

# Irish Rare Bird Report 2012

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### Introduction

Each year has its rarity hotspot – an area that, for some reason, attracts more than its fair share of vagrants. In 2012, the hotspot was definitely Inishmore Island in Galway Bay. The highlight of the autumn there, among a stellar list of rarities containing nine additions to the Galway list, was the first Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus* for Ireland and the Western Palearctic. This is the first species to be added to the Western Palearctic list on the basis of an Irish record since Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora cyanoptera* in October 2000 (*Irish Birds* 7: 107). A Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis* (Donegal) in May was also an addition to the Irish list. The second Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* (Clare) occurred in June and the second Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* (Mayo) in November. Three species occurred for the third time – Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla* (Wexford) and Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* (Cork), both in March and American Coot *Fulica americana* (Galway) in November. The

fourth Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* (Galway) was recorded in October. This report contains details of the fourth and fifth Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus hudsonius* (Wexford), one each in 2011 and 2012.

Unlike most years, the start of the year was busy. A few rarities remained from 2011 – Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* and Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri* in Galway, Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* in Waterford, and the usual scattering of wildfowl. Additionally however, there was a record influx of Kumlien's Gulls *Larus glaucooides kumlieni*, and three Bonaparte's Gulls *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*, although there was only one American Herring Gull *Larus smithsonianus*. Three Long-billed Dowitchers *Limnodromus scolopaceus* were found in January and early February, and 20 Glossy Ibises *Plegadis falcinellus* found in January were

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**Plate 256.** Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis*, Tory Island, May 2012 (Peter Phillips).

the beginning of what would become a record equalling annual total. Observed at sea from the deck of the research vessel *Celtic Explorer*, and therefore not available to the masses, the timing of a Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanopbris* recorded at sea in February was unexpected.

March opened with a relatively long-staying Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus* in Wexford, but it was not until the end of the month that spring began in earnest. As occasionally happens, a warm spell, with a light southerly airflow and temperatures in the high teens, triggered a flood of early migrants, bringing a smattering of rarities. In addition to the Baillon's Crake and Red-flanked Bluetail already referred to, the last week of March brought the first Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* for many years, a Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, an early Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, the earliest Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* ever recorded, and an unseasonably early Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*.

Almost inevitably, April was somewhat anti-climactic – the highlights were an Arctic Redpoll *Carduelis hornemanni* in Galway, two Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis* in Wexford, and the first of a record spring influx of American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*. Migration picked up strongly again in May and continued through to early June. In addition to the Collared Flycatcher, there was a record spring influx of Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*, a Black Kite *Milvus migrans*, the second Purple Heron for the year, and a small scattering of Red-rumped Swallows *Cecropis daurica*. Also found were a summer plumaged Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*, three more Red-footed Falcons, a Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*, and the first ever spring Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*.

Summer was unusually lively. The rarest occurrence was undoubtedly a Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides* in Wexford, which also hosted the regularly returning Forster's Tern, and small numbers of Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*. Elsewhere, a Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* was seen in Waterford, and the Mayo Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* that was first recorded in 2006 put in an appearance. An influx of adult Rose-coloured Starlings *Pastor roseus* occurred, and good numbers of Hobby *Falco subbuteo* were seen in coastal counties from Dublin through to Kerry. In contrast, it was a poor year for seawatching – there were no headline seawatch rarities, numbers of the Fea's/Zino's Petrel *Pterodroma feae/madeira* complex were about average, and Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* numbers were significantly lower than recent years.

Although not as bountiful for Nearctic waders as 2011, there were good numbers of American Golden Plover, White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis* and Spotted Sandpiper, while Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla* numbers returned to normal. A Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*, a

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* and the first Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan* for a number of years also managed to cross the Atlantic to our shores. Nearctic passerines were also well represented – in addition to the Eastern Kingbird and Cedar Waxwing, there were two Yellow-rumped Warblers *Setophaga coronata*, a Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata* and a Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*.

In contrast, autumn vagrancy from the east was quieter. Despite some good birds such as Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*, Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*, two Blyth's Reed Warblers *Acrocephalus dumetorum*, and a good influx of Richard's Pipits *Anthus richardi*, numbers of the more regular semi-rarities, such as Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*, were down. There were no Subalpine Warblers *Sylvia cantillans*, and, for only the second time since 1955, this report contains no records of either Icterine *Hippolais icterina* or Melodious Warblers *H. polyglotta*, the latter chalking up its second blank year in succession.

The last big rarity of the year was the American Coot previously mentioned. Otherwise, apart from a late Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* in Kerry, an American Golden Plover in Wexford and two Bitterns *Botaurus stellaris*, the year ended very quietly.

The backbone of the IRBC's system for recording occurrences of rare birds in the Republic of Ireland is the Provisional List, published online at [www.irbc.ie/provisional/provisional.php](http://www.irbc.ie/provisional/provisional.php) and updated on a monthly basis. Most of the data in this report were taken directly from the 2012 Provisional List. The IRBC expresses its sincere gratitude to all those who provided information during 2012, either directly or indirectly. Although there are no 2012 records from Northern Ireland in this report due to publication deadlines, we thank the members of the Northern Ireland Birdwatchers' Association Rarities Committee (NIBARC) for the continued close working relationship between that body and the IRBC. The Committee also extends its thanks to Joe Hobbs, Killian Mullarney and Keith Naylor for their invaluable assistance.

## Records for 2013 (and previous years) should be sent to the following:

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**Website** [www.nibirds.blogspot.ie/p/the-niba.html](http://www.nibirds.blogspot.ie/p/the-niba.html)

**Rarity Description forms may be downloaded from the IRBC website** [www.irbc.ie/records/records.php](http://www.irbc.ie/records/records.php).

**Submission of photographs** We welcome photographs of rare and scarce birds, which can be sent to [photoArchive@irbc.ie](mailto:photoArchive@irbc.ie).

**Rarities** The full list of taxa requiring substantiating documentation can be found at [www.irbc.ie/records/desclist.php](http://www.irbc.ie/records/desclist.php). For a full explanation of the background and purpose of the list, see *Irish Birds* 7: 413-418 or online at [www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php](http://www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php).

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## 2012 Systematic List

The sequence and scientific nomenclature largely follows British Ornithologists' Union (2013), but also incorporates recommendations of the Taxonomic Advisory Committee of the AERC (Crochet *et al.* 2010, Crochet *et al.* 2011, Crochet *et al.* 2012). Further details of taxonomic changes adopted by the IRBC can be viewed via the Announcements page on our website [www.irbc.ie/announcements/announcements.php](http://www.irbc.ie/announcements/announcements.php).

A change has been made in this report to the way species statistics are presented. From this report, a trinomial system will be used. The three numbers in parentheses after rarer species refer respectively to (a) the total number of birds up to 31st December 1949; (b) the total number of birds from 1st January 1950, up to, but not including, the current year; (c) the total number of new individuals for the current year. In addition to the species totals, the total number of individuals being added to the species total is included immediately following the county name.

### Tundra Bean Goose *Anser fabalis rossicus* (0; 23; 3)

**Clare** Zero: Adult, Liscannor Pitch and Putt Course, from 27th December 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 449) remained to 30th January; One, Lough Muckanagh, from 30th December 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 449) remained to 23rd January; Presumed same, Lough Atedaun, 16th to 18th January (D.McNamara).

**Donegal** Zero: Up to five adults, Inch Island Lake, Lough Swilly, from 19th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 449) remained to 17th March, at Big Isle from 17th February (C.Ingram *et al.*).

**Louth** Three: Three, Lurgangreen, 5th to 26th February, photographed (G.O'Neill *et al.*).

As geese show a tendency to site faithfulness, it is surprising that none from winter 2011/2012 returned. One wonders at the set of circumstances that pertained in both years to account for the influx of 2011/2012 and subsequent dearth of records in the latter part of 2012.

### Russian White-fronted Goose

*Anser albifrons albifrons* (51; 98; 11)

**Donegal** Two: Two, Farset More, Lough Swilly, 15th January (R.Sheppard).

**Louth** Zero: Adult, Lurgangreen, from 24th December 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 449) remained to 2nd January; Presumed same, Dromiskin, 2nd January, photographed (G.O'Neill).

**Wexford** Nine: Three adults and three juveniles, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, from 11th December 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 449) remained to 14th February, and were joined by a further three adults from 11th January, and six juveniles by 3rd February, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*).

As with the previous taxon, no birds returned for a second winter. It would appear that the factors that caused the numbers recorded in winter 2011/2012, were absent in the subsequent winter.

### Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens* (58; 47; 1)

**Donegal** One: White morph adult, Inch Island Lake and Big Isle, Lough Swilly, from 3rd December 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 450) remained to 6th February; One, Sheskinmore Lake, 7th November to 29th March 2013, photographed (D.Allen *et al.*).

**1976 Wexford** Zero: One, Wexford Slobs, 19th to 25th April (*Irish Birds* 1: 77) had been present since 19th March.

Since 2002, the species has occurred in nine of the eleven years. This fits the longer-term pattern – in fifty years from 1944, it was absent from only nine of those years. Why none occurred from 1994 to 2001 will likely remain a mystery, particularly considering this occurred at a time when Snow Goose numbers were increasing in the southern Québec staging areas (Lefebvre 2012).

### Cackling Goose *Branta hutchinsii* (0; 25; 0)

**Sligo** Zero: Up to three, Lissadell, 16th October to 24th February 2013, photographed (S.Feeney, P.Keogh *et al.*), presumed returning.

**2011 Mayo** One: Adult, showing characteristics of *B.h.hutchinsii*, Termoncarragh Lough, Mullet Peninsula, 1st to 4th November, and, presumed same, 7th to 19th December, photographed (T. Cooney *et al.*).

**2011 Sligo** Three: Up to three, showing characteristics of *B.h.hutchinsii*, Lissadell, 1st November to 12th February 2012, photographed (M.Casey, D.Cotton, M.Enright, S.Feeney, S.McCanny *et al.*).

**2010 Sligo** One: Adult, Ballyconnell and Raghly, 3rd November to 27th March 2011, photographed (D.Cotton *et al.*).

**2009 Sligo** Two: Adult, showing characteristics of *B.h.hutchinsii*, Ballyconnell and Lissadell, 25th October to 8th April 2010, photographed (J. Geraty *et al.*); A different individual, showing charac-

teristics of *B.b.butchinsii*, Ballyconnell and Lissadell, 14th December to 8th April 2010, photographed (J.Foss *et al.*).

**2008 Mayo** One: One, showing characteristics of *B.b.butchinsii*, Annagh, Mullet Peninsula, 25th March (D. Suddaby), in addition to one already at the same location.

**2007 Mayo** One: One, showing characteristics of *B.b.butchinsii*, Annagh, Mullet Peninsula, 19th November to 25th March 2008 (D. Suddaby *et al.*).

**2007 Sligo** Two: Up to two, showing characteristics of *B.b.butchinsii*, Ballyconnell and Lissadell, 6th November to 12th April 2008, photographed (D. Cotton, S. Feeney, S. Mughan *et al.*).

**2001 Donegal** Zero: One, Dunfanaghy, 25th February to 10th March, photographed (C.Batty), presumed same as Sligo record below.

**2000 Sligo** One: One, Raghly Point, 6th January into February, photographed (P.Ellis).

None of these records had previously been published in an Irish Bird Report. For full details of all records up to the end of 2011, readers are referred to the results of the IRBC review of this taxon (*Irish Birds* 9: 613-622).

