

Plate 90. Serin, female, Aisgernis (Askernish), South Uist, Outer Hebrides, 10 April 2014. © Ian Thompson

Scottish Birds Records Committee report on rare birds in Scotland, 2014

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This is the seventh annual report of the Scottish Birds Records Committee (SBRC), covering 2014. Previous reports have covered the periods 2005–08, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 (ap Rheinallt *et al.* 2010a, 2010b, 2011, 2012, McGowan *et al.* 2013, 2014, McGowan *et McInerny* 2015).

Following declines in numbers of British records over the last ten years, four species returned to the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) list from 1 January 2015 (Anon 2015). These are Aquatic Warbler Acrocephalus paludicola, Tawny Pipit Anthus campestris, Red-throated Pipit Anthus cervinus and Rustic Bunting Emberiza rustica, with only the latter two appearing in the current SBRC report. Aquatic Warbler was last recorded in Scotland in 2008, and Tawny Pipit last occurred in 2013. In contrast, due to increases in numbers of British records, BBRC no longer assesses Lesser Scaup Aythya affinis, Blyth's Reed Warbler Acrocephalus dumetorum, and Citrine Wagtail Motacilla citreola, and so these become SBRC species from 1 January 2015. Additionally, White-billed Diver Gavia adamsii remains on the SBRC list, but with local assessment in Shetland and the Outer Hebrides; and Olive-backed Pipit Anthus hodgsoni remains on the SBRC list, but with local assessment in Shetland, Fair Isle and Orkney. A summary of these changes is given in Appendix 2.

In 2014, the most striking occurrence was the autumn influx of Olive-backed Pipits. These arrived from 20 September, with the last present until 6 December; a total of 32 were involved, all on Shetland, Fair Isle and Orkney. This species was a rare vagrant to the UK, but has been seen increasingly in the past few years; hence it was assessed by BBRC, but has been considered by SBRC since 2013. Another notable sighting was of three adult White-winged Black Terns *Chlidonias leucopterus* in May in the Outer Hebrides, the first observation of multiple birds in Scotland. Also from

the Outer Hebrides in May and June was a male Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*, singing and displaying, apparently attempting to establish a territory. A Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* on Foula, Shetland in July that was subsequently found dead, had been ringed 14 years earlier as a chick in a breeding colony on Sardinia, Italy; this was the first ringing recovery of the species for Scotland. Two Serins *Serinus serinus* were recorded in the Outer Hebrides and on the Isle of May in April/May, the eighth and ninth Scottish records. Finally, only the second (and first live) observation of Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cettia* in Scotland was recorded on Barra (Outer Hebrides) in October.

Format of the report

The species accounts in the report follow a standard format, which is modelled on the annual BBRC reports published in *British Birds*. Nomenclature and taxonomic sequence follow the *Scottish List* (Forrester 2015).

On the header line, after the species or subspecies name, are three numbers:

- Total number of birds in Scotland to the end of 2004, based on Forrester *et al.* (2007), with adjustments in some cases, and also including records added in this report. In some cases, older records, 'At sea' records, or records pertaining to the breeding population are explicitly excluded from the totals, following the example of Forrester *et al.* (2007). In the case of Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* and Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*, numbers seen in the past were so great that totals have not been estimated.
- Total number of birds in Scotland during the period since 2004, but excluding the current year. Where appropriate, acceptances by BBRC and by local committees are included. Returning birds or repeat sightings of the same individual, insofar as these can be judged, are not counted.
- Total number in the current year (2014).

Immediately below the header line is a table of accepted Scottish records for 2014, with details. For those species assessed locally in the Northern Isles, full details of accepted Northern Isles records are not given. Instead, they are summarised as a separate table or in the text.

For all taxa, information is also provided about pre-2014 records that were not included in previous reports. These are presented in reverse chronological order. Records assessed by SBRC are listed in full, otherwise only summary information is provided.

It should be noted that records of individual birds reappearing at the same location in subsequent years can be accepted by local recorders without formal submission to SBRC; full details of these returning birds are nonetheless provided. Revised details are also provided for some pre-2013 records published previously.

For each record listed in full, the following information is provided. For additional details, see ap Rheinallt *et al.* (2010a).

■ Year.

100

- Recording area (www.the-soc.org.uk/bird-recording/local-recorders-network).
- Location(s). In the case of some recording areas, individual islands or component administrative areas are also named.
- Number of birds if more than one, with age and/or sex if known.
- 'Returning' if applicable.
- Date(s). Note that the use of a date range does not necessarily imply that a bird was confirmed to be present throughout; in some cases it may have been observed only on the first and last dates given.
- 'Found dead' or 'died' if applicable.
- 'Trapped' if applicable.
- Existence of a photograph, if this formed part of the assessment process.

- Names of observers, in alphabetical order. Every effort has been made to name only those people who played a part in finding and/or identifying the bird. However, if no submission was made by these observers, the submitter of the record is also credited. All other observers are covered by the use of 'et al.'.
- Details and location of specimen if preserved in a museum, with specimen number if available.
- Additional sightings of the same bird, or a cross-reference to additional sightings in a different recording area or year. Where a bird is said to be the same, this is usually a presumption based on the judgment of the observer, local recorder and/or others.

The table of records is followed by the main text of the species account. At the end of each account, a brief summary of global breeding and wintering distribution, with mention of relevant subspecies, is given in parentheses.

Species coverage

Species coverage is unchanged from the last report. Rare subspecies of several species on the SBRC list are still assessed by BBRC, the most important being Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* and Arctic Redpoll *Carduelis hornemanni*. For these, the accounts in the SBRC report summarise accepted BBRC records in order to give as complete a picture as possible of the species' occurrence in Scotland.

A list of records assessed by SBRC and considered to be 'not proven' can be found in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 summarises the involvement of different committees in the assessment of the taxa on the SBRC list. Appendix 3 lists minor corrections to previous SBRC reports.

SBRC

SBRC was set up in 1984 as a subcommittee of the SOC Council. Its role is to assess records of species that are rare in Scotland but not rare enough in Britain to be assessed by BBRC. Current members are Mark Wilkinson (Chairman), John Bowler, John Nadin, David Parnaby, Dave Pullan, Martin Scott and John Sweeney, with Chris McInerny as non-voting Secretary and Bob McGowan as non-voting Museum Consultant. Dave Pullan replaced Hywel Maggs during the period when the records reported here were assessed.

The Scottish List subcommittee consists of David Clugston, Ron Forrester, Angus Hogg, Bob McGowan, Chris McInerny and Roger Riddington. For more information about SBRC, see ap Rheinallt et al. (2010a) and www.the-soc.org,uk/bird-recording/records-committee/.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we are grateful to all observers who submitted records of Scottish rarities during the period. Without their efforts, this report could not exist. We owe a particular debt of gratitude to those who gave permission for their excellent photographs to be reproduced here.

Next, we thank the following current and former recorders and report compilers for their assistance in compiling, checking and correcting records for this report: Paul Collin, Jon Cook, Martin Cook, Jim Dickson, Iain English, Rob Fray, Keith Gillon, Pete Gordon, Angus Hogg, Nick Littlewoood, Ray Murray, David Parnaby, Scott Paterson, Chris Pendlebury, Mike Pennington, Ian Ricketts, Malcolm Ware, Stephen Welch, Jim Williams, and Val Wilson. We are particularly grateful for the cooperation of the Northern Isles recorders in helping to compile summaries for species assessed locally within their areas. Janette Park at Stromness Museum kindly supplied specimen information.

