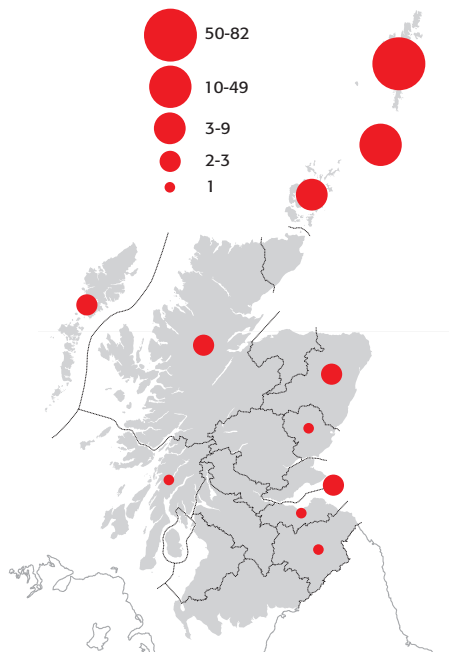


Figure 4. Distribution by recording area of Marsh Warbler in Scotland, 2005–08.

To the end of 2004, c. 90% of records were from the Northern Isles and, other than Caithness and the Isle of May, numbers seen in other recording areas were in single figures (Forrester *et al.* 2007). Spring occurrences in Scotland probably involve birds overshooting breeding grounds in Fennoscandia, where the population has increased (Hagemeijer & Blair 1997). Autumn records are rare, owing at least in part to identification challenges. There were three confirmed reports of breeding between 1993 and 2004. The species is assessed by local committees in the Northern Isles.

During the period 2005–08, more than 100 birds were seen in the Northern Isles but only 13 elsewhere in Scotland. Of the latter, one on the Isle of Eigg in spring 2005 was a first record for Lochaber (Highland), and one on Tiree in spring 2007 was a first for Argyll. Two were also seen in the Outer Hebrides: a mid-summer bird in 2006 on Benbecula, and an autumn individual in 2007 at Tobha Mòr (Howmore), South Uist. With the addition of the Applecross, Ross & Cromarty (Highland) bird in June 2007, the total of five individuals constitutes a marked increase in sightings in the west of the country.

Table 30. Accepted records of Marsh Warbler in the Northern Isles, 2005–08, excluding breeding pairs and long-staying singing males (see text).

Year	Number of birds		Date range	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
2005				
Fair Isle	3	2	3–15 June	8–27 August
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	5	4	3 Jun–7 Jul	3 Sep–1 Oct
2006				
Fair Isle	4	4	11–22 June	11 Aug–11 Sep
Orkney	1	3	14–20 June	21–27 September
Shetland	5	10	9–18 June	27 Aug–10 Oct
2007				
Fair Isle	4	4	31 May–22 Jun	25 Aug–5 Oct
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	13	3	31 May–10 Jun	4 Sep–1 Oct

2008

Fair Isle	12+	1	28 May–8 Jun	1 August
Orkney	5	-	28 May–6 Jun	-
Shetland	38+	-	28 May–19 Jun	-

Turning to the Northern Isles, records during 2005–08 conformed largely to the established pattern, although autumn birds were more frequent than spring birds in 2006. In addition to the spring and autumn occurrences shown in Table 30, breeding was confirmed in 2005 at Norwick, Unst (Shetland), where singing was first heard on 8 July and two young were fledged by one pair. Two other males were also heard in song in Shetland for more than one day, at Toab, Mainland and Baltasound, Unst; these are included in Table 30.

In 2006 and 2007, only short-staying males were noted in Shetland, though some were heard in song for several days, as was a male in Orkney, present for one week in mid-June 2006 (see Table 30). Both these years were substantially below average for Marsh Warblers in Britain as a whole, with total numbers of pairs at their lowest for more than 20 years (Holling *et al.* 2009, 2010).

In 2008 as in 2005, a pair at Norwick, Unst fledged at least two young. This pair has been omitted from Table 30, as have two long-staying singing males on Fair Isle from 24 June to 17 July 2007 and from 1 to 23 July 2008.