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* (0; 32; 1)

**Mayo** One: One, Termoncarragh Lake, Mullet Peninsula, 7th January to 8th April, photographed (J.Jones *et al.*).

**2011 Donegal** Zero: One, Malin Head and Malin village, 14th February to 8th April (G.Campbell, D.Hunter *et al.*), presumed returning.

**2011 Mayo** One: One, Termoncarragh Lough, Mullet Peninsula, 7th to 19th December, photographed (D.Suddaby).

**2010 Donegal** One: Adult, Malin Head, 2nd to 12th March, photographed (C.Mellon *et al.*).

**2009 Sligo** One: One, Ballyconnell and Lissadell, 25th October to 8th April 2010, photographed (J.Geraty *et al.*).

**2009 Wexford** Two: Two, North Slob, 6th February to 5th April, photographed (K.Grace, A.Walsh *et al.*).

**2008 Galway** One: One, Slyne Head, 5th October, photographed (P.Moore *et al.*).

**2008 Wexford** One: One, North Slob, 22nd to 26th November (A.G.Kelly *et al.*).

**2007 Wexford** One: One, showing characteristics of *B.c.interior*, North Slob, 29th December to 3rd March 2008, photographed (T.Kilbane *et al.*).

**1995 Kerry** One: One, Cashen Estuary, 13th November to 6th February 1996 (M.O'Keefe).

As for the previous taxon, none of these records had previously been published in an Irish Bird Report. For full details of all records up to the end of 2011, readers are referred to the results of the IRBC review of this taxon (*Irish Birds* 9: 613-622). All records published in these reports relate to presumed vagrants and, in line with previous policy (*Irish Birds* 6: 384), records of presumed feral birds are not published.

### Cackling/Canada Goose

*Branta hutchinsii/canadensis* (0; 54; 0)

Although there were no records of indeterminate Cackling/Canada Goose in 2012, this entry is included for

completeness. Full details of all records of indeterminate Cackling/Canada Goose are available in the IRBC review of Canada Goose records (*Irish Birds* 9: 613-622).

### Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* (0; 34; 3)

**Galway** One: Adult, Doorus, Kinvara Bay, 3rd November, photographed (D.Breen).

**Kerry** Zero: Adult, Inch, 6th January, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*), previously seen in November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 450); Adult, Sandy Bay, Castlegregory, 22nd October to 16th November, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*), presumed returning.

**Louth** One: Adult, Lurgangreen, 28th March to 15th April (P.Kelly, G.O'Neill).

**Mayo** Zero: Adult male, Carricklahan, Mullet Peninsula, from 10th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 450) remained to 11th April; Adult, Killala, 12th February, photographed (R.Bonser *et al.*), presumed returning.

**Sligo** Zero: Adult, Cummeen Strand, Sligo Harbour, 4th November (S.Feeney), presumed returning.

**Waterford** Zero: Adult, Dungarvan, from 24th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 450) remained to 25th February; Adult, Dungarvan, 26th November to 30th December, photographed (D.Sinnott *et al.*), presumed returning.

**Wexford** One: Adult, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve and South Slob, from 5th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 450) remained to 7th April; Adult, Rosslare Back Strand, from 13th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 450) remained to 7th April; Adult, Fethard-on-Sea and Bannow Bay, 14th February to 29th March, photographed (L.Ryan); Adult, Rosslare Back Strand, 28th October to 30th March 2013, photographed (P.Kelly), presumed returning; Adult, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve and Rosslare Back Strand, 5th November to 30th March 2013 (N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh), presumed returning.

This series includes the first for Galway. This is the first time that statistics have been presented for this taxon, which was first found in Ireland in 1978 at Strangford Lough, Co. Down (*Irish Birds* 3: 299). Considering that individuals of this taxon have been known to live for over 25 years (Klimkiewicz & Futcher 1989), it is very difficult to be definitive whether a record refers to a new bird, a returning one, or a wandering one. This is made more difficult as this taxon accompanies the Irish wintering population of Pale-bellied Brent Goose *B.b.brota*, which itself disperses through Ireland from its staging grounds at Strangford Lough each winter. Indeed, within one week, a marked *brota* had used major feeding sites in Down, Dublin and Kerry (Ó Briain *et al.* 1986). Given these issues, the totals presented above should be viewed as a 'best guess' based on the evidence at hand, rather than as definitive totals. Appendix 7 presents a summary of all records prior to 2012.

We note that there have been some recent claims of 'Grey-bellied Brent' in Ireland. The IRBC, acknowledging the current dearth of precise knowledge regarding this putative taxon, are pending all claims until its taxonomic position and identification criteria are clarified.

**American Wigeon** *Anas americana* (0; 129; 2)

**Galway** One: Male, Rahasane Turlough, 8th January to 29th March, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*).

**Tipperary** One: Male, Ashton's Callow, 29th December (F.O'Duffy, P.Skrade).

**Wexford** Zero: Male, Tacumshin Lake, 6th October to 5th November, photographed (T.Kilbane *et al.*), presumed returning; Presumed same, Cahore Marsh, 8th December (Sh.Farrell).

**2009 Cork** One: Female, The Gearagh, 15th November (J.Lynch).

**1982 Antrim** Minus one: Male, Shane's Castle, 5th to 12th December (*Irish Birds* 2: 382) was in 1979 - see 1979 Antrim below.

**1979 Antrim** One: Male, Shane's Castle, 5th to 12th December (*NIBR* 1982-85: 35).

The female in Cork was accompanied by a male (*Irish Birds* 9: 254 & 9: 285) and is only the fifteenth female recorded. This seems likely to be due more to the subtlety of their identification than to any real difference in rates of occurrence.

**American Black Duck** *Anas rubripes*

(0; 17; 0)

**Mayo** Zero: Male, Sruhull Lough, Dooniver, Achill Island, from 14th August 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 450) remained to 8th April; Male, Sruhull Lough, Dooniver, Achill Island, 13th September to 4th April 2013, photographed (M.O'Briain *et al.*), presumed returning.

Prior to 1989, all records were from the east of the country, an unusual distribution for a Nearctic vagrant. The first was shot in Kilkenny in 1954, a bird seen in Dublin during winter 1979/1980 was shot in late 1980 when it returned for a second winter, and three more were found in south Wexford. Since then, all but one have occurred in the west, the sole exception being at Tacumshin Lake in Wexford, a location virtually synonymous with Nearctic vagrants.

**Blue-winged Teal** *Anas discors* (3; 98; 7)

**Clare** One: Immature, Ballyallia Lake, 1st December (F.Gibson, N.Lynch, T.Lynch, J.N.Murphy).

**Dublin** Zero: Female, North Bull Island, from 24th September 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 451) remained to 30th March; Adult female, North Bull Island, 9th December to 17th February 2013 (H.Huhtinen *et al.*), presumed returning.

**Galway** Two: First calendar-year or female, Rahasane Turlough, 14th October, photographed (D.Breen); Adult male, Rahasane Turlough, 30th October, photographed (P.Troake).

**Kerry** One: First calendar-year or female, Ballylongford, 22nd to 29th November, photographed (D.Farrar).

**Tipperary** Zero: Male, Pat Reddan's Lake, Borrisokane, 12th to 15th March, photographed (P.Brennan *et al.*), presumed returning.

**Wexford** Three: Male, Tacumshin Lake, 30th June to 26th August, photographed (Sh.Farrell, R.Vaughan *et al.*); Two females, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, 3rd to 9th August, photographed (D.Berridge, A.G.Kelly *et al.*).

Although falling a dozen short of the 2010 record, seven new birds occurred for the second year in succession, and some 30% of the total has occurred between 2010 and 2012. The

male at Tacumshin Lake is only the second record of one summering in Ireland, following one at North Slob, Wexford, from 16th June to 27th August 1971.

**Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina* (4; 60; 1)

**Donegal** One: Female, Inch Island Lake and Blanket Nook, Lough Swilly, 8th September to 3rd November (B.Robson *et al.*).

**2009 Galway** One: Female, Angliham, Lough Corrib, 8th November (D.Breen *et al.*).

On the face of it, the timing of occurrences of this species seems anomalous. After the breeding season, most, or all, leave the breeding range north of 46°N (Cramp & Simmons 1977). In west and central Europe, the northernmost regular wintering places are in Switzerland, but only in small numbers. Given this, the clear winter peak, with two-thirds found between November and January, may indicate suspect origin. Ongoing analysis may show that only birds occurring in spring and summer are likely to originate from a wild population.

**Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris* (0; 323; -)

**2005 Donegal** One: Female, Kiltouris Lake, 20th March (J.K.Lovatt).

This species was removed from consideration by the IRBC from 1st January 2012 (see [www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce60.php](http://www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce60.php)). However, for completeness, records prior to that date will continue to be published. The record above was published as anonymous in Appendix 4 of the Irish Rare Bird Report 2005 (*Irish Birds* 8: 394), but further details were received and the record now takes its rightful place on the main list.

**Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis* (0; 26; 0)

**Westmeath** Zero: Adult male, Lough Owel, 10th November (P.Kelly), presumed returning.

**2008 Galway** Zero: Male, Loughrea, 11th February, photographed (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly); presumed same, Loughrea, 16th November, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*), both presumed to be the bird subsequently seen at the same location in November 2009 (*Irish Birds* 9: 452).

The Westmeath record is presumed to be the bird present at Lough Ennell in the same county during winters 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 452).

**Northern Eider** *Somateria mollissima borealis* (0; 11; 2)

**Donegal** Two: Adult male and immature male, Tory Island, 17th to 20th October, photographed (P.Kelly).

This is not the first time that multiple individuals showing characteristics of this taxon have been seen together at this location (*Irish Birds* 9: 255) and suggests that they might be more frequent than the statistics suggest.

## **King Eider** *Somateria spectabilis* (4; 15; 2)

**Donegal** One: First-winter male, Roaninish Island, 19th to 20th May (B.Robson).

**Mayo** One: First-winter female, Annagh Head, Mullet Peninsula, 1st March, photographed (D.Suddaby).

**1978 Donegal** Zero: Male, Rosbeg, April (*Irish Birds* 1: 421) was present from 16th to 23rd April.

The Donegal bird is the first there since the regularly returning bird that frequented Rosbeg between 1974 and 1982. The female in Mayo bore a resemblance to the individual in Kerry in 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 452), but, in the absence of conclusive proof, they are treated as different for statistical purposes. A first-summer male in Wexford in 2008 (*Irish Birds* 9: 81) is the only record from the southeast, and almost all records have been northwest of a line from Baltimore, Cork to Fair Head, Antrim.

## **Surf Scoter** *Melanitta perspicillata* (6; 172; 11)

**Clare** One: Male and female, Quilty, 25th February (P.Ellis, P.Slade, A.Tweed), presumed same as Doonbeg and Liscannor Bay individuals from 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 453); Female or first-winter, Coolsiva Pier, Ballyvaughan Bay, 16th October (P.Troake); One, Liscannor Bay, 25th November (J.Copner), presumed returning.

**Cork** Four: First-winter male, Garrettstown, 8th January to 22nd April, photographed (R.O'Driscoll *et al.*); Juvenile or female, Schull, 10th November (D.O'Sullivan); First-winter, Ballybranagan, 18th November, photographed (B.Lynch); Juvenile, Toe Head, 28th November (M.Cobley).