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Systematic list of accepted records

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca* 0: 9: 2

Table 1. Accepted records of Egyptian Goose in Scotland, 2014, with an additional record, 2013.

2014: Isle of May 7 February, photo *SB* 34: 176 (D. Bell, D. Pickett *et al.*).

Upper Forth Blair Drummond, adult, 12–17 May, photo (M. Albert, C. Pendlebury *et al.*).

2013: Lothian Abbeymill, adult, 24–28 February, photo (S. Welch *et al.*).

Egyptian Goose was added to Category C of the *Scottish List* in 2010 (ap Rheinallt *et al.* 2012). This species appears to be a rare, but near annual visitor, with observations throughout the country.

All three records reported here were the first for their respective recording areas.

(Breeds throughout Africa south of 20°N latitude, extending farther north into southern Egypt, the only part of its natural range to fall within the Western Palearctic. Substantial naturalised populations are concentrated in England, the Netherlands and Denmark, with smaller numbers breeding in Belgium, France and Germany.)

White-billed Diver Gavia adamsii

197: 214: 33

102

Table 2. Accepted records of White-billed Diver in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Argyll Machrihanish Seabird Observatory, Kintyre, adult summer, 17 May, photo (S. Holloway, E. Maguire).

Fife Fife Ness, adult, 13 October, photo (B. Farguharson).

Moray & Nairn Burghead, 2–6 April (R. Proctor). Moray & Nairn Portknockie, three, adults, 3 May, photo (L. Simpson *et al.*).

Moray & Nairn Cullen, adult, 4–7 May (M.J.H. Cook).

North-east Scotland Rosehearty, 30 January to 1 February, photo (W.T.S. Miles *et al.*).

North-east Scotland Portsoy, up to ten, 26 March to 6 April, photo (H. Maggs, W.T.S. Miles *et al.*).

North-east Scotland Peterhead, adult, 22 May (M. Innes).

Orkney St. Margaret's Hope, South Ronaldsay, adult (returning), 11 January to 6 May (B. Hamill, P. Higson, T. Wootton).

Orkney Scapa Flow, Mainland, three, 17 February, photo (S. Pinder *et al.*).

Outer Hebrides Ceann an t'Siumpain (Tiumpan Head), Lewis, 7 February (A. McNab, J.S. Nadin). Outer Hebrides Sgiogarstaigh, Nis (Skigersta, Ness), Lewis, four, 31 March to 20 April (B.A.E Marr).

Outer Hebrides Ceann an t'Siumpain (Tiumpan Head), Lewis, 7 April, photo (J.S. Nadin, K.D. Shaw).

Outer Hebrides Rubh an-t Seana Bhalla, Eirisgeigh (Eriskay), second-calendar-year, 21 April (M.J. Ainscough *et al.*).

Shetland Kirkabister, Mainland, adult (returning), 5 January (M. Heubeck).

Shetland Snarravoe, Bluemull Sound, Unst, adult, 7–12 February, photo (C.C. Rodger).

Shetland off Belmont, Bluemull Sound, Unst, adult (returning), 10 February to 7 March (B.H. Thomason).

Shetland Sound Gruney, Bluemull Sound, Fetlar, adult (returning), 10–17 February (B.H. Thomason).

Shetland Kirkabister, Mainland, immature, 18 April (R.M. Mellor).

Shetland Bluemull Sound, Fetlar, adult, 10 May (J. & T. Thomason *et al.*).

Shetland Ham Voe, Foula, adult, 13 May, photo (D. & G. Atherton).

Shetland Brough, Fetlar, adult (returning), 16 October to 2015 (W.C. Aspin).

Shetland Kirkabister, Mainland, adult (returning), 10 November **to 2015** (P.V. Harvey).



Plate 91. White-billed Diver, adult, Fife Ness, 13 October 2014. © *Barry Farguharson*

White-billed Diver is a scarce though regular visitor to Scotland, with up to about 30 being reported each year since around 2000. Most occur in Shetland, Orkney, the Outer Hebrides, Highland, Moray & Nairn and North-east Scotland, with some preferred localities being used in spring as stop-overs between wintering and summering areas. In Shetland and Orkney, a small number of wintering individuals return to the same sites in successive years, and summering birds have become almost annual. There may be some overlap among these records given the birds' mobility.

This was a typical year for this species with 33 apparently new birds and a number of returning individuals. Almost all were seen at traditional sites in spring and winter, but with extralimital records from Argyll and Fife. The Fife Ness observation was unusual not only being in autumn, but also because it was identified retrospectively from photographs taken as it flew past during a sea watch.

(Breeds in parts of Arctic Russia, Alaska and Arctic Canada; winters on the Pacific coasts of Russia and Canada, and along the Atlantic coast of Norway.)

Cory's Shearwater Calonectris borealis c. 228: 25: 3

Table 3. Accepted records of Cory's Shearwater in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Highland Brora, Sutherland, 28 August (D. MacAskill).

Moray & Nairn Lossiemouth, 29 July (R. Proctor). Moray & Nairn Lossiemouth, 14 August (R. Proctor).

Cory's Shearwater is a rare visitor to Scottish waters, recorded near-annually, with most seen off North Ronaldsay and the Outer Hebrides. Although a marked increase in sightings from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s occurred (ap Rheinallt *et al.* 2010a), numbers since have decreased, with about two or less seen annually.

Considering this species' rarity in North Sea waters, the two records from Lossiemouth may refer to the same individual lingering off Moray & Nairn.

(Breeds on the Azores, Canary Islands and other nearby Atlantic islands, with the closely related Scopoli's Shearwater *C. diomedea* breeding in the Mediterranean. Both species occur in North Atlantic waters in autumn and are on the *British List*, but most are assumed to be Cory's, with Scopoli's not yet recorded in Scottish waters.)

Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis c.* 522 (1950–2004): 9,219: 2 (excluding 'at sea' records)

Table 4. Accepted records of Great Shearwater in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Orkney Dennis Head, North Ronaldsay, 21 August (N. & P.J. Donnelly). Orkney Dennis Head, North Ronaldsay, 22 September (M. Warren).

Great Shearwater was rarely observed in Scotland until the large number of sightings during 2005–07. Since then, however, no more than six have been recorded in any one year, if 'at sea' records are discounted. This underlines the exceptional nature of the influxes witnessed during that period.

This species is almost entirely a late summer and autumn visitor, with most sightings from the Outer Hebrides and North Ronaldsay, Orkney. The two 2014 records fit this geographical pattern, and typically for North Ronaldsay, involved birds flying west past Dennis Head at the north end of the island. These are thought to be birds returning to the North Atlantic that have previously entered the North Sea, likely after westerly storms.

(Breeds on South Atlantic islands and carries out a clockwise loop migration in the North Atlantic outside the breeding season. In the north-east Atlantic occurs most regularly off the west coast of Ireland in late summer and autumn.)