(Breeds Britain, France, Denmark, Fennoscandia, east through Europe to Russia; winters in sub-Equatorial Africa.)

Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta* 52: 3: 55**Table 31. Accepted records of Melodious Warbler in Scotland, 2005–08.****2006**

Fair Isle Setter, 27 August to 2 September, photo (D.N. Shaw *et al.*).

2007

Shetland Baltasound, Unst, adult, 30 August to 8 October, photo (J. Nicolson, M.G. Pennington, G.W. Petrie *et al.*); same Easter Quarff, Mainland, 9–12 October, photo (R.A. Haywood *et al.*).

2008

Shetland Sumburgh Head, Mainland, adult, 6–11 August, photo (J. Brown, P.M. Ellis *et al.*).

Melodious Warbler is a very rare spring and autumn migrant in Scotland, recorded in most years. The majority of occurrences (c. 75%) are in the Northern Isles, and thus the three birds in the period 2005–08 were typical. All initially appeared in August, with one remaining for six days, one for seven days, and one long-staying adult for 44 days.

(Breeds in north Africa, Iberia, France, Belgium, and south-west Germany to the north-west Balkans; migrates to winter in sub-Saharan West Africa.)



Plate 175. Melodious Warbler, adult, Baltasound, Unst, Shetland, 30 August to 8 October 2007 © Hugh Harrop.

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Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* 194: 25: 219**Table 32. Accepted records of Subalpine Warbler in Scotland, 2005–08. Northern Isles records for 2006–08 are summarised separately in Table 33.****2005 BBRC**

7 birds: Highland 1, Lothian 1, North-east Scotland 1, Orkney 1, Shetland 3.

2006Isle of May Adult female or first-summer male, 6–9 May, photo (M. Newell, C. Thaxter *et al.*).**2007**Isle of May First-summer female, 21 June to 19 August, photo (M. Newell *et al.*).

Outer Hebrides Vatersay, adult male in song, 3 May, photo (C. Williams).

2008

Outer Hebrides Bàgh a' Bhaile (Village Bay), St Kilda, adult male, 6 May (S. Money).

Outer Hebrides Bàgh a' Bhaile (Village Bay), St Kilda, adult male, 22 May, photo (M. Hallet, W.T.S. Miles *et al.*).Outer Hebrides Ceathramh Meadhanach (Middlequarter), North Uist, male in song, 23 May (J. Metcalf *et al.*).

Subalpine Warbler is a scarce, annual and increasingly regular migrant to Scotland. The total number of birds to the end of 2004 was 194, of which 192 were included in Forrester *et al.* (2007) and a further two, observed on Shetland in 2002, accepted more recently (Fraser *et al.* 2007c). Seven birds were seen in 2005 (Fraser *et al.* 2007b), after which Subalpine Warbler was dropped from the list of species considered by BBRC, although records of the eastern subspecies *S. c. albistriata* continue to be assessed by that committee. Local committees in the Northern Isles have assessed records, other than those of *albistriata*, since 2006.

Generally speaking, peak arrival (c. 90% of Scottish records) is in May, contrasting with the few autumn occurrences in August to October, and the overwhelming majority of birds (more than 80%) occur in the Northern Isles.

Table 33. Accepted records of Subalpine Warbler in the Northern Isles, 2006–08, excluding one accepted record of *S. c. albistriata* (see text).

	Number of birds		Date range	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
2006				
Fair Isle	1	-	6 June	-
Orkney	1	-	11 May	-
Shetland	2	-	8 May–9 Jun	-
2007				
Fair Isle	1	1	23–24 May	20–29 October
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	-	-	-
2008				
Fair Isle	2	-	9–20 May	-
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	3	-	14–30 May	-

Records for the period 2006–08 conformed to the usual pattern, with occurrences in the Northern Isles, the Outer Hebrides and the Isle of May; no birds were seen on the Scottish mainland. Notable observations included a female that lingered for 60 days on the Isle of May during summer 2007; a bird on Fair Isle that occurred on the latest date so far recorded in Scotland (20–29 October); and the two males seen on St Kilda (Outer Hebrides) in May 2008.