**Dublin** One: Female, Balbriggan, 15th April (M.Stewart).

**Kerry** Two: Adult male, Brandon Bay, from 8th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 453) remained to 30th January; Female, Fermoy, 17th January (D.Farrar); Adult female, Brandon Bay, 7th October to 21st February 2013 (M.O'Clery), presumed returning; Adult male, Brandon Bay, 16th November (E.Carty), presumed returning; Female, Glenbeigh Bay, 16th November (E.Carty), presumed returning; Juvenile female, Burnham Lagoon, 22nd to 27th December (M.O'Clery *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 68: 26.

**Louth** One: Female, Hermitage, 24th December (O.Foley).

**Meath** One: Female, Gormanston, 2nd January (O.Foley).

**Waterford** One: First-winter male, The Cunnigar, Dungarvan, 25th November to 4th January 2013, photographed (J.A.Power, B.Sheridan *et al.*).

Almost all coastal counties have recorded this species – only Leitrim, with its minimal coastline, and, surprisingly, Derry, are without records. Even two inland counties (Armagh and Fermanagh) have had records. There are hotspots at all four corners of the island, with Donegal, Down, Wexford and Kerry the four counties most frequented.

## **Black-browed Albatross**

*Thalassarche melanophris* (0; 12; 0)

**At sea** Zero: Immature, 160 nautical miles southwest of Mizen Head, 29th February (C.Ryan *et al.*), photograph *Duch Birding* 34: 114.

For many, an encounter with an albatross in Irish waters is something to dream of, and, unless one (an albatross that is!)

spends some time in a Gannet *Morus bassanus* colony, many may not live to see that dream fulfilled. Conor Ryan has lived the dream not once, but twice, having previously connected with the species in September 2008! The date of this record is notable – away from normal seawatching months between August and October. It brings to mind the arrival dates of the famous Hermaness (Shetland) individual, which arrived there during February on at least four occasions (Evans 1994).

## **Albatross sp.** *Thalassarche sp.* (0; 3; 0)

**2008 Cork** One: One, Mizen Head, 21st October (P.Wolstenholme).

The vast majority of northwest European albatross records have been of Black-browed Albatross. However, there have been records of Yellow-nosed Albatross *Thalassarche chlororhynchos* in Britain, Sweden and Norway, which would imply that its occurrence in Ireland is possible. Unfortunately, views of this bird meant that neither bill nor underwing were seen, precluding specific identification.

## **Fea's/Zino's Petrel**

*Pterodroma feae/madeira* (0; 73; 5)

**Cork** Three: One, Mizen Head, 16th July (A.Duggan); One, Galley Head, 29th August (P.Moore *et al.*); One, Mizen Head, 5th October (C.Foley, O.Foley).

**Wexford** Two: Two, Carnsore Point, 18th August (N.Keogh).

The record of two together in Wexford is not without precedent - two were seen from Mizen Head, Cork, in August 1994 (*Irish Birds* 5: 328). The October record above is almost the latest recorded – only one at the same location on 15th October 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 587) was later.

## **Wilson's Storm-petrel**

*Oceanites oceanicus* (2; 237; 10)

**Clare** Three: Two, twelve miles off Loop Head, 12th August, photographed (O.Foley *et al.*); One, Bridges of Ross, 17th August (N.T.Keogh).

**Cork** Three: One, Galley Head, 22nd July (O.Foley); One, Toe Head, 19th August (A.Duggan); One, Galley Head, 21st August (J.Lynch).

**Galway** One: One, Baile na hAbhainn, 4th October (A.Ó'Dónaill).

**Kerry** Three: Three, five miles off the Blasket Islands, 17th August, photographed (J.Gilroy *et al.*).

The Galway record is the latest ever. The vast majority have occurred by the third week of September and the only previous October records were two storm-driven records in Fermanagh and Down, on 1st and 2nd October 1891 respectively. Between them, the four counties above account for over 95% of the total.

## **Continental Cormorant**

*Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis* (0; 21; 4)

**Cork** One: One, Baltimore, 6th January (J.Wyllie).

**Wexford** Three: Adult, Little Saltee Island, 1st June, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*); Second calendar-year, Nethertown, 6th September

to 1st January 2013, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*); Near adult, Tacumshin Lake, 29th October, photographed (P.Kelly). These are the first records for both Cork and Wexford, and include the first not to occur in winter – all previous records had been found between late October and February.

### **Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* (161+; 39; 3)

**Cork** One: One, Ballyhonock Lake, 19th March (O.Foley).

**Donegal** One: One, Inch Island Lake, Lough Swilly, 30th December to 16th February 2013, photographed (D.Charles *et al.*).

**Galway** Zero: One, Clonboo, 22nd October to 28th February 2013 (I.Brophy), presumed returning.

**Wexford** Zero: One, Tacumshin Lake, 24th October (T.Murray), presumed returning.

**Wicklow** One: One, Kilcoole, 14th February (M.Bowtell, S.O'Toole); Presumed same, Kilcoole, 29th December to 1st January 2013 (B.Hamilton *et al.*).

**1982 Antrim** One: One, Gawley's Gate, shot, 2nd January (*NIBR* 1982-85: 29), originally incorrectly published as 1982 Armagh below.

**1982 Armagh** Minus one: One, Galwey's Gate, shot, 2nd January (*Irish Birds* 2: 379) was at Gawley's Gate, County Antrim (*NIBR* 1982-85: 29), as above.

**1947 Antrim** One: Female, found dead, Portmore Lough, 17th February (*INJ* 9: 49).

**1947 Armagh** One: Male, found dead, Charlemont, 4th January (*INJ* 9: 49).

**1945 Armagh** One: One, Ballymacully Bog, near Caledon, dead, 13th January (*INJ* 8: 264).

**1945 Donegal** One: One, at a coastal locality, 6th May (*British Birds* 41: 358).

**1945 Limerick** One: One, near Limerick, 16th to 17th January (*INJ* 8: 304).

**1937 Antrim** One: One, Belfast, picked up moribund, 6th January, died later (*INJ* 6: 167).

**1936 Fermanagh** One: One, Enniskillen, shot, 14th March (*INJ* 6: 60).

**1931 Antrim** One: Male, Gortgole, Portglenone, picked up, 18th December (*INJ* 4: 14).

**1924 Antrim** One: Adult male, Ballybuttle, near Millisle, found injured, 19th February, died later, now at Belfast Municipal Museum (*North Western Naturalist* 16: 82).

**1923 Down** One: Female, Ardglass, obtained, 31st December (*INJ* 8: 245).

**1921 Antrim** One: Male, Mosley, shot, 13th January (*IN* 30: 52).

**1917 Kerry** One: One, near Waterville, late February (*Field* 3rd March 1917: 313).

**1917 Tipperary** One: One, shot, February (*Field* 3rd March 1917: 313).

**1916 Tyrone** One: Female, Coalisland, shot, 2nd February (*IN* 26: 53).

**1904 Waterford** One: Male, Coolfin, Portlaw, shot, 5th February (*IN* 13: 120).

**1904 Wexford** One: One, near Curracloe, shot, November (*IN* 14: 119).

**1901 Tipperary** One: One, Nenagh, 5th February (*Field* 23rd February 1901: 233).

**1900 Down** One: One, Groomsport, shot, 9th August (*IN* 9: 273).

**1900 Derry** One: One, Burnfort, shot, 10th January (*IN* 9: 81).

This is the first time that statistics for the period up to 1950 have been provided for this species. Formerly a regular breeder, it probably became extinct as a breeding species in Ireland in 1840 (Ussher & Warren 1900). The total prior to 1950 (which should be treated as a minimum figure as it excludes breeding records) comprises of; a minimum of 124 implicit in a breakdown of records by county cited in the main text of Ussher and Warren, seven more in the appendix to that work, a further eleven referenced by Kennedy *et al.* (1954), and the 19 records listed above for which details were not published in Kennedy *et al.* The total since 1950 includes one heard in spring 1962 (Wicklow), published in Ruttledge (1966) but not published in an Irish Bird Report. It also assumes that one in Clare from 24th April to 22nd May 1983 (*Irish Birds* 2: 549) was the same as that heard 18th April 1982 (*Irish Birds* 2: 379).

### **Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax* (27; 48; 1)

**Cork** One: Adult, Skibbereen, 30th March to 13th April (J.Wyllie *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 65: 28.

Although recorded every month, there is a strong spring bias to occurrences – peak time is between March and May, which accounts for 36 of the total. March records are not uncommon, with this the tenth for that month. This is the longest staying bird since one in Ballycotton in August 1983, although well short of the 144 day visit of one in Dublin between April and September 1916.



**Plate 257.** Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, Skibbereen, Co. Cork, March 2012 (Laura Woods).

### **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* (0; 237; 5)

**Cork** One: One, Shandrun, Bantry, 23rd May (M.Cobley).

**Donegal** One: One, Tullyowen, St. Johnston, 10th December to 21st March 2013, photographed (A.Speer *et al.*).

**Louth** One: One, Lurgangreen, 28th to 29th March, photographed (P.Kelly, G.O'Neill).

**Wexford** Two: Two, Bannow Bay, 9th to 20th April, photographed (P.Robinson *et al.*), also seen at Tintern Abbey, 13th April (K.Grace).

Although Cork and Wexford have 160 between them, this series includes the first record for Louth and only the second for Donegal. Occurrences of this species fall into three different phases. It was genuinely rare between the first occurrence in 1976 and 2005, during which time there were only ten. Then, there were 223 between 2007 and 2009. As might be indicated by the occurrence of nine in two years, we are perhaps entering a new phase where occurrences become more common than in the first period, although it is marginally early to tell.

### **Great White Egret** *Ardea alba* (0; 48; 6)

**Dublin** One: One, Applegreen Service Station, Lusk, 14th December (Sh.Farrell).

**Kerry** One: One, Maine River, Castlemaine, 21st to 29th October (M.Ryle *et al.*).

**Laois** One: One, Ballycolla, 2nd January (J.J.Murphy).

**Louth** One: One, Dundalk and Lurgangreen, 18th February to 2nd April (B.Sheils *et al.*).

**Mayo** Zero: One, Lough Carra, 4th June (C.Huxley), presumed same as Lough Conn individual, November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 456).

**Wexford** One: One, Ballycarney Bridge, 3rd February to 20th March, photographed (D.Clarke, D.Weldon *et al.*); Presumed same, Bunclody, 28th August (K.Fahy).

**Wicklow** One: One, Usk, 7th January (F.O'Cuinneagain).

Including the first record for Laois, this was another good year for this species – it is the second highest annual total, two behind the total for 2009. Almost two-thirds of the total has occurred since 2007 and, with that increase in records, it gets more difficult to be certain about the exact number of birds that are occurring – many of the records could be attributable to a small number of wide-ranging individuals.

### **Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea* (1; 20; 2)

**Waterford** One: Adult, Bunmahon, 27th March to 27th April, photographed (D.Weldon *et al.*).

**Wexford** One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 4th May, photographed (D.Murphy *et al.*).

It appears that this species is genuinely rare in Ireland. These are the first since 2006, and there have been only five since 2000. Unlike some other rare herons and Glossy Ibis that have become more regular in recent years, there is no evidence that Purple Heron numbers are increasing. Of the southern originating herons, since 2000, only Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* (two) and Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* (three) have had fewer records than this species. The March record,

coinciding with a Night Heron in Cork, is the first for Waterford and only the third record for the month. By contrast, the Wexford record is the seventh for the county, the sixth for Tacumshin Lake and the eighth for May, which is the peak month.