Plate 92. Night-heron, adult, Brake, Quendale, Mainland, Shetland, 18 April 2014. © Susan Boardman

Night-heron Nycticorax nycticorax

46: 10: 2

Table 5. Accepted records of Night-heron in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Shetland Brake, Quendale, Mainland, adult, 18 April, photo (S. Boardman, M. Robinson); same, Loch of Spiggie, Mainland, 20–30 April, photo SB 34: 283 (P.V. Harvey et al.). Shetland Reawick, Mainland, 18–21 April, photo, found dead (D. & K. Anderson, J. Redpath et al.).

Night-heron is a less-than-annual visitor to Scotland, with a spring peak in observations. There is a wide geographical spread, but most are seen in the Northern Isles and the Outer Hebrides.

As no Night-herons were seen in Scotland in 2013, with the last in 2012, the arrival of two adults in Mainland Shetland on the same day is noteworthy. The Brake individual was first noticed perching on silage bales from the observers' kitchen window, subsequently moving to nearby Loch of Spiggie.

(Holarctic with four subspecies, nominate *nycticorax* breeding in mainland Europe and into Asia, and *hoactli* in North America. Populations move south in winter.)

Cattle Egret Bubulcus ibis

3: 7: 1

Table 6. Accepted record of Cattle Egret in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Orkney Noup Head, Westray, female, 15–16 October, found dead, specimen at Stromness Museum (accession number SM 2015.01), (D. & L.-M. Muir, M. Gray *et al.*).

Cattle Egret remains very rare in Scotland, with no obvious pattern or trend.

The Orkney bird, the first for the recording area, was found injured having apparently flown into a fence, and died the following day, despite veterinary attention.

(Occurs commonly in sub-tropical and temperate areas throughout the world, the European population being centred on the Mediterranean, extending north to central and western France, with increasing numbers of records farther north. Generally a short-distance migrant.)

Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus

c. 65: 28: 5

Table 7. Accepted records of Glossy Ibis in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Argyll Kirkapol, Tiree, second-calendar-year, 13 January, photo (J. Bowler, J. Hunter, S. Kyle et al.); same, Scalasaig, Colonsay, 25 January to 5 February (J. Binnie, S. Weatherstone et al.). Lothian Ballencrieff, 16 January, photo (D. Robertson).

Orkney various locations, two from 2013, to 8 February (McGowan & McInerny 2015); one, same, Orkney North Ronaldsay, 13 February to 14 May, 18 May, 25 May, 5–12 June, photo (P. Donnelly, A. Tulloch, A Duncan *et al.*); same, Fair Isle Houll and other locations, 16 May, 26 May, photo *SB* 35: 62 (C. Hatsell, J. Hunt *et al.*); same, Shetland Hillwell, Virkie & Sumburgh, Mainland, 20–25 May, 28 May to 4 June (P.V. Harvey *et al.*):

Outer Hebrides various locations, from 2013 to 12 January (McGowan & McInerny 2015).

Perth & Kinross Loch Leven, Kinross, second-calendar-year, 6 March to 23 August, photo (C. Nisbet *et al.*).

Shetland Haroldswick, Unst, adult, 6–9 January, 12 January, photo (M.G. Pennington *et al.*); same, Littleness, Loch of Spiggie, Mainland, 10–11 January, photo (G.R. Ball *et al.*).

Upper Forth Cambus, immature, 2–11 June, photo (G. Garner *et al.*).

2013: Argyll Scalasaig, Colonsay, 27 December into **2014** (H. Smith, S. Weatherstone).

Glossy Ibis is a rare, though increasingly frequent, visitor to Scotland. In the early 20th century a few flocks were observed, including a group of 19–20 in Orkney in September 1907, but the species subsequently became much rarer (Forrester *et al.* 2007). In the early 21st century larger numbers and flocks were seen again in the UK. This change coincided with significant numbers being observed in Scotland, with groups in Orkney and the Outer Hebrides.

The five new birds observed in 2014, though not as many as seen as in 2013, was still a high annual total.

One individual was observed on multiple occasions as it wandered between Shetland, North Ronaldsay (Orkney) and Fair Isle, from January to June. Another was located in Argyll, moving between Colonsay and Tiree; this bird was first found in December 2013.

The Lothian and Upper Forth records were the second for the recording areas.

(Nominate *falcinellus* breeds from Spain and France, through the Balkans to central Asia, in sub-Saharan Africa, the Indian subcontinent, south-east Asia, the east coast of the USA and the Caribbean. Most European birds migrate to Africa with others short distance migrants or resident. Another subspecies in the Far East and Australia).

Black Kite Milvus migrans

19: 20: 4

Table 8. Accepted records of Black Kite in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Argyll Kilmichael Glen, Lochgilphead, 3 May, photo (J. Platt *et al.*).

Highland Inverpolly, Ross & Cromarty, 19 April, photo (S. Edwards *et al.*).

Orkney Boardhouse Loch, Birsay, Mainland, 22–23 April, photo (J. Branscombe, J. & F. Manson, K. Norbury *et al.*).

Shetland Seli Voe, Mainland, 13 June (D. Jackson).

Black Kite is a very rare visitor to Scotland from continental Europe. Most individuals have been seen in spring, from April to June, with just a few sightings later in the season. There have also been instances of summering, and a single case of hybridisation with Red Kite *Milvus milvus* (ap Rheinallt *et al.* 2010a).

The four in 2014 equalled the annual mean for the last five-year period; in the five years prior to that, a total of only four individuals occurred.

(Nominate *migrans* breeds throughout most of Europe except the far north; winters in sub-Saharan Africa. Other subspecies elsewhere in the Old World.)

Stone-curlew Burhinus oedicnemus

29: 3: 1

Table 9. Accepted record of Stone-curlew in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Outer Hebrides Loch Stiapabhat (Loch Stiapavat), Lewis, 18 May, photo (B.A.E Marr *et al.*).

Stone-curlew is a very rare visitor to Scotland; there were just 32 accepted records to the end of 2013 with half of these in the Northern Isles, and the remainder scattered across the country, though mostly along the east coast. There is a peak in occurrence in late May and early June.

The 2014 record was the first for the Outer Hebrides. At one stage during its brief stay it was chased by, and flew with, Herring Gulls *Larus argentatus*, making an unusual sight.



Plate 93. Stone-curlew, Loch Stiapabhat (Loch Stiapavat), Lewis, Outer Hebrides, 18 May 2014. © *John Burgis*



Plate 94. Stone-curlew with Herring Gull, Loch Stiapabhat (Loch Stiapavat), Lewis, Outer Hebrides, 18 May 2014. © *Tony Marr*

(Nominate *oedicnemus* breeds in open habitats in southern Europe east to the Caucasus, extending as far north as England and Poland; migrates south to winter in Spain and North Africa. Five other subspecies.)

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* 15: 3: 1

Table 10. Accepted record of Kentish Plover in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Highland Dunvegan, Skye, Skye & Lochalsh, adult male, 23 May, photo (R.L. McMillan).



Plate 95. Kentish Plover, adult male, Dunvegan, Skye, Skye & Lochalsh, 23 May 2014. © *Bob McMillan*

Kentish Plover is a very rare migrant to Scotland. Almost all records have been in spring from the east coast of the mainland on sandy beaches or estuaries, with just one winter record.