Most Scottish records have been assigned or assumed to be Western Subalpine Warbler (*S. c. cantillans*), with just 19 *albistriata* to the end of 2004; the latter tend to have slightly later spring arrival dates (Forrester *et al.* 2007). *S. c. moltonii* may be a potential vagrant to Britain; furthermore, vocal and plumage differences may be sufficient to merit species status, though it has been suggested that the name *moltonii* is a junior synonym of *subalpina* (Baccetti *et al.* 2007, Parkin & Knox 2010).

In the current period as in earlier years, most birds are assumed to have been *cantillans*, but only three males were specifically accepted as belonging to this subspecies: on North Ronaldsay (Orkney) on 11 May 2006, Fair Isle on 6 June 2006, and Foula (Shetland) on 9 June 2006. In addition, BBRC has accepted a single record of *albistriata*, a first-summer male on North Ronaldsay (Orkney) from 30 April to 11 May 2007 (Hudson *et al.* 2008), this being the 20th Scottish record of the subspecies (SBRC 2009). This brings the total number of Subalpine Warblers in Scotland during 2005–08 to 25, excluding two claimed *albistriata* from Shetland, still under consideration by BBRC.

(*S. c. cantillans* breeds from Iberia to Italy, *S. c. albistriata* from the Balkans to Turkey; *S. c. moltonii* breeds in Balearics, Corsica, Sardinia and north Italy; migrates to winter in sub-Saharan Sahel.)

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* 158: 16: 174

Table 34. Accepted records of Greenish Warbler in Scotland, 2005–08. Northern Isles records for 2006–08 are summarised separately in Table 35.

2005 BBRC

5 birds: Shetland 5.

2006

North-east Scotland Longhaven Quarry, 19–20 August, photo (M.B. Cowie, I.J. Kelman *et al.*).

North-east Scotland Findon, 20–21 August (M. Newell).

North-east Scotland Whinnyfold, 20 August (P.S. Crockett, H.E. Maggs *et al.*).

2008

North-east Scotland Cruden Bay, 20 August (J.P. Cook).

North-east Scotland Loch of Strathbeg, 20 August (D. Parnaby *et al.*).

Greenish Warbler is a rare but annual migrant to Scotland. The Scottish total to the end of 2004 was 158 birds. In addition to the 156 taken into account by Forrester *et al.* (2007), this total includes two late acceptances of singles on Shetland in 2004 (Fraser *et al.* 2007c, Hudson *et al.* 2008). A further five, all on Shetland in autumn, were seen in 2005, after which the species was dropped from the list considered by BBRC (Fraser *et al.* 2007b). Local committees in the Northern Isles have assessed records since 2006.

Over the last 30 years Greenish Warbler has become an increasingly regular autumn visitor. It is generally seen in August and September, with more than 80% of sightings in the Northern Isles. Most other birds are seen on the east coast of the Scottish mainland.

Table 35. Accepted records of Greenish Warbler in the Northern Isles, 2006–08.

	Number of birds		Date range	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
2006				
Fair Isle	-	2	-	18–28 August
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	-	-	-
2007				
Fair Isle	-	1	-	20–21 August
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	1	-	21–22 August
2008				
Fair Isle	-	-	-	-
Orkney	-	1	-	18 August
Shetland	1	-	3–5 June	-

During the period 2006–08, there was a fairly even split of birds between the Northern Isles (six) and the Scottish mainland (five). All records for the period fit the established temporal and geographical pattern, with only one bird appearing in a month other than August. All August occurrences were within a very narrow date interval in the second half of the month, and all mainland occurrences were in North-east Scotland.

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(*P. t. viridanus* breeds from the Baltic east through Russia to the Yenisei and south to Afghanistan, and winters in the Indian subcontinent and south-east Asia. There are a very few records of *P. t. plumbeitarsus* (eastern Siberia) in England.)

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi* 46: 4: 50

Table 36. Accepted records of Radde's Warbler in Scotland, 2005–08.

2005 BBRC

1 bird: Isle of May 1.

2006

Angus & Dundee Gaylet Pot, Auchmithie, 15 October, photo (K. Edwards *et al.*).
Shetland Scousburgh, Mainland, 15 October, photo (N. Barlow, R. Riddington *et al.*).