### **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* (0; 1; 1)

**Clare** One: One, Boltiagh Bog, Kilmaley, 4th June, photographed (P.Troake).

This is only the second for Ireland, following one in Dublin in August 1987 (*Irish Birds* 3: 614). With 156 in Britain (BBRC 2013) since the 1987 bird, it is inexplicably rare in Ireland – particularly considering western occurrences in Britain are not unusual, notwithstanding a bias there to the east and southeast. There were other reports of this species later in the summer months and, although we have not received any submissions, it seems likely that these relate to this individual.

### **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* (103; 104; 32)

**Cork** Fifteen: Two, Ringarogy Island, Baltimore, 17th January (C.Martin); One, Lissagriffin, 27th January (D.Ballard); Five, Skibbereen, 28th January (O.Foley); Four, Ballycotton, 28th January (P.Davis); Up to three, Timoleague, 10th February to 2nd February 2013, photographed (C.Heardman *et al.*); One, Kilbrittain, 7th August (O.Foley), presumed to be one of the three from Timoleague.

**Galway** One: Second calendar-year, Mullaghmore Lake, Moylough, 14th March to 2nd May, photographed (M.Cashman *et al.*).

**Kerry** One: One, Tralee Bay Wetlands, 20th July (E.Carty).

**Mayo** Three: Up to three second calendar-years, Termoncarragh Lake and Annagh Marsh, Mullet Peninsula, 12th to 27th January, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

**Waterford** Four: Four, Dungarvan, 14th to 15th January, photographed (M.Cowming, C.Flynn *et al.*).

**Wexford** Six: Cahore Marsh, 31st January to 2nd February



**Plate 258.** Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, May 2012 (Paul Kelly).



(D.O'Ceallaigh, O.O'Sullivan), presumed same as the individual at Wexford Wildfowl Reserve in November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 456); Presumed same, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, 6th February (P.Kelly), Cahore Marsh, 24th June and 23rd September (Sh.Farrell) and Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, 8th August (G.O'Sullivan); Three adults and one immature, Tacumshin Lake, 6th to 26th May (P.Kelly *et al.*), photograph *Birdwatch* 241: 74; Up to two, Tacumshin Lake and Ring Marsh, 25th June to 15th September, photographed (A.G.Kelly, P.Kelly *et al.*).

**Wicklow** Two: One, Broad Lough, 22nd January (Sh.Farrell); Presumed same, Kilcoole, 18th February, photographed (P.Clancy *et al.*); One, Greystones, 13th May (B.Haslam).

This was the fifth good year in succession and, along with 2009, is the joint best year on record. Between the influxes of 1945 and 2007, both of which comprised six individuals, this species was very rare in Ireland. There were only 12 recorded in about 60 years - single records in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, three in the 1980s, five in the 1990s, and one in 2004.

### Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* (92; 135; 4)

**Cork** One: One, Cork City, 5th March (M.Waldeck).

**Kerry** Zero: Adult, Cromane, from 28th September 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 457) remained to 4th March; Presumed same Blennerville, 29th September to 27th October, photographed (E.Carty); Presumed same, Cromane Harbour, 16th November to 17th February 2013 (M.O'Clery *et al.*).

**Waterford** Zero: Sub-adult, Killongford, Dungarvan and The Cunnigar, from 14th April 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 457) remained to 3rd March; Adult, The Cunnigar, Dungarvan, 8th November to 26th February 2013, photographed (A.D.Malcolm *et al.*), presumed returning.

**Wexford** Three: Third calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 4th March, photographed (P.Kelly); Two, Tacumshin Lake, 25th March (P.Clancy); presumed same two, Cullenstown Strand, 9th April (P.Kelly).

It is very difficult to be certain of exact numbers due to wandering and returning individuals. There must be a strong possibility that some of the recent records treated as new birds relate to the dispersal of the long-staying group of five first-winter birds that arrived in Cork in 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 258) - in particular, the Waterford occurrences in 2010 and 2011, although these are still treated as different in the statistics.

### Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* (0; 10; 1)

**Mayo** One: One, Lough Baun, Louisburgh, 29th to 31st October, photographed (P.Lonergan *et al.*).

The first record for Mayo. Occurrences have been in clusters - there were two between 1987 and 1988, three between 1995 and 1997, and now four between 2010 and 2012, in addition to single records in 2000 and 2003. Since first recorded their status has hardly changed - there were five in the thirteen years from 1987 to 1999 inclusive and six in the following thirteen years.

### Black Kite *Milvus migrans* (0; 16; 1)

**Cork** One: Adult, Galley Head, 1st May (E.O'Donnell).

This is the sixth consecutive year that this species has occurred. Before 2007, there had been none since 1995. Over two-thirds have now occurred between 7th April and 11th May, although this is only the third found in May. This timing is consistent with the major arrival into central Europe in the first half of April, with immigration continuing to early or mid-May (Cramp & Simmons 1980).

### Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus hudsonius* (0; 4; 1)

**Wexford** One: Juvenile female, Tacumshin Lake, 19th October to 20th April 2013 (G.Clark *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 25: 467, *Dutch Birding* 34: 397.

**2011 Wexford** One: Juvenile, Tacumshin, 20th to 26th October, photographed (P.Archer, K.Mullarney *et al.*).

Tacumshin Lake seems to be a magnet for this taxon - all bar one of the Irish records have occurred there, and they have been annual there since the first in 2010.

### Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* (0; 5; 0)

**Galway** Zero: Second calendar-year female, Lough Corrib, from 28th September 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 459), photograph *Birding World* 25: 94, remained to 2nd April.

This individual remained following the influx of five that occurred in 2011, a year in which Britain doubled its total to 58 (Hudson *et al.* 2012). While autumn is the peak time for occurrences in Britain, the over-wintering of the Galway individual is not unprecedented. One stayed in Norfolk during winter 2002/2003 (Rogers *et al.* 2003), and its 30th March departure date is very similar to the last date for the Galway bird.

### Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* (23; 58; 2)

**Cork** One: Adult male, Mitchelstown, 14th May (C.McNamee).

**Wexford** One: Second calendar-year female, Tacumshin Lake, 13th May to 8th September (P.Kelly *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 66: 27; Presumed same, Oldtown, Tomhaggard, 25th August (K.Grace).

**1907 Wicklow** One: Male, in transition to adult plumage, Sally Gap, obtained in June (Williams 1907, *British Birds* 1: 318).

The 1907 Wicklow record was not published in any of the seminal works on Irish birds but was taken into account for totals in *Checklist of the Birds of Ireland* (IRBC 1998). This is the first time that statistics have been presented for this species. Details of two individuals were published in Thompson (1849-1851), one in Volume 1, the second in the preface to Volume 2. Ussher and Warren (1900) provided details of a further seven, one of which was included in the addenda at the end of that volume, and thirteen more were published in Kennedy *et al.* (1954). These, together with the 1907 record above, make up the total of 23 prior to 1950. Since 1950, 13 were published in Irish Bird Reports from 1953 to 1975, and 41 in its successor, *Irish Birds*. The total is completed by the inclusion of four in two breeding pairs, one

pair in Cork in 1957 and a series in Wicklow between 1957 and 1961, treated as a returning pair, both referred to in Hutchinson (1989), but not published in an Irish Bird Report. Although these breeding birds were said to be successful, there is no indication of how many young fledged and none are included in the total.

### **Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis* (2; 110; 0)

**2009 Cork** One: Adult female, The Gearagh, 15th November (J.Lynch). This species is considerably scarcer in the southern half of the island, where only 28 have occurred, 20 of which have been in Cork, perhaps contributing to persistent rumour that the species breeds in that county. Note that the statistics exclude six individuals of the North American race *A.g. atricapillus*, all Republic of Ireland records of which are being reviewed.

### **Rough-legged Buzzard** *Buteo lagopus* (28; 19; 0)

**Wicklow** Zero: One, Kilcoole, from 21st November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 459), photograph *Wings* 65: 27, remained to 13th February.

**1926 Wicklow** One: One, Near Luggala, trapped, early December (Williams 1927, *British Birds* 24: 225).

The 1926 Wicklow record was not published in any of the standard works on Irish birds (Kennedy *et al.* 1954, Ruttledge 1966, Hutchinson 1989), and is also absent from the 'Museum Lists' (Humphreys 1937, Kennedy 1961, Ruttledge 1975). See also Appendix 6 for details of a correction to the statistics.

### **Red-footed Falcon** *Falco vespertinus* (1; 27; 4)

**Cork** Two: Female, Cape Clear Island, 27th March (S.Wing); Adult male, Owenahincha, 24th May (C.Cronin).



**Plate 259.** Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow, January 2012 (Dick Coombes).

**Galway** One: Male, Killeenaran, 4th to 5th June (G.D'Arcy).

**Wexford** One: Second calendar-year male, Tacumshin Lake, 25th May to 6th June, photographed (B.Haslam *et al.*).

**1997 Cork** Zero: Adult female, Churchtown South, 9th to 17th May (*Irish Birds* 6: 295), originally incorrectly published as at Ballycotton. These three counties between them account for 19 (almost 60%) of the total. Perhaps surprisingly, Galway is the leading county with a total of eight, largely due to a party of five in 1992. Apart from two September records, all have occurred during spring. The 2012 individual on Cape Clear Island is the earliest by almost three weeks. Churchtown South, referred to in the correction to the 1997 record, is a village 6km west of Ballycotton and is considered a separate location.

### **Hobby** *Falco subbuteo* (14; 255; 33)

**Cork** Sixteen: One, Lissagriffin, 23rd April (D.Ballard); Adult, Tilickafinna, Dursey Island, 19th May (D.A.Scott *et al.*); One, Ballycotton, 2nd June (O.Foley); One, Mizen Head, 6th June (D.Ballard); Second calendar-year, Killeagh, 12th June (P.Moore); Adult, Robert's Cove, 24th June (S.Burke); Two, Rostellan, 30th June (O.Foley *et al.*); Second calendar-year, Cuskinny Marsh, 8th July (R.McLaughlin); One, Kilcoe, Roaringwater Bay, 26th July (J.Wyllie); Juvenile, Ballycotton, 31st August (P.Moore); Second calendar-year, Cloonkeen East, Connonagh, 4th September (C.Jones); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 22nd September (O.Foley); One, Cape Clear Island, 11th to 15th October (P.O'Keeffe *et al.*); One, Mizen Head, 17th to 25th October (D.Ballard *et al.*); Juvenile, Ballinwilling, 21st October (O.Foley).

**Dublin** One: One, Hollywood Great, Naul, 2nd July (B.Porter).

**Kerry** Three: One, Ballydavid, 4th June, photographed (J.Brown); Adult, Spa, Tralee, 10th June (E.Carty); One, Riasc, Ballyferriter, 16th June (S.Miller).

**Mayo** One: One, Foxford, 29th to 30th June (S.Sowrey).

**Waterford** Four: Adult, Bunmahon, 4th May (D.Weldon); Two, Carriganantry Reservoir, 6th to 24th June (A.Jacques *et al.*); Second



**Plate 260.** Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, May 2012 (Paul Kelly).

calendar-year, Ballyneety, Dungarvan, 25th August (C.Flynn, D.Weldon).

**Wexford** Seven: One adult and three second calendar-years, Tacumshin Lake, 2nd June to 8th July, photographed (M.Boyle, O.Foley, P.Kelly, N.Keogh, A.McMillan, I.Stevenson *et al.*), also seen at Oldtown, Tomhaggard, 16th June (K.Grace); Second calendar-year, South Slobs, 9th June, photographed (P.Kelly); One, Tacumshin Lake, 4th August (R.Busby); Juvenile, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, 4th September (T.Murray).