The 2014 record was the first for Skye, and the second for both Highland and the west coast of Scotland. The last on the west coast was one that wintered on South Uist (Outer Hebrides) in 2007/08 (ap Rheinallt *et al.* 2010a). The Skye sighting was only the second in Scotland since 2008.

(A cosmopolitan species with several subspecies, including nominate *alexandrinus*, which breeds patchily in Europe, North Africa and Asia. European birds are migratory and normally spend the winter in sub-Saharan Africa.)

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis* 69: 72: 4

Table 11. Accepted records of White-rumped Sandpiper in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Argyll Gott Bay, Tiree, adult, 31 August to 1 September, photo (K. Gillon *et al.*).

Outer Hebrides Baile Gharbhaidh (Balgarva), South Uist, juvenile, 5–18 October, photo (J.B. Kemp, A. Stevenson).

Outer Hebrides Coig Peighinnean, Nis (Fivepenny, Ness), Lewis, juvenile, 27 October, photo (B.A.E Marr *et al.*).

Shetland Virkie, Mainland, adult, 29–30 July, photo (R. Riddington *et al.*).



Plate 96. White-rumped Sandpiper, adult, Virkie, Mainland, Shetland, 29–30 July 2014. Note the few winter scapular feathers on this bird, indicating that it is just starting to moult into winter plumage © *Roger Riddington*

White-rumped Sandpiper is a scarce, but annual, visitor to Scotland from North America, with most observations in autumn on the Outer Hebrides.

(Breeds in North America at high latitudes, migrating to winter in Brazil, Argentina and Chile.)

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* 12: 13: 5

Table 12. Accepted records of Yellow-legged Gull in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Argyll Drumlemble, Kintyre, adult, 21–22 February, photo (J.M. Dickson, E.J. Maguire et al.). Dumfries & Galloway Stanhope, adult, 28–29 July, photo (B.D. Henderson).

Dumfries & Galloway Stranraer, adult, 27–30 December, photo (B.D. Henderson).

Outer Hebrides 97 km north-west of St Kilda, adult, 4 April, photo (N.T. Keogh *et al.*).

Shetland Foula, adult, 6–7 July, found dead, ringed (IAB C81819) as a pullus/chick 5 May 2000 at Stagno di Mistras, Cabras, Oristano, Sardinia, Italy (D. & G. Atherton).

Yellow-legged Gull is very rare in Scotland, though found at scattered locations throughout the country, usually in groups of other large white-headed gulls, often Lesser Black-backed Gulls *Larus fuscus graellsii*. Birds, predominately



Plate 98. Yellow-legged Gull, adult, Foula, Shetland, 6–7 July 2014. The ring on this bird indicates that it was marked as a pullus/chick on 5 May 2000 at Stagno di Mistras, Cabras, Oristano. Sardinia. © Geoff Atherton



Plate 97. Yellow-legged Gull, adult, 97 km north-west of St Kilda, Outer Hebrides, 4 April 2014. © Niall Keogh

adults, have been found at all times of the year, sometimes remaining for extended periods, with a number of individuals returning to the same locations in consecutive years. Thus it is possible that the two 2014 Dumfries & Galloway records refer to the same, returning individual.

The ringing recovery on Foula, was the first such record for Scotland. It is perplexing why an adult 14-year-old bird should wander to the North Atlantic so far from its Mediterranean home.

(Nominate *michahellis* breeds mainly from south-west Europe east to the Black Sea, with immatures dispersing widely in winter as far north as Britain and the Baltic; *atlantis* breeds on the Azores, Madeira and Canaries, wandering south to north-west Africa.)

Caspian Gull Larus cachinnans

Noble-Nesbitt et al.).

0:5:2

Table 13. Accepted records of Caspian Gull in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Lothian Belhaven Bay, adult, 15 November, photo (C.N. Davison, K. Gillon).
Angus & Dundee Montrose Basin, second-calendar-year, 19 October, photo (H. Bell, R.

Caspian Gull is extremely rare in Scotland, observed on just five occasions up to the end of 2013. All occurrences were in late autumn or winter.

It is now known that a regular movement of this species takes place each year through England, mainly in the east and south. Generally, immatures are involved, in late summer and autumn. It remains rare elsewhere in the UK. However, under-recording of this difficult-to-identify species is also likely.

The Montrose record was the first for the recording area. The Lothian bird was the fourth found at Belhaven Bay/Dunbar. Considering the rarity of this species in Scotland it is possible that some of the Lothian records refer to the same returning individual.

(Breeds at inland lakes in eastern Europe and the Middle East, wintering mostly in the eastern Mediterranean, but with smaller numbers reaching western maritime Europe.)

White-winged Black Tern Chlidonias leucopterus

59: 13: 4

Table 14. Accepted records of White-winged Black Tern in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Orkney Loch of Matpow, Stronsay, adult, 26 May, photo (N. & A. Wildsmith et al.).
Outer Hebrides Loch nam Feitham, Baile Raghaill (Balranald), North Uist, adults, two, 20 May, three, 21–24 May, photo (C. Holter et al.).

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

The Outer Hebrides record was the first multiple sighting in Scotland. Two birds were present initially on 20 May, joined by a third on 21–24 May. To see three such beautiful birds in full summer plumage together must have been a memorable sight.

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

Alpine Swift Apus melba

34: 5: 2

Table 15. Accepted records of Alpine Swift in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Orkney Birsay, Mainland, 26–29 May, photo (G. Cannon *et al.*).

Shetland Hermaness, Unst, 24 May (G. Bathe *et al.*).

Alpine Swift is a very rare visitor to Scotland, seen usually between mid-April and late July. Spring occurrences probably involve overshoots from breeding grounds on the European continent, while those in summer relate to wandering non-breeders. There are very few autumn records.

Considering how the rare this species is in Scotland (the last was in 2012), it is possible that the two 2014 records refer to the same individual; the close but non-overlapping dates are consistent with this suggestion.

(Nominate *alba* breeds in north Africa and southern Europe from Iberia to the Middle East, moving to southern Africa in winter. Other subspecies in the Indian subcontinent and Africa.)

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* 83: 14: 1

Table 16. Accepted record of Red-footed Falcon in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Orkney Harray & Wyre, Mainland, male, second-calendar-year, 22–25 July, photo (A. & L. Forsyth *et al.*).

Red-footed Falcon is a rare late spring migrant to Scotland, with most sightings coming from Shetland, Orkney and North-east Scotland. Although not quite annual, since the late 1960s there has been at least one sighting every other year, with the exception of two three-year periods, in 1986–88 and 2011–13, during which no birds were seen.

(Breeds from Hungary and the Czech Republic east to China, wintering in southern Africa.)



Plate 99. Short-toed Lark, singing male, Tobha Mòr (Howmore), South Uist, Outer Hebrides, 20 May to 10 June 2014. © *John Kemp*

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* 86: 16: 1

Table 17. Accepted record of Woodchat Shrike in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Orkney Palace, Birsay, Mainland, female, 12 June, photo (D. Annible, S. Marwick); same, Stromness, Mainland, 13–24 June, photo (T. Wooton *et al.*).