2007

Shetland Toab, Mainland, 18 October (R.M. Fray, H.R. Harrop).



Plate 176. Radde's Warbler, Gaylet Pot, Auchmithie, Angus & Dundee, 15 October 2006 © Eric McCabe.

Radde's Warbler is a very rare autumn visitor to Scotland. It had occurred 46 times by the end of 2004 (Forrester *et al.* 2007), and in 2005 there was a bird on the Isle of May on 16 October (Fraser *et al.* 2007b). The species was then dropped from the BBRC list as from 1 January 2006.

Overall, around 70% of occurrences to date have been on the Northern Isles with totals from other recording areas, all on the east coast, restricted to single figures. All three in the period 2006–08 were at typical eastern and northern localities, with each bird seen on one day only. The mid-October dates were also typical of this species, which in Scotland has an average arrival date of 5 October (Forrester *et al.* 2007).

(Breeds from southern Siberia east to Sakhalin and North Korea; migrates to winter in southern China and south-east Asia.)

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* 60: 8: 68

Dusky Warbler is a rare but more or less annual visitor to Scotland, with the autumn migration period accounting for all records but one. Like its close relative, Radde's Warbler, it occurs mainly in the Northern Isles, with nearly all the remaining records on the east coast (Forrester *et al.* 2007). Four birds were seen in Scotland in October 2005: two in Shetland and one each in Borders and Lothian (Fraser *et al.* 2007b).

Since Dusky Warbler was dropped from the BBRC list from 1 January 2006, there have been four accepted Scottish records, all from the Northern Isles where local committees are responsible for assessment. All four birds arrived within the space of 11 days in October 2007, with three on Shetland from 12th–16th and one on Fair Isle from 22nd–24th.

(Breeds from western Siberia to China, wintering from the Himalayas to south China; two subspecies, with European vagrants belonging to nominate *fuscatus*.)



Plate 177. Woodchat Shrike, juvenile, Quoy & Schoolton, Fair Isle, 2–13 September 2006 © Deryk Shaw.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* 86: 7: 93

Table 37. Accepted records of Woodchat Shrike in Scotland, 2005–08.

2005

Highland Stoer, Sutherland, male, 21–27 July, photo (C. Hill *et al.*).

2006

Fair Isle Gorson's Geo, Hoini & Pund, juvenile, 18–20 August, photo (M. Warren *et al.*).

Fair Isle Quoy & Schoolton, juvenile, 2–13 September, photo (M. Warren *et al.*).

Orkney Vincoin, North Ronaldsay, male, 6 May (P.A. Brown, M. Gray).

Shetland Foula, 28 June, photo (G. & D. Atherton).

Shetland Baltasound, Unst, female, 23–26 September, photo (M.G. Pennington, G. Woodburn *et al.*).

2008

Orkney Papa Westray, first-winter, 30 September to 2 October (M. Kerby).

Woodchat Shrike is a rare, almost annual, passage migrant to Scotland, seen in all months between April and October. Most birds have been found in the Northern Isles, which during the period 2005–08 accounted for six of the seven Scottish records.

A late spring peak in Scottish occurrences represents overshooting adults, probably from populations breeding in Iberia and the near Continent. Since 1990 the majority of birds seen in the Northern Isles have been juveniles in autumn, possibly dispersing from breeding grounds in south-east Europe (Forrester *et al.* 2007). The adult male at Stoer, Sutherland (Highland) that was seen for six days in 2005 was noteworthy; mid-summer records are few, particularly from mainland Scotland.

Like a bird on Shetland in September 2003 (Forrester *et al.* 2007), the juvenile on Fair Isle in August 2006 showed characteristics associated with the eastern subspecies *L. s. niloticus*. However, there are as yet no accepted British records of this subspecies, whose diagnosability is still being evaluated (Kehoe 2006).

(Nominate *senator* breeds from north-west Africa, Iberia, France and Belgium south to Turkey; *L. s. badius* on Mediterranean islands; and *L. s. niloticus* from Turkey to Iran; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.)