**Wicklow** One: Second calendar-year male, Kilcoole, 1st to 2nd June, photographed (B.Haslam *et al.*); Presumed same, Five Mile Point, 9th June, photographed (T.Cardiff *et al.*) and Broad Lough, 11th June (C.Cardiff, T.Cardiff).

The second best year of all time, fourteen lower than the record set in 2010. The recent explosion in numbers continues – almost half (149 of 302) have occurred since 2008. The April bird in Cork is among the earliest on record and only the twelfth for the month. The main arrival of 18 in June was slightly later than normal. This contrasts with May, normally the best month, when there were only three.

### **Spotted Crake** *Porzana porzana* (Unknown; 48; 1)

**Tipperary** One: Adult male, trapped and ringed, Cabragh Wetlands, 28th August (A.Copland, H.Williams *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 67: 30. The status of this species in Ireland, summarised in Ussher and Warren (1900), remains as valid today as when it was written. They state that “Spotted Crakes are chiefly met with when the breeding season is past, in August, September and

October, that the numbers fall off in winter, but that a very few occur in spring months”. Since 1950, 33 have been found between August and October. The lack of records after October represents the winter fall off, and a single March record and four in May represent the few that occur in spring months. Moreover, they also state that “The want of records for June and July cannot be taken as conclusive proof of the bird’s absence in those months, for... this is a species which loves to skulk in marshy herbage, and hates to show itself on the wing, it may well escape notice in summer”. Time has proven this analysis correct as, since 1950 there have been eleven found during June and July.

### **Baillon’s Crake** *Porzana pusilla* (2; 0; 1)

**Wexford** One: Adult, Great Saltee Island, 24th March (N.Warnock *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 25: 90, *Birdwatch* 239: 68-69, *British Birds* 105: 290, *Dutch Birding* 34: 187, *Wings* 65: 28 (Warnock 2012). A fantastic, and most unexpected, find, which was one of the highlights of the spring. It seems to have misread the literature that suggests the species is normally shy and elusive, as it performed for a properly appreciative group of twitchers from around the country. So showy and tame was it that, at one stage, as the bird walked towards the gathered gallery, one well known photographer was heard to utter a muffled curse as it came too close to allow his expensive long lens to focus on it!

Only three extant species have been longer on the Irish list without recurring – Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus* (last



**Plate 261.** Baillon’s Crake *Porzana pusilla*, Great Saltee Island, Co. Wexford, 24th March 2012 (Tom Shevlin).

recorded 1843), Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* (1845) and Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis* (1854). This is the first since one in Tramore, Waterford on 6th April 1858. Previous to that, Ireland's only autumn record was in Cork, in October 1845. The species is a relatively early migrant – Cramp and Simmons (1980) indicates that spring passage occurs from March to early May, so the Waterford and Wexford records fall neatly into this time-span.

Records have been increasing in northwest Europe recently. They were rediscovered breeding in The Netherlands in 2005 after a more than 30 year absence, and 2012 was a very good year there (Ausden *et al.* 2013). Breeding has also resumed in Germany recently, after largely being absent as a breeder since 1962 (Stübing & Sacher 2012). Moreover, in summer 2012, at least six, and perhaps as many as 11, were heard singing in apparently suitable breeding habitat at a minimum of three locations in Britain, where breeding has not been suspected since 1889 (Ausden *et al.* 2013).

### American Coot *Fulica americana* (0; 2; 1)

**Galway** One: One, Murlach, Ballyconneely, 28th November to 13th April 2013 (D.Breen *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 25: 445 & 490, *Birdwatch* 247: 60.

Another addition to the Galway list in this report! This individual would have been far better appreciated were it not for the relatively recent bird in Mayo in 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 294). The similarities of both records will not be lost on readers – both found on the west coast in November and both staying through to the following April. The geographical distribution, particularly when including British records from Shetland and Outer Hebrides, is peculiarly skewed towards the northwest.



**Plate 262.** American Coot *Fulica americana*, Murlach, Co. Galway, 28th November 2012 (Dermot Breen).

### Crane *Grus grus* (29; 144; 12)

**Cork** Two: One, Fitzgerald Park, Cork City, 7th February (O.Foley); One, Castletownroche, 4th October (P.Moore).

**Dublin** Zero: Adult, Rogerstown Estuary, 19th March, photographed (A.Fleming), also seen in Louth and Meath.

**Kerry** Four: Three adults, Ardfert, 20th to 30th January, photographed (F.King *et al.*); Adult, Ballinskelligs, 8th to 24th November, photographed (S.Kelleghan *et al.*).

**Limerick** One: Adult, Athlacca, 28th to 31st January, photographed (M.Flanagan, G.Hunt, M.Sheehy, M.Turner *et al.*).

**Louth** Zero: Adult, Beaulieu Pond, Termonfeckin and Drogheda, intermittently from 18th to 21st March, photographed (M.Conaghy *et al.*), presumed to be the same bird that had been in Dublin, November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 461), also seen in Dublin and Meath in 2012.

**Meath** Zero: Adult, Polder and Mornington, Boyne Estuary, 19th March, photographed (M.Conaghy *et al.*), also seen in Dublin and Louth.

**Wexford** Five: One, Cahore Marsh, 21st January to 12th February (T.Kealy *et al.*), presumed to be one of the two that frequented south Wexford from September 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 461); Two, presumed same, between Ballygarrett and Kilmuckridge, 24th February, photographed (P.Finn); One, Churchtown, 29th October (M.Noonan); Four, Tacumshin Lake and South Slob, 29th October were joined by the Churchtown individual, 2nd November and remained to 14th February 2013, photographed (N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh *et al.*); Presumed same group of five, Fethard-on-Sea, 12th December, photographed (L.Ryan).

Twelve in a year has only been exceeded twice – in 2011 (77) and 1851 (15). Records during the first few months of 2012 are presumably associated with the large influx of autumn 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 460-461) – although whether they are wanderers from the original influx or different birds is not really clear. Records north of Wexford on the east coast are uncommon - the bird that wandered the east coast was the first record for Louth and only the second for Meath.



**Plate 263.** Cranes *Grus grus*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, 3rd November 2012 (Killian Mullarney).

## Black-winged Stilt

*Himantopus himantopus* (13; 41; 1)

**Wexford** One: Male, Tacumshin Lake, 30th March to 10th April, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*).

Subsequent to its time in Wexford, this individual was seen in Oxfordshire, Leicestershire and Lincolnshire in Britain (Gantlett 2012). March is the peak month, with 14 recorded, although figures are somewhat distorted by a considerable influx of 11 in March 1990, which included a group of six, the largest gathering ever recorded here.

## Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* (34; 108; 8)

**Cork** One: One, Harbour View, Kilbrittain, 12th May (D.Rees).

**Dublin** Five: Five, Rogerstown Estuary, 23rd March, photographed (S.Cullen *et al.*).

**Louth** Two: Two, Lurgangreen, 27th to 28th March, photographed (E.Larrisey *et al.*).

**1979 Wexford** Zero: One, Tacumshin, June until late September (*Irish Birds* 1: 569) was present from 20th June to 18th September.

This species shows a strong tendency to occur between October and February, with December the peak month. In addition, there is evidence of spring migration, with a small peak during April and May. If this species is ever to repeat the breeding success at Tacumshin Lake, Wexford, in 1938, the latter group probably represents the most likely source.

## American Golden Plover

*Pluvialis dominica* (1; 197; 36)

**Clare** Two: Adult, Bridges of Ross, 10th to 22nd September, photographed (N.Keogh *et al.*); Juvenile, Loop Head, 3rd October to 3rd November, photographed (K.Langdon *et al.*).

**Cork** Eight: One, Old Head of Kinsale, 17th May (M.Carmody); One, Ballycotton, 22nd May (D.O'Sullivan); Adult, Harper's Island, 15th to



**Plate 264.** American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*, Pilmore Strand, Co. Cork, 23rd September 2012 (Graham Clarke).

22nd September, photographed (J.Wilson *et al.*); Adult, Pilmore Strand, 23rd September to 20th October (G.Clarke *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 67: 32; One, Caher, Mizen Head, 23rd September (O.Foley); Juvenile, Rosscarbery, 7th October (M.Callaghan, D.Charles); Juvenile, Ballydonegan, West Beara, 7th October (K.Grace *et al.*); One, The Gearagh, 21st October (J.Lynch).

**Donegal** Two: Juvenile, Tory Island, 23rd September (D.Charles *et al.*); Adult, Inch Island Lake, Lough Swilly, 20th October (T.Gittings).

**Galway** Two: Adult, Truska, Ballyconneely, 18th to 24th September, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*); Juvenile, Aillebrack, Ballyconneely, 24th September, photographed (D.Breen).

**Kerry** Four: One, Reenroe, Waterville, 28th April to 1st May, photographed (P.McDaid *et al.*); Juvenile, Carrahane, 20th September (E.Carty *et al.*); One, Carrahane, 5th October (T.Tarpey); Adult, Cashen Estuary, 15th to 24th October, photographed (D.Farrar).

**Kildare** One: Juvenile, The Curragh, 8th October (P.Phillips).

**Louth** One: Juvenile, Termonfeckin, 19th September (B.Sheils).

**Mayo** Four: Juvenile, Keel Golf Course, Achill Island, 15th September (R.Bonser, J.Jones), photographs *Birding World* 25: 358, *Birdwatch* 245: 68, *Dutch Birding* 34: 327; Two juveniles, Annagh Strand, Mullet Peninsula, 30th September to 7th October (D.Suddaby *et al.*); Adult, Trawmore, Mullet Peninsula, 30th September (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

**Wexford** Twelve: One, Tacumshin Lake, 20th April (P.Kelly); Presumed same, Tacumshin Lake, 6th to 20th May, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); Up to two adults, Tacumshin Lake, 8th to 22nd September, photographed (P.Kelly, T.Kilbane *et al.*); Adult, The Cull, 15th September, photographed (P.Kelly); Adult, Rosslare Back Strand, 22nd September, photographed (P.Kelly); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 28th to 30th September (P.Kelly), photograph *Birding World* 25: 358; Up to four juveniles, Tacumshin Lake, 4th October to 17th November, photographed (P.Kelly, T.Kilbane, P.King *et al.*); Juvenile, Lady's Island Lake, 9th October (K.Mullarney); One, Rosslare Back Strand, 23rd December (P.Kelly).

This species seems to be getting more common! The total for 2012 is only one short of the record set in 2011, and almost three-quarters of the total has occurred since 2005. It may not be coincidental that 2005 marked the change in IRBC record assessment policy (see [www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php](http://www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php)) – one wonders how many of the list above would have come before the committee for assessment had there been a requirement for supporting documentation to be submitted. There had previously only been nine spring records, so the largest ever spring influx of four during April and May is notable.

## Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* (0; 12; 1)

**Mayo** One: Adult female, Inishkea Islands, 4th June, photographed (D.Suddaby).

This is the first for Mayo and the first June record for Ireland. July, with five, is the peak month of occurrence, followed closely by August, with four. Smaller numbers have also occurred in autumn, with one record for September and two for October. To date, none have been juveniles - all have been aged as adults, except for a first-summer individual at Tacumshin Lake in August 2005. The lack of juveniles could be

related to the similarity of colouration to European Golden Plover *P. apricaria* which would allow a juvenile *P. fulva* to blend in to a flock of the former, unlike the obviously colder plumage tones of a juvenile *P. dominica*.

### Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

(0; 108; 6)

**Cork** One: Juvenile, Pilmore Strand, 18th August (O.Foley).

**Waterford** One: Juvenile, Ballinclamper, Clonea, 4th to 12th September, photographed (M.Cowming *et al.*).

**Wexford** Four: Three females, Tacumshin Lake, 10th to 12th May, photographed (P.Kelly, K.Mullarney *et al.*); Male, Tacumshin Lake, 25th to 30th May, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Although fewer than in 2011, the total is marginally better than the average since the start of the century of 5.75 per year. With over 70% of the national total from its neighbouring counties (even including its inland neighbours, Kilkenny and Tipperary), this glaring gap in the Waterford county list has finally been filled!

### Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* (3; 18; 0)

**2011 Cork** One: One, Sherkin Island, 10th November (J.Wyllie).

The distinctive call of this species (which was well described) was heard on multiple occasions as this bird flushed away into a starlit night, never to be seen, despite extensive searching the following morning.



**Plate 265.** Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, May 2012 (Paul Kelly).

### Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* (146; 143; 7)

**Cork** Two: Two juveniles, Robert's Cove, 6th October (D.Fitzpatrick *et al.*), photograph *Birdwatch* 246: 68.

**Galway** Three: Three, Aillebrack, Ballyconneely, 26th April to 4th May, photographed (A.Ó'Dónaill *et al.*).

**Laois** One: One, Rosenallis, 8th October (C.Cronin).

**Mayo** One: Juvenile, Termon Hill, Mullet Peninsula, 30th August (D.Suddaby).



**Plate 266.** Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*, Robert's Cove, Co. Cork, 6th October 2012 (Graham Clarke).

The pattern of vagrancy for this species is well established, and is reflected in the records for 2012. In spring there is a tendency towards (occasionally large) trips of adults on northward migration, mainly found between mid-March and mid-May, and often in suitable upland breeding habitat. Return migration takes place over a more protracted time, with records from late July almost to the end of November, and consists almost entirely of juveniles, very rarely more than two together, and often at lowland sites.

### Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* (0; 15; 0)

**2000 Wexford** One: Adult, North Slob and Castlebridge, 13th August (T.Kilbane *et al.*).

This brings the number of occurrences in Wexford to five, level with Cork, with the remainder comprising three in Kerry and singles in Armagh and Derry. This, the tenth adult, further emphasises the pattern of adults occurring from June to early September. With its continued scarcity, and the benefit of a quarter of a century of hindsight, the occurrence of three in the space of two magical weeks in August 1988 was remarkable.

### Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* (0; 132; 4)

**Cork** One: Juvenile, Rosscarbery, 4th to 15th October, photographed (P.Leonard *et al.*).

**Kerry** Two: Adult, Baile an Reannaigh, Smerwick Harbour, 16th to 17th August, photographed (J.Bird *et al.*); One, Black Rock Strand, 30th November to 12th December, photographed (D.Farrar).

**Wicklow** One: Juvenile, Kilcoole, 14th to 15th September, photographed (A.G.Kelly *et al.*).

Very rare on the east coast, the record for Wicklow is only the third for the county, and the tenth for the east coast. Almost 90% of records have occurred between mid-August and mid-October. The November record is only the second for the month, and the latest ever.

### White-rumped Sandpiper

*Calidris fuscicollis* (0; 292; 22)

**Clare** One: Adult, Quilty, 6th to 10th October, photographed (G.Pearson *et al.*).

**Cork** Three: One, Garretstown, 3rd September (B.O'Mahony); One, The Gearagh, 28th September (A.Duggan); One, Baltimore, 11th November (D.O'Sullivan).

**Dublin** Two: One, Rogerstown Estuary, 9th September (Sh.Farrell); Adult, Rogerstown Estuary, 28th to 30th September (Sh.Farrell *et al.*).

**Kerry** Three: One, Blennerville, 24th August (I.Maclean *et al.*); Adult, Reenroe Beach, 7th October, photographed (P.McDaid); One, Baile an Reannaigh, Smerwick Harbour, 9th October, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*).

**Mayo** One: Adult, Belmullet, Mullet Peninsula, 2nd October (D.Suddaby).

**Waterford** One: Adult, The Cunnigar, 4th to 6th August, photographed (M.O'Keefe *et al.*).

**Wexford** Ten: Adult, Rosslare Back Strand, 7th July (P.Kelly); Adult,

Tacumshin Lake, 9th to 17th September, photographed (P.Keating *et al.*); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 22nd September, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); Juvenile, Cahore Marsh, 23rd September (Sh.Farrell); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 29th September, photographed (P.Kelly, C.ten Bohmer); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 13th to 14th October (A.G.Kelly, T.Kilbane, K.Mullarney); Up to four juveniles, Tacumshin Lake, 26th October to 3rd November, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

**Wicklow** One: Adult, Kilcoole, 22nd to 26th August, photographed (R.H.Coombes *et al.*).

**2001 Wicklow** One: Adult, Kilcoole, 20th to 22nd July (P.Hackett), photograph *Birding World* 14: 270.

**2000 Donegal** One: Adult, Rocky Point, 23rd September (A.McGeehan), photograph *Birding World* 13: 348.

**1976 Kerry** Zero: One, Akeragh Lough, 16th to 17th October (*Irish Birds* 1: 81) was present 16th to 17th August not October as published. This was the third best year ever – behind 2011 (34) and 2006 (31). Since the first occurred in 1956, it has been almost annual in occurrence, and only three years (1961, 1962, 1972) were without a record. With an average of 5.5 per year since 1956, and occurrences in most of the coastal counties, this species must be a prime candidate to be the third Nearctic wader to be removed from the rarity list, following Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* and Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Calidris subruficollis*. Almost 43% of the total has occurred at arguably the three best sites for vagrant waders in Ireland – there have been 71 (more than 22% of the total!) at Tacumshin Lake, Wexford, 33 from the Akeragh area, Kerry, and a further 30 at Ballycotton, Cork.

### Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* (0; 12; 1)

**Kerry** One: Adult, Carrahane, 13th August, photographed (D.Farrar). Following the late autumn trio in 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 465), this record, the fifth for August, represents a return to the more normal pattern of early autumn arrivals. Indeed, this is the fourth to be recorded between 7th and 15th August. Although this could theoretically have been a returning bird, it is treated as different, and means that Kerry recorded three of these characterful waders in less than a year!



**Plate 267.** Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*, Carrahane, Co. Kerry, 13th August 2012 (Ciarán Cronin).



**Plate 268.** Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*, Garrettstown, Co. Cork, September 2012 (Graham Clarke).

### Buff-breasted Sandpiper

*Calidris subruficollis* (2; 477; -)

**2009 Cork** One: Juvenile, Ballymacoda, 17th September, photographed (P.Smiddy *et al.*).

This species was removed from consideration by the IRBC from 1st January 2012. However, for completeness, records prior to that date will continue to be published.

### Semipalmated Sandpiper

*Calidris pusilla* (0; 173; 4)

**Cork** Two: Up to two juveniles, Garrettstown, 20th to 22nd September (J.Diggin *et al.*), photographs *Birdwatch* 245: 68, *Wings* 67: 31.

**Kerry** One: Juvenile, Blennerville, 24th September (E.Carty).

**Wexford** One: Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 27th September (J.Sheehan).

In contrast to the incredible influx of 63 in 2011, this year represents an abrupt return to normal – excluding 2011, the annual average since 1980 has been 3.5. Even the geographical spread is normal – these three counties together account for more than two-thirds of the total.

### Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*

(0; 88; 1)

**Cork** One: Juvenile, Rosscarbery, 24th August to 9th September, photographed (E.Dillon-Hooper, P.Dillon-Hooper *et al.*).

A typical record – 71 of the total have occurred between mid-August and end of September, and two-thirds have occurred in the south from Wexford to Kerry, although none have been found in Waterford.

### Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

**Donegal** Two: Two, of which at least one female, Tory Island Ferry, 30th May to 4th June, photographed (R.Vaughan *et al.*).

**Mayo** Eleven: Female, Inishkea Islands, 25th May, photographed (D.Suddaby); Two females, Inishkea Islands, 4th June, photographed (D.Suddaby); A minimum of five, at the site referred to as 'site B' in the 2011 Irish Rare Bird Report (*Irish Birds* 9: 472), 3rd June to 16th July (observers' names withheld); Male and female, Inishkea Islands, 19th June, photographed (D.Suddaby); Female, 10km off Annagh Head, Mullet Peninsula, 25th July (D.Suddaby).

Numbers of this rare and irregular breeding species have increased recently – there have been thirty recorded since 2004. With records likely to have been withheld to protect a potential breeding species, it is probably not useful to try and compare frequency patterns. Indeed, this is the only species in this report for which statistics are not presented for that reason and the difficulty of accounting for birds at breeding colonies over the years.

### Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*

(1; 36; 4)

**Kerry** One: Juvenile, Baile an Reannaigh, Smerwick Harbour, 4th to 16th September (G.Walker *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 67: 32.

**Sligo** One: Juvenile, Silver Falls, Ballysadare, 13th October, photographed (S.Feeney *et al.*).

**Waterford** One: Adult summer, Ballinclammer, Clonea, 5th August (P.Veale).

**Wexford** One: Adult summer, Tacumshin Lake, 11th to 13th May (P.Kelly *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 25: 181.





**Plate 269.** Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, May 2012 (Tom Shevlin).

This series continues an unbroken sequence back to 2004, and contains the first record for Sligo. The total for the year has only been exceeded twice – in 2007, when there were five, and 2011, when seven occurred. Those years were also the two peak years in Britain (BBRC 2013). There has been a dramatic increase in numbers in Ireland since 2004. Between 1978 and 2003, the annual average was 0.42, contrasting with a more than seven-fold increase since then to 3.125. It seems likely that this increase is real as an increase also occurred in Britain, although less dramatically, where the averages for the two periods were 3.35 and 7.125 respectively.

### **Lesser Yellowlegs** *Tringa flavipes* (0; 136; 2)

**Dublin** One: Juvenile, North Bull Island, 7th to 23rd October, photographed (P.Robson *et al.*).

**Kerry** One: Juvenile, Ballinskelligs, 13th to 27th October, photographed (P.McDaid *et al.*).

Although there are records for all months, most records occur between August and October, the typical months for transatlantic vagrancy. Perhaps surprisingly, given its east coast location, the record for Dublin is the tenth for the county.

### **Long-billed Dowitcher**

*Limnodromus scolopaceus* (2; 113; 7)

**Cork** Three: Adult summer, The Gearagh, 18th May (A.Duggan); Juvenile, Lough Beg, 7th October (J.Diggin); Juvenile, Rosscarbery, 9th October (O.Foley).

**Kerry** Zero: First-winter, Fahamore, Castlegregory, from 18th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 469) remained to 16th January.

**Wexford** Four: First-winter, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, 1st to 8th January, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); Two first-winters, The Cull, 14th January to 21st April (K.Grace *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 25: 5; One, Ballyhealy Bay, 2nd February, photographed (T.Murray); First-winter, Bannow Bay, 26th February to 4th May, photographed (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly *et al.*), presumed same as the juvenile there in October 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 469).

Seven in a year is a good total. Only two years have had higher numbers – 2005 (11) and 1987 (10). This was one of the few Nearctic waders to be recorded in good numbers in a year generally very quiet for that group. However, it seems likely that the Wexford records, and possibly the spring record in Cork, may have arrived along with the record breaking influx of Nearctic waders in autumn 2011, and remained undetected until 2012. See also Appendix 6 for a correction to the 2011 IRBR.