Woodchat Shrike is a rare, almost annual, passage migrant to Scotland, with most in the Northern Isles. Adults and sub-adults are seen in spring as overshoots from their European continental breeding areas, along with dispersing juveniles recorded in autumn.

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

Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla* 286: 62: 19

Table 18. Accepted record of Short-toed Lark in Scotland, 2014. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 19.

2014: Outer Hebrides Tobha Mòr (Howmore), South Uist, male, singing, 20 May to 10 June, photo (P. & P. Johnston, J. Kemp, I. Thompson *et al.*).



Plate 100. Short-toed Lark, singing male, Tobha Mòr (Howmore), South Uist, Outer Hebrides, 20 May to 10 June 2014. This is possibly the first example of a bird holding territory in the UK. © *Ian Thompson*

Short-toed Lark is found annually in Scotland in very small numbers, mostly in spring and autumn, with the majority of observations in the Northern Isles, where records are assessed locally. It is very rare elsewhere, particularly on the mainland.

The 19 birds observed in 2014 was the highest Scottish annual total, exceeding 16 seen both in 1991 and 1999. Three individuals were noted on one day on Fair Isle, equalling the previous single day record for the island. The male on South Uist (Outer Hebrides) was present for 22 days during which time it held a territory, perhaps the first occurrence of this phenomenon in the UK.

Table 19. Accepted records of Short-toed Lark in the Northern Isles. 2014.

Nu	mbe	r of l	oirds Dat	Date range	
	Spr.	Aut.	Spr.	Aut.	
Fair Isle	4	3	27 Apr-30 May	30 Aug-24 Sep	
Orkney	1	3	5–6 May	16 Sep-11 Nov	
Shetland	2	5	10 May–8 Jun	18 Sep-15 Oct	

(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.)

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* 40: 37: 4

Table 20. Accepted records of Red-rumped Swallow in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Argyll Ceann a' Mhara, Tiree, 26 May (J. Bowler). Shetland Burrafirth, Unst, 18–19 May, photo (R.J. Brookes, J. & I. Flood, M.G. Pennington et al.). Shetland Hillwell, Mainland, 20–22 May, photo (R. Riddington et al.). Shetland Boddam, Mainland, 25 May (R.M. Mellor).

Red-rumped Swallow is observed in Scotland annually in small but increasing numbers from April through to November, mainly along the east coast and on islands. This recent increase is thought to reflect a northward expansion of the European continental breeding range. One individual of an eastern subspecies, either daurica or japonica, has been observed on

Orkney and then Skye (Highland) in June 2011 (McGowan *et al.* 2013).

The occurrence at Ceann a' Mhara, Tiree was the second for Argyll, following one on Mull in 2011. The three sightings on Shetland were typical, and this recording area now has 32.5% of the total Scottish records since 1950.

(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.)

Cetti's Warbler Cettia cetti

1: 0: 1

Table 21. Accepted record of Cetti's Warbler in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Outer Hebrides Nasg, Barra, 12 October (C. Scott *et al.*) (Scott 2015).

Cetti's Warbler is an extremely rare vagrant to Scotland, with just one previous record. This was a freshly dead adult found at Leith, Edinburgh (Lothian) on 4 October 1993, that had been ringed in August the same year in northern France, near Calais (Forrester et al. 2007). Three other ringed birds have been recovered in the UK from the European continent and the Channel Islands, with this dispersal offered as an explanation for the colonisation of the UK by the species in the late 20th century. Thus the discovery of the 2014 bird in October on Barra (Outer Hebrides) is consistent with other extralimital observations (Scott 2015). However, the origin of this individual is unclear. It could be from either the European continent or from the English and Welsh population, which has expanded rapidly to reach 1,500-2,000 singing males/territories in recent years (Holling et al. 2015).

(Nominate *cetti* breeds in southern Britain, and eastwards from Morocco through to Bulgaria; mainly sedentary. *C. c. orientalis* in central and eastern Asia Minor and *C. c. albiventris* from Kazakhstan to western China.)

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* 157: 54: 11

Table 22. Accepted records of Greenish Warbler in Scotland, 2014. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 23.

2014: Lothian Tyninghame, 7–22 June, male, singing, photo SB 34: 287 (C.N. Davison, K. Gillon et al.) (Davison & Gillon 2014).

Outer Hebrides Loch Aineort (Loch Eynort), South Uist, 7 June, male, singing (S.E. Duffield *et al.*).

Outer Hebrides Brèbhig (Brevig), Barra, 18 September (D. Douglas, I. Hartley, M. Lewis, A. Whewell).

Greenish Warbler is a rare but annual migrant to Scotland, increasingly regular over the past few decades. It is mostly seen in late August and early September, with more than 80% of sightings in the Northern Isles, where records are assessed locally.

The male at Tyninghame was only the second occurrence for Lothian; the first was at Barns Ness in August 1983. This individual, found in June, sang and held territory for 16 days (Davison & Gillon 2014). The birds on South Uist and Barra were the first summer and autumn records respectively for the Outer Hebrides. Of four birds present in Scotland during June, it is noteworthy that two were singing males.

Table 23. Accepted records of Greenish Warbler in the Northern Isles. 2014.

Nu	mbe	r of b	oirds Dat	Date range	
	Spr.	Aut.	Spr.	Aut.	
Fair Isle	1	1	6 Jun	6 Aug	
Orkney	-	-	-	-	
Shetland	1	5	31 May–4 Jun	7 Aug-28 Sep	

The dates reported for 2014 are typical of the consistently narrow spread of arrival dates in both spring and autumn.

(*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 four records in England of Two-barred Greenish Warbler *P. t. plumbeitarsus* from eastern Siberia.)

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi* 46: 18: 3

Table 24. Accepted records of Radde's Warbler in Scotland, 2014, with an additional record, 2010.

2014: North-east Scotland Troup Head, 8 October (A. Perkins).

Shetland Sumburgh Hotel, Mainland, 6 October, photo (R.C. Cookson *et al.*).

Shetland Mid Dale, Mainland, 8 October, photo (R.M Tallack *et al.*).

2010: Shetland Toab, Mainland, 14 October, photo (C. Fentiman, T. Wilson *et al.*).

Radde's Warbler is a rare late autumn visitor to Scotland, with the majority of occurrences in the Northern Isles, principally Shetland, and the remainder along the east coast.

Occurrences in 2014 came from typical areas and during the peak period; 42% of sightings have taken place in Shetland.

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



Plate 101. Radde's Warbler, Toab, Mainland, Shetland, 14 October 2010. © *Dave Hatton*

Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* 193: 65: 14

Subalpine Warbler occurs annually in Scotland as a rare migrant, mainly in spring. The overwhelming majority are seen in the Northern Isles.

The British Ornithologists' Union Records (BOURC) recently recommendations to recognise two species in the S. cantillans complex: Subalpine Warbler Sylvia cantillans (polytypic, with subspecies cantillans (breeding in Southern Italy and Sicily), albistriata (breeding in Turkey and South-east Europe), iberiae (Spain and France, into Northern Italy) and inornata (breeding North Africa)), and Moltoni's Subalpine Warbler S. subalpina (Sangster et al. 2015, BOU 2015). BOURC has accepted that records belonging to albistriata and either iberiae or inornata have occurred in the UK: consequently albistriata and iberiae/inornata are on the British List. For the same reason, although S. c. albistriata and S. c. cantillans (s.l.) currently appear on the Scottish List, the latter should instead be *S. c. iberiae/inornata*.