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Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus* 330: 15 (2005–06): 345**Table 38. Accepted records of Rosy Starling in Scotland, 2005–06. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 39.****2005****Angus & Dundee** Carnoustie, adult, 7–17 July, photo (D.A. Carmichael, Mrs Maxwell *et al.*).**Clyde Islands** Straad, Bute, adult female, 28–29 June, found dead, photo (I. Hopkins *et al. per* R.W. Forrester); preserved, NMS.Z 2010.22.**Highland** Teangue, Skye & Lochalsh, juvenile, 8 October, photo (L. Wheatland).**2006****Argyll** Columba Hotel, Iona, first-summer, 14 May, photo (A. & D. Stevens).**Outer Hebrides** Stornoway, Lewis, juvenile, 27 September to 1 October, photo (A. McIver, F. Stark).

Rosy Starling is a scarce, occasionally irruptive visitor, recorded with increasing frequency throughout Scotland.

The majority of juvenile and first-winter birds occur in the Northern Isles, as would be expected for a species dispersing from breeding areas in eastern Europe and beyond, while most adult and first-summer birds appear from June to August (Forrester *et al.* 2007). Northern Isles records were assessed locally during 2005–06, and from 2007 all Scottish records have been assessed by local committees.

Table 39. Accepted records of Rosy Starling in the Northern Isles, 2005–06.

2005	Number of birds		Date range	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
Fair Isle	-	-	-	-
Orkney	-	1	-	20 September
Shetland	-	2	-	2–11 September
2006				
Fair Isle	-	-	-	-
Orkney	-	1	-	c. 25 Sep–12 Oct
Shetland	-	6	-	13 Jul–15 Oct

In the period 2005–06, about three-quarters of the juveniles were found in the Northern Isles, in accordance with the usual pattern. Adults and immatures were recorded on the mainland and the Northern Isles in May, June and July. The adult on Bute in June 2005 was, after an 80-year gap, the second for the island, and the fifth for Clyde Islands.

Two birds are preserved as skins at NMS: the Bute bird, and a male from Baltasound, Unst (Shetland), found on 13 September 2007 (NMS.Z 2010.9).

(Breeds from the Balkans through the Middle East to Mongolia; winters from Arabia to the Indian subcontinent.)

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* many: 18: many**Table 40. Accepted records of Ortolan Bunting in Scotland, 2005–08. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 41.****2008****Outer Hebrides** Bàgh a' Bhaile (Village Bay), St Kilda, male, 21–23 May, photo (W.T.S. Miles, T. Bickernell *et al.*).

Ortolan Bunting is a rare but annual passage migrant in Scotland, with numbers declining substantially in recent years. Even though more than 700 were recorded between 1950 and the end of 2004, the restricted geographical distribution of Scottish records means that the species is very rare away from the Northern Isles, where more than 90% of sightings occur (Forrester *et al.* 2007). The main arrival periods are in May and September; over the last 30 years, autumn records have predominated.

In the Northern Isles, records are assessed by local committees. In the period 2005–08, only one bird was seen outwith these recording areas, a short-staying male on St Kilda (Outer Hebrides). It was the fourth for St Kilda, and the third spring occurrence there.

Table 41. Accepted records of Ortolan Bunting in the Northern Isles, 2005–08.

	Number of birds		Date range	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
2005				
Fair Isle	-	1	-	12 Sep–3 Oct
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	-	-	-
2006				
Fair Isle	2	4	8–26 May	7–29 September
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	3	-	19 Sep–11 Oct
2007				
Fair Isle	-	-	-	-
Orkney	-	2	-	28 October
Shetland	-	1	-	25–27 August
2008				
Fair Isle	-	1	-	3–19 September
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	3	-	2–17 September

In the Northern Isles there were only two birds in spring, both on Fair Isle in May 2006, and a total of 15 in autumn, including a male and female on North Ronaldsay on 28 October 2007, just two days short of the latest date for the species in Scotland (Forrester *et al.* 2007).

The decline in observations in Scotland accords with the contraction of the breeding population in Continental Europe (Hagemeyer & Blair 1997).

(Breeds patchily from Algeria and Iberia north to Norway and east through Europe to Asia; winters in sub-Saharan Africa.)

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica* 276: 24: 300

Table 42. Accepted records of Rustic Bunting in Scotland, 2005–08. Northern Isles records for 2006–08 are summarised separately in Table 43.**2005 BBRC**

5 birds: Angus & Dundee 1, Shetland 4.

2007

North-east Scotland Foveran, Newburgh, female or first-summer male, 2 June (H.E. Maggs *et al.*).

Rustic Bunting is a scarce, annual vagrant in Scotland with the majority of birds appearing in the Northern Isles. There were 276 birds recorded to the end of 2004 (Forrester *et al.* 2007), followed by five in 2005 after which the species was dropped from the BBRC list (Fraser *et al.* 2007b). In the current period, there was a single occurrence on mainland Scotland, all others being in the Northern Isles, where records are assessed locally.

Table 43. Accepted records of Rustic Bunting in the Northern Isles, 2006–08.

	Number of birds		Date range	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
2006				
Fair Isle	-	1	-	3–5 October
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	3	-	27 Sep–6 Oct
2007				
Fair Isle	1	-	31 May–4 Jun	-
Orkney	1	-	18 May	-
Shetland	2	1	30–31 May	14 October

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2008				
Fair Isle	4	-	19 May–1 Jun	-
Orkney	2	-	24–30 May	-
Shetland	1	2	1–3 June	17 Sep–10 Nov

In the Northern Isles there were 11 spring birds during the peak late May to early June period, which is also when the single mainland bird was seen. Similarly, the seven in autumn were generally within the main late September to early October migration period, but one at Baltasound, Unst (Shetland) on 9–10 November was only the fourth Scottish occurrence for that month.

The skin of a female found dead on Fair Isle on 19 May 2008 is held at NMS (NMS.Z 2009.34.4).

(Breeds from Fennoscandia to Siberia; winters mainly in Japan, Korea and China.)

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* 593: 61: 654

Table 44. Accepted records of Little Bunting in Scotland, 2005–08. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 45.

2007

Argyll Milton, Tiree, 23 October, photo (J. Bowler).

Outer Hebrides Gleann Dail bho Dheas (South Glendale), South Uist, 19 October (J.B. Kemp).

Little Bunting is a scarce passage migrant in Scotland, mainly to the Northern Isles. The great majority of birds occur in autumn, and spring records are less than annual. A few have overwintered. The Scottish total to the end of 2004 was 593 birds (adjusted from Forrester *et al.* 2007).

Records of this species in the Northern Isles are assessed by local committees. In the period covered by this report, autumn totals were 22 (2005), 18 (2006), nine (2007) and eight (2008). By contrast, only two birds were found elsewhere in Scotland in autumn, both on islands.

Table 45. Accepted records of Little Bunting in the Northern Isles, 2005–08.

	Number of birds		Date range	
	Spring	Autumn	Spring	Autumn
2005				
Fair Isle	-	7	-	25 Sep–7 Nov
Orkney	-	3	-	25 Sep–18 Oct
Shetland	-	12	-	10 Sep–21 Oct
2006				
Fair Isle	-	3	-	22 Sep–17 Oct
Orkney	1	7	27 March	24 Sep–17 Oct
Shetland	-	8	-	18 Sep–14 Oct
2007				
Fair Isle	-	2	-	7–24 October
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	7	-	28 Sep–14 Oct
2008				
Fair Isle	1	2	30 May	25 Sep–4 Oct
Orkney	-	-	-	-
Shetland	-	6	-	15 Sep–20 Oct

Autumn dates for all areas were generally within the normal mid-September to early October period, though one appeared relatively late on 6–7 November 2005 on Fair Isle.

Only two of a total of 61 birds during 2005–08 were not autumn migrants. One in late May on Fair Isle was typical of spring arrival, but the early date of 27 March at Deerness, Mainland (Orkney) in 2006 suggests an overwintering bird. The only other March record for Scotland was one at Tarradale, Ross & Cromarty (Highland) on 9 March 1986 (Forrester *et al.* 2007).

Little Bunting has increased in frequency in Scotland since the 1980s, a likely consequence of the increased breeding population in Fennoscandia (Hagemeyer & Blair 1997).