Following BOU (2014) and Sangster *et al.* (2015) and the recognition of the newly named subspecies *iberiae*, the (Scottish) record which led to S. c. *cantillans* (s.l.) being admitted to the *British* and *Scottish Lists* is now regarded as 'race undetermined, almost certainly *iberiae*.' Thus the subspecies of Subalpine Warbler that occur on the *Scottish List* are:

- S. cantillans albistriata ('Eastern Subalpine Warbler')
- S. cantillans race undetermined, almost certainly *iberiae* ('Western Subalpine Warbler')

Apart from those identified as *albistriata*, the records below are at species level, rather than particular subspecies, while reviews continue. This ensures that the annual totals are maintained to date. Assignation to subspecies (where possible) will take place if/when other taxa are formally accepted by BOURC to the *British List*.

With no Scottish sightings outwith the Northern Isles in 2014, all claims were considered locally or reviewed by BBRC (Hudson *et al.* 2015).

Table 25. Accepted records of Subalpine Warbler in the Northern Isles, 2014, with additional records, 2013, 2012, 2011 and 2009 (per Hudson *et al.* 2015 and local committees).

2014: Fair Isle Observatory/South Feltsigeo, male, 25 April to 2 May, trapped (DNA), photo.

Fair Isle Burkle, male, 3–21 May, trapped, photo. Fair Isle Gully, first-summer male, 8 May, trapped (DNA), photo.

Fair Isle Schoolton, male, 13 June, photo.

Orkney Holland House, Papa Westray, adult female, 1 June.

Orkney Holland, North Ronaldsay, male, 17–18 June, trapped, photo.

Shetland Exnaboe, Mainland, first-summer male, 24–27 April, photo.

Shetland Out Skerries, first-summer male, 2 May, photo.

Shetland Haroldswick, Unst, male, 7 May, photo. Shetland Ham, Foula, female, 13 May, photo. Shetland Eshaness, Mainland, male, 25 May, photo.

Shetland Baltasound, Unst, male, 22–23 September, photo.

Shetland Baltasound, Unst, male, 22 September to 5 October, photo.

Shetland Hametoun, Foula, female, 13–15 October, photo.

2013: Fair Isle Gully, female, 25 May, trapped (DNA), photo, albistriata.
Shetland Yell, adult male, 24 September to 8

October, photo.

2012: Fair Isle south of island/Observatory, first-summer female, 26–27 May, trapped (DNA), photo, albistriata.

Shetland Whalsay, first-summer male, 21 May, photo.

2011: Fair Isle Schoolton, male, 6 June, photo.

2009: Shetland Scousburgh, Mainland, first-summer male, 19 May, photo.

There were 14 occurrences in 2014, all in the Northern Isles, and a further six birds from earlier years.

The 2005–13 total in the species' header has been increased accordingly. However, the separation of Moltoni's Subalpine Warbler means that the three Scottish records of that species (one in 1894, and two in 2009) are now removed from the totals for Subalpine Warbler. The first two totals are now 193 and 65.

(S. cantillans breeds from Iberia, north-west Africa, north-west Italy, south-east Europe to Turkey. Migrates to winter in the sub-Saharan Sahel.)

Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta* 53: 9: 3

Table 26. Accepted record of Melodious Warbler in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Argyll Scarinish, Tiree, first-winter, 18 September to 4 October, photo SB 34: 379 (W. Allan, J. Bowler, J.M. Dickson et al.). Shetland Out Skerries, first-winter, 6 October, photo (M.J. McKee, C. Turner). Outer Hebrides Ormacleit (Ormiclate), South Uist, 23 August, photo (S. Beeby, S.E. Duffield, C. Saunders et al.).

Melodious Warbler is a very rare spring and autumn migrant to Scotland, recorded in most years but not all: for example, 2001, 2004, 2005 and 2009 were blank years. About three-quarters of occurrences have been in the Northern Isles, with almost identical totals for the three recording areas.

The three sightings for 2014 represent the highest annual total since 2003, when four were seen. The individual on Tiree was the second for Argyll. Most occurrences in Scotland are brief, but this bird lingered for 16 days. The individual on South Uist was the fifth for the Outer Hebrides, with previous records also on South Uist (three) and Barra (one).

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

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* many: c. 284: 32

Table 27. Accepted records of Marsh Warbler in Scotland, 2014. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 28.

2014: Argyll Mannal, Tiree, 28 May (J. Bowler *et al.*). Fife Fife Ness, male, singing, 29 May (D. Dickson *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. The Northern Isles account for the overwhelming majority of records, and these are assessed locally.



Plate 102. Melodious Warbler, first-winter, Out Skerries, Shetland, 6 October 2014. © *Michael McKee*

The sighting in Argyll was the third for the area, with both earlier occurrences also on Tiree, in 2007 and 2012. The Fife Ness bird was the first for Fife.

Table 28. Accepted records of Marsh Warbler in the Northern Isles, 2014.

Nu	ımbe	r of bi	rds Date	Date range	
	Spr.	Aut.	Spr.	Aut.	
Fair Isle	10	1	5–25 Jun	15 Aug	
Orkney	3	-	25 May-18 Jun	-	
Shetland	12	4	21 May—14 Jun	7 Jul-2 Oct	

The number of Marsh Warblers recorded in Scotland in 2013 (32) was very close to the annual mean recorded between 2005 and 2013 (31.5). The fluctuating annual abundance of this species is related, for spring birds at least, to variation in the prevalence of easterly winds in late May and early June, which are presumed to cause them to overshoot their breeding grounds in Fennoscandia (Forrester *et al.* 2007). Typically, most birds in 2014 only stayed for a few days, although a pair bred at Norwick, Unst, Shetland, raising at least one juvenile. Breeding was also recorded at this locality in 2005 and 2008 (ap Rheinallt *et al.* 2010). This breeding pair has been omitted from Table 28.

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

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* 139: 13: 4

Nightingale is a very rare, but almost annual, passage migrant to Scotland; spring records predominate. In the Northern Isles, claims are assessed locally, and Fair Isle and Shetland account for the vast majority of sightings.

In 2014, all four occurrences were in Shetland. On 24 April, one was at Sumburgh Hotel, Mainland, with others at Toab, Mainland (22 May), South Ness, Foula (24 May) and Sumburgh Hotel (30 May). This was the highest annual total in Scotland for a decade, following seven in 2004.

(Nominate *megarhynchos* breeds from Morocco and western Europe through North Africa and southern and central Europe to the Ukraine and Turkey; *L. m. africana* from the Caucasus area and eastern Turkey to Iran; *L. m. golzii* from the Aral Sea to Mongolia. Winters in sub-Saharan Africa.)

Olive-backed Pipit Anthus hodgsoni

151: 115: 33

Table 29. Accepted records of Olive-backed Pipit in Scotland, 2014, with an additional record, 2013.

2014: Fair Isle Quoy, 21–22 September, found dead, photo *SB* 35: 65 (D. Liley *et al.*).

Fair Isle Hjukni/Pund, 7–13 October, photo (C. Holt *et al.*).