(Breeds from northern Fennoscandia to eastern Siberia; winters from north-eastern India and Nepal to south-east Asia.)

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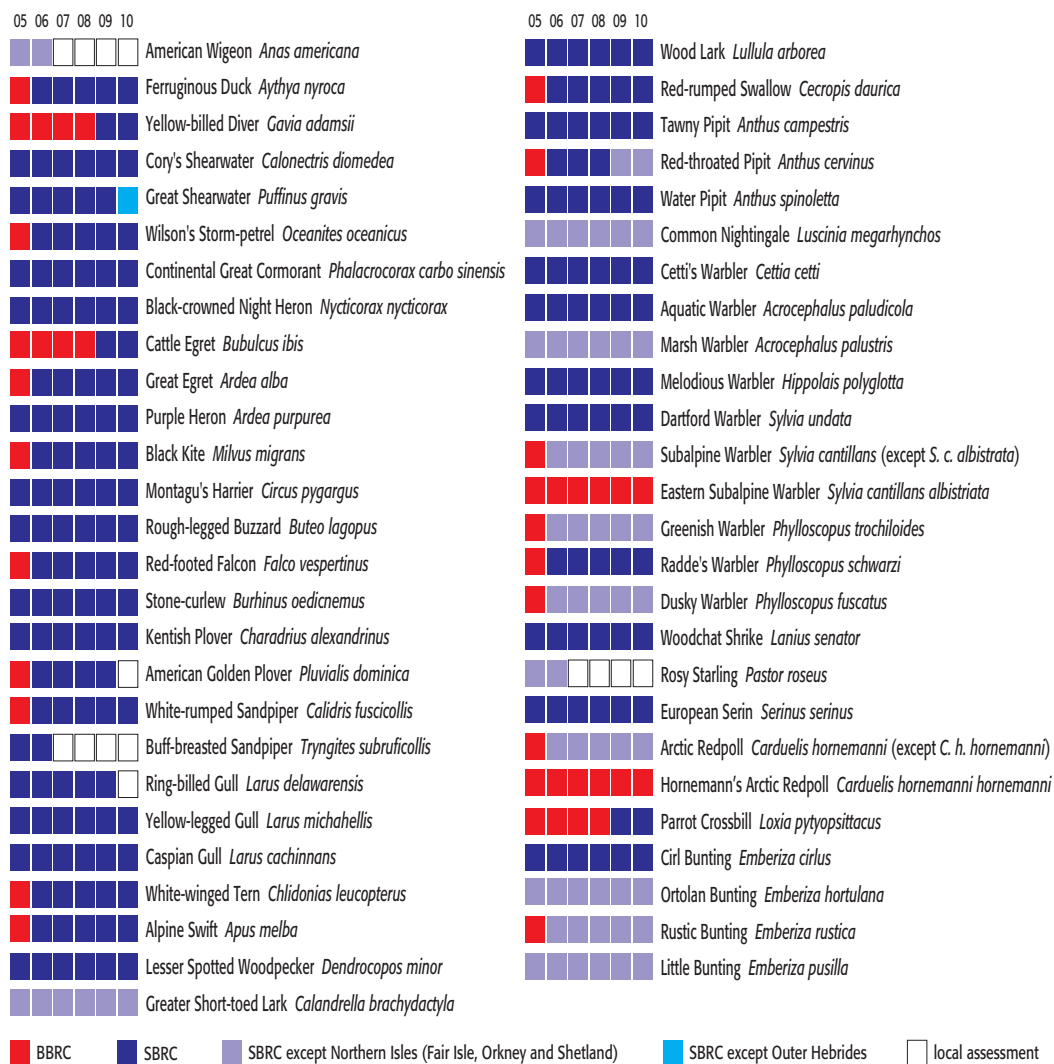
Appendix 1.

List of records regarded as not proven by the Scottish Birds Records Committee (SBRC).

- 2005:** Cory’s Shearwater Scurdie Ness, Angus & Dundee, 21 August. Fair Isle, 8 September. Girdleness, North-east Scotland, 10 September. Great Shearwater Ullapool–Stornoway ferry, Ross & Cromarty, Highland, 28 August. Black-crowned Night Heron Carnshalloch, Dumfries & Galloway, 30 April. Rough-legged Buzzard Durris, North-east Scotland, 8 November. Ravensgill Dod, Clyde, 29 December. Caspian Gull St John’s Loch, Caithness, 23 November.
- 2006:** American Wigeon Loch Ryan, Dumfries & Galloway, 3 September. Purple Heron Loch Loyal Lodge, Sutherland, Highland, 27 October. Black Kite Kaimes, West Linton, Borders, 15 September. Montagu’s Harrier Aberlady Bay, Lothian, 9 May. Rough-legged Buzzard Baleshare, North Uist, Outer Hebrides, 23 January. Lairg, Sutherland, Highland, 2 September to 6 October. Inverness Airport, Inverness district, Highland, 8 September. Gearraidh Gadhal (Garrygall), Barra, Outer Hebrides, 24 September. Red-footed Falcon Dalnessie Estate, Ross & Cromarty, Highland, 4–5 August. Ring-billed Gull Ayr, Ayrshire, 29 January. Loch Peallach, Mull, 20 April. Rosy Starling Gatehouse of Fleet, Dumfries & Galloway, 27–28 December. Serin Peebles, Borders, 13 September.
- 2007:** Cory’s Shearwater Craignure–Oban ferry, Argyll, two, 18 May. Dennis Head, North Ronaldsay, Orkney, 7 July. Dennis Head, North Ronaldsay, Orkney, 27 August. Strathy Point, Caithness, 10 September. Newtonhill, North-east Scotland, 27 September. Isle of May, 28 September. Dennis Head, North Ronaldsay, Orkney, 25 October. Great Shearwater Off Boreray, St Kilda, Outer Hebrides, 6 September. St Abbs Head, Borders, 27 September. Continental Great Cormorant Loch Spynie, Moray & Nairn, 20–27 October. Great Egret Gullane Point, Lothian, 26 March. Loch Creran, Argyll, 21 September. Rough-legged Buzzard Lairg, Sutherland, Highland, 25 August. Acha Mòr (Achmore), Lewis, Outer Hebrides, 16 December. Red-footed Falcon Drums, North-east Scotland, 3 June. American Golden Plover Aberlady Bay, Lothian, 4 October. White-rumped Sandpiper Sands of Forvie, North-east Scotland, 24 August. Ring-billed Gull Loch Caolisport, Argyll, 16 November. Red-rumped Swallow Baron’s Haugh, Clyde, 28 May. Tawny Pipit North Ronaldsay, Orkney, 27 September. Water Pipit Cardross, Clyde, 7 February. Broxmouth, Lothian, 20 October. Serin Loch Laidon, Perth & Kinross, 2 June. Little Bunting St Abbs Head, Borders, 10 October.
- 2008:** Cory’s Shearwater Corsewall Point, Dumfries & Galloway, 19 July. Kinnaird Head, North-east Scotland, two, 20 July. Dennis Head, North Ronaldsay, Orkney, 29 July. Black Kite *Buchan Alpha* oil platform, Sea area Forties, 10 May. Rough-legged Buzzard Earlshall Muir, Fife, 6 May. Kilconquhar Estate, Fife, 5 October. Red-footed Falcon Stewarton, Campbeltown, Argyll, 23 May. Moulin Moor, Perth & Kinross, 26 May. Laghead, Dumfries & Galloway, 23 September. Caspian Gull Newmains, Borders, 6 March. Alpine Swift Strathclyde Loch, Clyde, 2 May. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker Eisg-Brachaidh, Coigach, Ross & Cromarty, Highland, 6 July. Red-rumped Swallow St Kilda, Outer Hebrides, 2 June. Marsh Warbler Dubford Farm, Turriff, North-east Scotland, 23 June to 7 July. Inverugie, North-east Scotland, 30 June.

Appendix 2.

Summary of assessment of records by the Scottish Birds Records Committee (SBRC) and other committees, 2005–08 (this report) and 2009–10. Some rare subspecies assessed by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) are not shown.



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