Fair Isle Gully/Ditfield, 8–18 October, photo (D. Parnaby *et al.*).

Fair Isle Kenaby, 13 October, photo (S. Colenutt). Fair Isle Hill Dyke/Pund, 18–25 October, photo (C. Hatsell, W.T.S. Miles *et al.*).

Fair Isle Quoy, 19 November to 6 December, photo (D.N. Shaw *et al.*).

Orkney Lurand & Observatory, North Ronaldsay, 18–20 September, photo (A. Duncan *et al.*).

Orkney East Denwick Plantation, Deerness, Mainland, 1 October, photo (G. Seth, P.A. Stronach).

Orkney Gretchen, North Ronaldsay, 6–8 October, photo (S.M. Rodriguez *et al.*).

Orkney Tor Ness, North Ronaldsay, 6–8 October, photo (M. Warren *et al.*).

Orkney Nether Linnay, North Ronaldsay, 6–8 October, photo (M. Warren *et al.*).

Orkney Westness, North Ronaldsay, 8 October (P. Donnelly).

Orkney Quoyolie, Papa Westray, 8–14 October,

photo (S. Davies et al.).

Orkney Greenwall, North Ronaldsay, 10 October, photo (M. Warren).

Shetland Hermaness, Unst, 2 May, photo (B.H. Thomason *et al.*).

Shetland Sullom, Mainland, 3–4 October, photo (M.S. Chapman *et al.*).

Shetland Loch of Hillwell, Mainland, 7 October (C.C. Thomas).

Shetland Vidlin, Mainland, one, 7 October, two, 8 October, photo (M.S. Chapman, J. & M. Willmott *et al.*).

Shetland Asta Golf Course, Mainland, 8 October (J.D. Okill).

Shetland Otterswick, Yell, 8 October, photo (D. Preston).

Shetland Baltasound, Unst, 8–9 October, photo (B.H. Thomason *et al.*).

Shetland Houbie, Fetlar, 8–10 October, photo (C.C. Roger *et al.*).

Shetland Lower Voe, Mainland, 10 October, photo (G. Kinnard *et al.*).

Shetland Exnaboe, Mainland, 11 October, photo (R.M. Fray).

Shetland Uyeasound, Unst, 11 October, photo (B. Armitt *et al.*).

Shetland Eastshore, Virkie, Mainland, 11 October (R.M. Fray, M.N. Reeder *et al.*).

Shetland Haggersta, Whiteness, Mainland, 11–12 October, photo (G.C. Taylor, G. Thomas *et al.*).

Shetland Helendale, Lerwick, Mainland, two, 13 October (G.R. Ball, H.J. Fern, P.A. Harris).

Shetland Burn of Swinister, Mainland, 18–26 October (J.G. Brown, P.V. Harvey *et al.*).

Shetland Mid Yell, Yell, 26 October, photo (C. Inkster).

Shetland Toab, Mainland, 17 November, photo (R.M. Fray).

2013: Shetland Collafirth, Mainland, 23 September, photo (M.S. Chapman, R.W. Tait *et al.*).

Olive-backed Pipit is a rare but regular autumn migrant in Scotland. There was a marked increase in occurrences in Britain and Europe in the 1980s and the species was dropped from BBRC review in 2013. The vast majority of sightings in Scotland are in the Northern Isles, with only 13 elsewhere; the most recent was one on Barra, Outer Hebrides in October 2012. There have been only seven mainland records, the last mist-netted at Blackdog, North-east Scotland in October 2006.

The 33 occurrences in 2014 equalled the highest previous annual total in 2012 (Figure 1). The bird at Hermaness, Unst, Shetland in May was only the sixth in spring. As peak arrival occurs in October, the observation on Fair Isle on 19



Plate 103. Olive-backed Pipit, Quoyolie, Papa Westray, Orkney, 8–14 October 2014. © Sean Davies

November was unusual. There have only been two later arrival dates: 24 November 1974 on Fair Isle and 20 November 1984 on Shetland.

A late acceptance by BBRC was one at Àird Mhidhinis (Ardveenish), Barra, Outer Hebrides on 16 October 2012 (Hudson *et al.* 2015); thus the total for that year is now 33.

One record inadvertently omitted from last year's 2013 report has been added to the 2005–13 total in the species' header.

(A. h. yunnanensis breeds from Urals east to Kamchatka, Manchuria and Japan; one other subspecies. Winters in south-east Asia.)

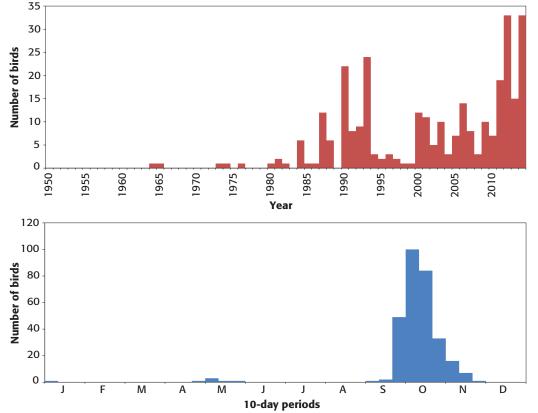


Figure 1. Annual and seasonal occurrence of Olive-backed Pipit in Scotland by 10-day periods, 1950–2014.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* 135: 14: 4

Red-throated Pipit is a rare spring and autumn migrant to Scotland, found almost exclusively on islands, with the majority of birds appearing in the Northern Isles where claims were assessed locally. Numbers have declined in recent years, and so since 1 January 2015 this species is considered by BBRC (see Appendix 2).

In 2014, there were four occurrences. On Fair Isle, adults were seen at Setter (20–24 September) and Hill Dyke & Buness (13–20 October), whilst sightings on Shetland were at Hermaness, Unst (1 June), and Norby, Mainland (16 October).

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

Serin Serinus serinus

7: 0: 2

Table 30. Accepted records of Serin in Scotland, 2014.

2014: Isle of May female, 4 May (C. McGuigan et al.).

Outer Hebrides Aisgernis (Askernish) & Gleann Dail bho Dheas (South Glendale), South Uist, female, 10–23 April (C. Batty, Y. Benting, J.P. Siddle, I. Thompson et al.).

Serin is an extremely rare vagrant to Scotland, with just seven previous records: three on Fair Isle, two on Shetland (Unst and Fetlar), and one each in Lothian (Edinburgh) and Borders (St Abbs) (Forrester *et al.* 2007). Five were males and two females, with birds being found in April (1), May (5), August (1) and November (1); the last was in 2004.

Thus the discovery of two in 2014 was exceptional. Both were females, and were the first records for the Isle of May and the Outer Hebrides. The South Uist bird was noticed in the observers' garden at Aisgernis (Askernish), where it was photographed and its identify confirmed when photos were shown on the internet. Though it disappeared, it was relocated 11 km to the south at Gleann Dail bho Dheas (South Glendale) on 12 April, where it remained until 23 April, allowing many to enjoy its stay.

The Isle of May bird was found by the same observer who discovered the St Abbs' Serin in 1998, a remarkable example of luck and skill.

(Breeds from the Canary Islands, North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula to Germany, Denmark and the Middle East. Northern populations migrate south, remaining within the breeding range.)



Plate 104. Serin, female, Aisgernis (Askernish), South Uist, Outer Hebrides, 10 April 2014. © Ian Thompson

Arctic Redpoll *Carduelis hornemanni* 366: 109: 1

Arctic Redpoll is a scarce though annual visitor to Scotland. Most sightings since 2005 have involved the race *C. h. hornemanni* (Hornemann's Redpoll), claims of which are assessed by BBRC, while many earlier occurrences referred to *C. h. exilipes* (Coues's Redpoll). All but nine of the 109 birds during 2005–13 were in the Northern Isles, with the majority occurring in autumn. Claims of Coues's Redpoll in the Northern Isles are assessed locally.

In 2014, the sole observation of Hornemann's Redpoll was a bird at Veensgarth, Mainland, Shetland from 26 September to 6 October (Hudson *et al.* 2015). In addition, BBRC also published a late acceptance of three Hornemann's Redpolls seen at Sullom Plantation, Mainland, Shetland on 27 September 2013. The 2005–13 total in the species' header has been adjusted accordingly.

(Breeds on the Arctic tundra, with a circumpolar range divided between two subspecies: *C. h. hornemanni* on Ellesmere and Baffin Island (Canada) and in Greenland, and *C. h. exilipes* elsewhere. Winters to the south of the breeding range.)

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* many: 41: 1

Ortolan Bunting is a rare and declining, but still annual, passage migrant to Scotland. In recent years the Northern Isles, where records are assessed locally, have accounted for more than 90% of occurrences.

There was only one Scottish record in 2014. A female was present on Out Skerries, Shetland on 30–31 May. Records in Scotland have not reached double figures since 18 were seen in 1999. The recent general trend of declining numbers appears to be continuing.

(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: 46: 11

Table 31. Accepted records of Rustic Bunting in Scotland, 2014, with an additional record, 2013. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 32.

2014: Argyll Balephuill, Tiree, immature, 21 May (J. Bowler).

Argyll Iona, Mull, first-summer, 27 May, photo (G. Pain).

Àrgyll Balephuill, Tiree, adult male, 2–3 June, photo (J. Bowler *et al.*).

2013: North-east Scotland Cove, 1–3 November, photo (J.F. Cooper *et al.*).

Rustic Bunting is a scarce, annual vagrant in Scotland with the majority appearing in the Northern Isles where claims were assessed locally. Numbers have declined in recent years, and so since 1 January 2015 this species is considered by BBRC (see Appendix 2).

The three sightings in Argyll in 2014 brought the total for the recording area to five. The two previous records were also from islands: Islay (May 1980) and Tiree (June 1987).

Table 32. Accepted records of Rustic Bunting in the Northern Isles, 2014.

Number of birds			Date range		
	Spr.	Aut.	Spr.	Aut.	
Fair Isle	-	-	-	-	
Orkney	1	-	3 May	-	
Shetland	5	2	9–30 May	5 Jul-9 Oct	

The 11 observations in 2014 constitute the first double-figure annual total for Rustic Bunting since 1998, when 29 birds were seen.

Since 2006, only six sightings from a total of 48 in Scotland have been made outwith the Northern Isles.

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

Little Bunting Emberiza pusilla

593: 174: 66

Table 33. Accepted record of Little Bunting in Scotland, 2014. Northern Isles records are summarised separately in Table 34.

2014: Outer Hebrides Àird Mhòr (Ardmhor) plantation, Barra, 22 October (B.A. Taylor *et al.*).

Little Bunting is a scarce though increasingly regular passage migrant to Scotland, mostly in the Northern Isles, where records are assessed locally. The great majority occur in autumn, but there have also been a few winter and spring records.

In 2014, there was a record number of occurrences in Scotland, with a total of 66

birds seen. This exceeds the previous highest count of 50 in 2000. The bird at Aird Mhòr (Ardmhor), Barra was at the same site and date as one in 2013; it was the tenth for the Outer Hebrides, and the fourth since 2001.

Table 34. Accepted records of Little Bunting in the Northern Isles, 2014.

Number of birds			oirds Dat	Date range	
	Spr.	Aut.	Spr.	Aut.	
Fair Isle	2	13	29 Apr-9 May	16 Sep-4 Nov	
Orkney	1	5	3 May	17 Sep-10 Oct	
Shetland	3	41	8–16 May	11 Sep-14 Nov	

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

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Appendix 1.

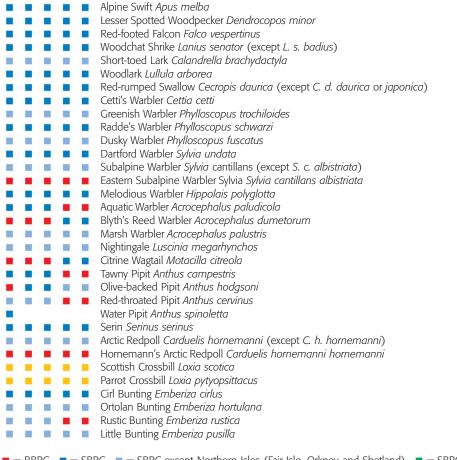
List of records regarded as not proven by SBRC.

2014: White-billed Diver Portknockie, Moray & Nairn, 4 February; Lossiemouth, Moray & Nairn, 25 May. Cory's Shearwater Rubha Reidh, Gairloch, Lochaber, Highland, 28 August; Barns Ness, Lothian, 14 September. Great Shearwater Barns Ness, Lothian, 21 September. Purple Heron Three Lochs, Dumfries & Galloway, 27 June. Black Kite Voe, Mainland, Shetland, 11 June. Yellow-legged Gull Ardfern, Argyll, 2 March; Talisker, Skye, Skye and Lochalsh, Highland, 15 May. Red-footed Falcon second-calendar-year, Tankerness, Mainland, Orkney, 27 July. Short-toed Lark Oronsay, Argyll, 23 October. Marsh Warbler Uig, Skye, Skye and Lochalsh, Highland, 25–26 June. Olive-backed Pipit Lower Voe, Mainland, Shetland, 10 October; Fair Isle, 18 October; Papa Westray, Orkney, 27 October.

Appendix 2.

Summary of assessment of records by the Scottish Birds Records Committee (SBRC) and other committees, 2012–16. All species and subspecies assessed by SBRC are included, with two exceptions. First, any species or subspecies not on the *Scottish List* is automatically assessed by SBRC if it is not assessed by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Second, some species assessed by SBRC have additional rare subspecies assessed by BBRC but not shown here.





■ = BBRC, ■ = SBRC, ■ = SBRC except Northern Isles (Fair Isle, Orkney and Shetland), ■ = SBRC except Outer Hebrides, ■ = SBRC except Northern Isles (Fair Isle, Orkney and Shetland) and Outer Hebrides, ■ = SBRC outside core range (see www.the-soc.org.uk/identification-of-scottish-and-parrot-crossbills)

Appendix 3.

Corrections to previous SBRC reports:

Report year 2013:

Marsh Warbler, first sentence after Table 25, '(43)' to read '(42)'. The total (42) at species' header is correct

Little Bunting, Table 31, date range for Orkney autumn records is 19 October to 8 November.

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