**Plate 270.** Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*, North Bull Island, Co. Dublin, 14th October 2012 (Mark Carmody).

## Short-billed/Long-billed Dowitcher

*Limnodromus griseus/scolopaceus* (0; 41; 1)

**Kerry** One: One, Blennerville, 24th August (I.Maclean).

This is only the third unidentified Dowitcher to appear in these reports since 1985. Although identification of these two sister taxa is well understood (e.g. Kaufman 1990, O'Brien *et al.* 2006, Svensson *et al.* 2009), distant and silent Dowitchers are probably safest left unidentified.

## Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

(0; 16; 1)

**Waterford** One: Adult, Ballyneety, Dungarvan, 29th June (M.Cowming *et al.*), photographs *Wings* 66: 28.

This is the tenth for the south coast, but the first for Waterford, following six in Wexford and three in Cork. Although recorded every month between April and October, there is a distinct mid-summer peak, with ten of the total recorded in June and July. This timing is consistent with late-June post-breeding dispersal from Danish and German breeding populations (Cramp 1985).

## White-winged Black Tern

*Chlidonias leucopterus* (9; 85; 1)

**Cork** One: Adult, Garrettstown, 4th August (O.Foley).

**2005 Cork** One: First-winter, Garryvoe, 21st October (P.Smiddy).

There have been records every month from May to November, albeit small numbers in October, and only one in November. Peak time is early autumn - 19 have occurred in August, and 27 in September.

## Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri* (0; 35; 0)

**Galway** Zero: Adult, Newtownlynch Pier, from 6th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 474), remained to 23rd February; Adult, Nimmo's Pier and Newtownlynch Pier, 29th October to 28th March 2013 (M.Pisula *et al.*), photograph *Birdwatch* 248: 66, presumed returning.



**Plate 271.** Atlantic Gull *Larus michahellis atlantis*, Owenahincha, Co. Cork, 9th September 2012 (Ciarán Cronin).

**Louth** Zero: Adult, Soldiers Point, 29th August to 13th October (G.O'Neill *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 25: 361, presumed returning.

**Wexford** Zero: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 12th May to 30th June, photographed (K.Grace *et al.*), presumed returning.

The most recent record of this species that was considered a new bird was in 2008. As would be expected, Western Palearctic records have largely been confined to the western seaboard. In addition to the Irish records, there have been 20 in Britain, one in Iceland (as far back as 1959), three in Portugal and a similar number on the Azores, three in Spain and six in France. Away from the western seaboard, there have been four in The Netherlands and single records in both Belgium and Sweden.

## Bonaparte's Gull

*Chroicocephalus philadelphia* (1; 63; 3)

**Cork** One: First-winter, Lough Mahon, 21st January (O.Foley).

**Dublin** One: Adult, Dun Laoghaire, 5th February (C.MacLochlainn).

**Wexford** One: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 25th February (T.Kilbane *et al.*).

**2007 Kerry** Minus one: Adult, Tralee, 6th March (*Irish Birds* 8: 596) was present from 18th December 2006 and had previously been published (*Irish Birds* 8: 403).

The 2012 distribution was the opposite of the long term geographic split which has seen twice as many in the west compared to the east.

## Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan* (0; 16; 1)

**Meath** One: First-summer, Gormanston, 16th August (P.Kelly).

This is the first since the influx of nine in 2005/2006 that was associated with Hurricane Wilma in October 2005. There is an unusual east coast bias to records – eleven (almost two-thirds) of the total have occurred there, and all east coast counties have had records. See also *Irish Birds* 9: 490 for details of a correction to the statistics.

## Atlantic Gull *Larus michahellis atlantis* (0; 8; 2)

Birds showing characters of the Atlantic island form, in particular, the somewhat more distinctive Azorean population.

**Cork** Two: Sub-adult, Rosscarbery and Owenahincha, 13th August to 9th September (R.O'Driscoll *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 25: 360; Third calendar-year, Ring, Clonakilty, 26th August, photographed (M.O'Keefe).

**2010 Kerry** One: Adult, Blennerville and Carrahane, 8th August to 30th September, photographed (E.Carty *et al.*).

This is the highest annual total for this taxon since three occurred in 2005, although the geographical distribution was far wider that year, with records in Kerry, Dublin and Belfast. These, and previous accepted records, have all shown features consistent with the currently understood identification characteristics of the population. These include, dark head streaking – almost causing a hooded effect, a pale iris, dark mantle and upperwings, dark front tarsi ('shin pads'), and displaying an appropriate wing moult for the time of year. Nonetheless,

further study is still required in order to establish reliable means of identifying putative out-of-range vagrants resembling Azorean *atlantis*. In view of continuing uncertainties, including individuals occurring along the western seaboard of Spain not considered to be *atlantis*, these, and other records of 'Atlantic Gull' should be considered provisional, pending further study.

### Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* (0; 12; 0)

**2007 Derry** One: Third-winter, Culmore Tip, 31st January (*NIBR* 18: 80).

This is the third for Culmore Tip, following adults there in February 1999 and from December 2002 to January 2003.

### American Herring Gull

*Larus smithsonianus* (0; 90; 1)

**Dublin** One: First-winter, Dublin Port, 30th January (A.Lauder).

Irish Sea records are very rare away from a hotspot around Belfast, where twelve have been found since 1990. Including the 2012 record above, there have only been three in Dublin and one in Louth, and these are the only records between Belfast and Waterford City.

### Kumlien's Gull

*Larus glaucooides kumlieni* (0; 151; 39)

**Clare** One: First-winter, Kilbaha and Gull Island, Loop Head, 15th to 25th February, photographed (R.Bonser *et al.*).

**Cork** Four: First-winter, Youghal Dump, 3rd January to 18th February, photographed (H.Hussey *et al.*), also seen in Waterford; Presumed same, Youghal Dump, 3rd March (O.Foley) and 13th April (P.Moore); First-winter, Ballycotton, 8th February, photographed (P.Moore *et al.*); A different first-winter, Ballycotton, 8th to 9th February (P.Moore *et al.*); Fourth-winter, Cobh, 26th December to 3rd April 2013, photographed (G.Clarke *et al.*).

**Donegal** Nineteen: Thirteen at Killybegs as follows: Adult, from 20th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 473) remained to 28th February 2012; Up to two more adults, 8th January to 4th March, photographed (M.Callaghan, D.Charles); First-winter, from 28th December 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 473) remained to 8th January; Up to two more first-winters, 8th January to 4th March (M.Callaghan, D.Charles); Two second-winters, 8th January (D.Charles), photograph *Birding World* 25: 7; Up to six third-winters, 8th January to 11th March, photographed (M.Callaghan, D.Charles); Fourth-winter, 22nd to 28th January (D.Breen *et al.*); Six at locations other than Killybegs, as follows: Second-winter, Fanad Head, 1st January, photographed (W.Farrelly); Third-winter, Fanad Head, 10th March, photographed (M.Callaghan, D.Charles); One, St. Johns Point, 22nd March (R.Wheeldon); Adult, Blanket Nook, 31st March to 13th April (C.Ingram); Adult, Fanad Head, 6th April (M.Callaghan, D.Charles); Adult, Big Isle, Lough Swilly, 3rd November (N.Warnock).

**Galway** Three: Second-winter, Curhownagh, Errislanan, 5th to 27th January, photographed (D.Breen); Third-winter, Ross Beach, 22nd February, photographed (D.Breen); A different third-winter, Ross Beach, 22nd to 29th February, photographed (D.Breen).

**Kerry** Six: Fourth-winter, Black Rock Strand, 5th January, photographed (D.Farrar); Adult, Reenard Point, 16th February to 30th March, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*); Second-winter, Reenard Point, 17th February (R.Bonser *et al.*); Adult, Knightstown, Valentia Island, 22nd February to 11th March, photographed (D.Farrar); First-winter, Cashen Estuary, 27th February, photographed (D.Farrar); Second-winter, Cashen Estuary, 1st March, photographed (D.Farrar).

**Mayo** Four: Second-winter, Killala, 21st January, photographed (D.Breen, M.Davis); Second-winter, Annagh Marsh, Mullet Peninsula, 22nd to 23rd February (M.Reilly *et al.*); A different second-winter, Annagh Marsh, Mullet Peninsula, 28th February to 6th April, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*); Third-winter, Belderra Strand, Mullet Peninsula, 7th April, photographed (V.Caschera *et al.*).

**Waterford** Zero: First-winter, Tinnabina Pier, 12th to 15th January, photographed (M.Cowming, C.Flynn *et al.*), previously seen in Cork.

**Wexford** One: Near adult, Tacumshin Lake, 29th September (M.Boyle, A.McMillan *et al.*).

**Wicklow** One: Adult, Bray, 21st February to 10th March, photographed (P.Smith).

This is the largest ever annual total, eclipsing the previous record, set in 2007, by twelve, and includes the first records for both Clare and Waterford. There were 186 between 1988 and 2012, at an annual average of over seven. Numbers have fluctuated wildly within that time - most years have had fewer than six, and there were none in 2001. To balance that, there have been six years with ten or more, and these years make up more than half of the overall total, with 122 recorded.

### Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* (55; 23; 1)

**Donegal** One: Male, Arranmore Island, 18th July to 10th September, photographed (M.Glynn *et al.*).

**Mayo** Zero: Adult female, Ballycastle and Corvoderry, Bellacorick, from 2nd March 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 476) remained to 13th February, also seen Termon, Mullet Peninsula, 14th to 27th July, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

All that remains now is for the Donegal male to meet the Mayo female! With records in nine out of the last ten years, and relatively long staying birds in many of those years, it is difficult to convey the mythical status that this species had achieved during the period from 1968 to 1992. Older readers will remember the excitement caused by the short staying bird in Mayo in 1992, and the eventual long stay of the 1993 bird on Arranmore in Donegal, which, although elusive at times, allowed many birders to see this magnificent species in Ireland.

### Alpine Swift *Apus melba* (7; 67; 2)

**Clare** One: One, Fanore, 24th March (O.Foley).

**Wexford** One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 28th June (P.Phillips *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 66: 28.

**1981 Antrim** One: One, Torr Head, 7th June (*NIBR* 1981: 37).

This species shows a strong easterly bias to its distribution in Ireland, and the record for Clare is only the second for the county. Moreover, there have only been six records for the



**Plate 272.** Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus*, Arranmore, Co. Donegal, 12th July 2012 (Mike Glynn).

west coast, the remaining four all from Kerry. See also Appendix 6 for details of a correction to the statistics.

**Belted Kingfisher** *Megaceryle alcyon* (0; 3; 1)

**Galway** One: First-winter male, Lough Fee and Kylemore Abbey, 5th to 6th October (G.O'Donnell *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 25: 404 & 520, *Birdwatch* 245: 62, *British Birds* 105: 758, *Wings* 68: 25.

This is the fourth Irish record of the appropriately named 'Mega'-*ceryle*, of which two of the previous three were unfortunately shot. In a Western Palearctic context, there have been six in the Azores, five in Iceland, three in Britain and one in Holland. For a lucky few, this bird was the consolation prize for the departure of the Inishmore Eastern Kingbird, but what a magnificent consolation!

**Bee-eater** *Merops apiaster* (21; 38; 1)

**Waterford** One: One, Ram Head, 21st May, photographed (A.D.Malcolm *et al.*).

Following hot on the heels of the first record for Waterford in 2011, the second, found by the same observer, at the same location, less than a year later! Although they have occurred every month between April and November, there is a very strong spring peak. The peak month is May, with 28 recorded, and April and June are joint second, with seven each.

**Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla* (9; 256; 5)

**Cork** Five: One, Mizen Head, 9th September (A.Duggan); One, Cape Clear Island, 9th September (M.Leonard); One, Cape Clear Island, 10th October (P.Kelly); One, Lissagriffin, 20th October (P.Wolstenholme); One, Cape Clear Island, 22nd October (E.O'Donnell).



**Plate 273.** Alpine Swift *Apus melba*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, 28th June 2012 (Peter Phillips).

Five is a significantly lower total than the annual average of 10.5 since the turn of the century, but only slightly lower than the annual average of about 6.5 since 1982. Occurrences in September and October are the norm – 83% of the total has occurred in those two months. Cape Clear Bird Observatory, with 86, accounts for over 30% of the total. See also Appendix 6 for details of a correction to the statistics.

**Eastern Kingbird** *Tyrannus tyrannus* (0; 0; 1)

**Galway** One: First-winter, Kilmurvey, Inishmore, 5th October (H.Delaney *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 25: 430, 431 & 520, *Birdwatch* 245: 63, *British Birds* 105: 698, *Dutch Birding* 34: 401, *Wings* 68: 24 (Delaney 2012).



**Plate 274.** Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus*, Inishmore, Co. Galway, 5th October 2012 (Dermot Breen).

This long distance migrant was one of a group of six Nearctic passerines or near-passerines strongly predicted for Western Palearctic vagrancy by Robbins (1980), alongside Grey Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis*, Connecticut Warbler *Oporornis agilis*, Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*, Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* and Common Grackle *Quiscalus quiscula*. Despite this, it seems not to have been particularly high on Irish birders' radars – a list of 69 putative additions to the Irish list by subscribers to *Irish Birding News* in 1990 (and another 10 'dark-horse' predictions by the author) omitted this species entirely! (Grace 1990). This changed forever following Hugh Delaney's extraordinary find, and all except the chosen few who managed to get to Inishmore 'on-the-day' will be fervently praying for a repeat.

### **Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus* (62; 147; 2)

**Clare** One: Female or immature, Loop Head, 3rd June (T.Mee).

**Cork** One: Female or immature, Cape Clear Island, 4th to 6th May, photographed (P.Phillips *et al.*).

Two distinctly different pedigrees involved in these records! Cape Clear Island recorded its first in 1962, and has since amassed a total of 60. The Clare record, in contrast, is the first there in at least 150 years, and only the third county record – two were shot at Roxton, near Corofin, 'years before 1862', and 'a small flock' was seen near Ennis in 1847 (Ussher & Warren 1900).

### **Red-backed Shrike** *Lanius collurio* (7; 154; 8)

**Cork** Four: Female, Mizen Head, 1st May (D.Ballard); Female, Cape Clear Island, 27th May, photographed (G.Clarke); Juvenile, Firkeel, 1st to 2nd October (K.Grace); One, Three Castles Head, 16th to 25th October (D.Ballard).

**Dublin** One: Male, Sutton, 26th May (S.A.O'Loaire).



**Plate 275.** Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*, Cape Clear Island, Co. Cork, 5th May 2012 (Peter Phillips).

**Wexford** Three: Male, Tacumshin Lake, 25th May, photographed (V.Caschera *et al.*); Male, Great Saltee Island, 27th May (T.Shevlin); Juvenile, Hook Head, 18th to 19th August, photographed (K.Grace *et al.*).

Autumn records are about six times more common than spring ones, and the total of five spring birds in this series is a record for the season. Although there have been eight on three previous occasions (1976, 1989, 2006), this total was only exceeded in 1983, when there were ten.

### **Woodchat Shrike** *Lanius senator* (2; 90; 4)

**Cork** One: Male, Sherkin Island, 30th May to 9th June (J.Sherwin *et al.*).

**Galway** One: Juvenile, Kilmurvey, Inishmore, 10th to 20th October (N.Warnock *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 25: 415.

**Waterford** One: First-summer male, Ardmore Head, 24th March, photographed (M.Cowming, C.Flynn, D.Weldon *et al.*).

**Wexford** One: Adult, Camsore Point, 18th to 19th May, photographed (C.Foley *et al.*).

The Galway record is the first for the county, and only the second between Kerry and Donegal, following one in Kerry in 2011. The Waterford record is one of the earliest spring records – only two exceptionally early records, on 17th and 18th March 1990 in Dublin and Waterford respectively, were earlier.

### **Bearded Tit** *Panurus biarmicus* (0; 71; 12)

**Wexford** Twelve: The group of 22 at Tacumshin Lake, from 3rd July 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 478) remained to 31st May 2013, and peaked at 24 on 29th October (N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh *et al.*); Three males and three females, Ring Marsh, 19th February to 20th April 2013, photographed (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly *et al.*); Two males and two females, South Slob, 17th March to 11th August, photographed (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly, M.Noonan).

**1979 Wicklow** Zero: The pair that bred successfully (with some non



**Plate 276.** Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, 25th May 2012 (Tom Shevlin).



**Plate 277.** Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*, Carnsore Point, Co. Wexford, May 2012 (Tom Shevlin).



**Plate 278.** Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*, Inishmore, Co. Galway, October 2012 (Dermot Breen).

breeding birds also present) in an un-named county and location (*Irish Birds* 1: 577) were at Broad Lough, from at least 14th April to 22nd July. This series of records provides some evidence of dispersal from Tacumshin Lake to nearby sites. Successful colonisation, if it is to happen, will probably depend on a wider dispersal, and a series of mild winters to allow winter survival. Suitable habitat, some of which was used in the attempt at colonisation in the 1970s and 1980s, certainly exists in nearby counties. This is the first time that statistics have been presented for this species, and it should be stressed that they are minimum figures. Two in Louth, in 1966 were the first recorded in Ireland (*IBR* 14: 44). This was followed by a group of eight on Cape Clear Island, Cork, in 1972, and that county hosted a minimum of a further six between 1979 and 1982, at Ballycotton and Ballymacoda. Four were recorded in Wicklow, at Kilcoole and Greystones, in 1974, and at least three occurred at Broad Lough between 1975 and 1977. In addition, between 1979 and 1985, the population there peaked at 11 pairs, in 1983, and this is treated as a further 22 birds, thought to be different from the occurrences between 1975 and 1977. In addition 26 occurred in Wexford prior to 2012.

## Short-toed Lark

*Calandrella brachydactyla* (1; 70; 3)

**Cork** One: One, Cape Clear Island, 3rd June (S.Wing).

**Wexford** Two: One, The Cull, 23rd to 24th June (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly *et al.*), photograph *Birdwatch* 242: 86; One, Tacumshin Lake, 29th September (P.Kelly, C.ten Bohmer).

Prior to 2012 there had only been four June records, all of which had occurred during the first five days, and the record at The Cull is by far the latest for the month. However, even this mid-summer record is not without precedent as one was found in mid-July 2003 at nearby Tacumshin Lake.

## Red-rumped Swallow

*Cecropis daurica* (0; 43; 4)

**Cork** One: One, Cape Clear Island, 5th to 6th May, photographed (P.Phillips *et al.*).

**Mayo** One: One, Termon, Mullet Peninsula, 26th May (D.Suddaby).

**Wexford** Two: One, Tacumshin Village, 13th May (K.Finch); One, Tacumshin Lake, 17th to 23rd May, photographed (D.O'Sullivan *et al.*). A good year – the total has only been exceeded twice, in 2007 and 2011, both with six, and the series includes the first for Mayo. With these four, May now becomes the peak month, with 14, ahead of April, which has 12. Numbers have increased recently, and over half of the total has occurred since 2007. A similar increase has also been noticed in Germany, with increasing numbers since 2000 being attributed to a northward expansion of Spanish and French breeding populations (Kriegs *et al.* 2012).



**Plate 279.** Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*, Cape Clear Island, Co. Cork, May 2012 (Peter Phillips).

## Greenish Warbler

*Phylloscopus trochiloides* (0; 35; 2)

**Cork** Two: One, Cape Clear Island, 30th May (S.Wing); One, Three Castles Head, 17th October (D.Ballard).

The May record is the earliest ever, and only the third in spring. It is also the first spring record from the west, the previous two being in Wexford and Dublin. Records show a strong September peak, and the October record is at the later end of the scale – only one has been found later, in Cork on 19th October 1993.

## Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

(0; 37; 1)

**Cork** One: One, Knockadoon Head, 27th October (O.Foley).

This diminutive waif tends towards short stays, with exactly half of the records being one-day-birds, and only one remaining longer than a week. See also Appendix 6 for details of a correction to the statistics.

## Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* (0; 9; 1)

**Galway** One: One, Onaght, Inishmore, 19th to 24th October, photographed (H.Delaney *et al.*).

The first for Galway and the first away from the south coast since the species was added to the Irish list, in Limerick, in December 1970 (*IBR* 18: 48-49). Half have been found between 14th and 22nd October.





**Plate 280.** Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*, Inishmore, Co. Galway, October 2012 (Dermot Breen).



**Plate 281.** Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*, Cabinteely, Co. Dublin, 1st April 2012 (Dick Coombes).

## Siberian Chiffchaff

*Phylloscopus collybita tristis* (2; 27; 2)

**Dublin** One: One, Clonkeen Park, Deansgrange, 29th March to 23rd April, photographed (H.Delaney *et al.*).

**Waterford** One: First-summer, Brownstown Head, 25th March to 1st April, photographed, sound recorded, trapped and ringed (P.Archer *et al.*) (Collinson *et al.* 2013).

Statistics are presented for the first time for this taxon. They should be treated with caution as they include all published *tristis* records, and therefore include 18 sight records between 1968 and 1982, at a time when the intricacies of identification of this taxon were perhaps not fully appreciated.

Following concerns about field identification of this taxon, particularly regarding potential confusion with *P.c.abietinus*, the IRBC upgraded it to an Appendix 1 species with effect from 1st January 2010 (see [www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce47.php](http://www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce47.php)). However, de Knijff *et al.* (2012) presented very significant findings regarding the status and identification of *tristis* and *abietinus* Chiffchaffs in The Netherlands. A co-ordinated study collected samples from about 40 Chiffchaffs suspected on morphological grounds not to be of the nominate subspecies (suspected *abietinus* in most cases, suspected *tristis* in the case of a few), for subsequent DNA analysis. The rather surprising result was that none of the samples matched *abietinus*, while virtually all matched *tristis*. The conclusion is that *tristis* is a scarce but regular migrant in The Netherlands, much more common than the number of accepted records up to this time indicated. Conversely, *abietinus* appears to be rare, and it is suspected that the numerous birds identified as *'abietinus'* because they did not show features considered necessary for them to be claimed as *tristis*, probably were

mostly (or possibly all) *tristis*. Clearly there is further work to be done on these intriguing taxa, but it seems quite likely that *tristis* is a scarce but regular migrant in Ireland too, and if we allow for a little more variation in their appearance than we have done in the past, we may come to the conclusion that vocalisation evidence is not as essential for safe identification as has been advocated in the past, especially when claims are backed up with good photographic evidence.

The Waterford bird was trapped, and feathers that the bird shed while being ringed were sent to Aberdeen University for analysis by Dr. Martin Collinson. The results were subsequently detailed in Collinson *et al.* (2013) covering this and two recent birds in Britain. The analysis showed conclusively that the bird was indeed a *tristis*, with cytb sequences almost identical (1 to 4 base pairs difference of around 1000 base pairs sequenced, or a 0.1% to 0.4% divergence) to a *tristis* collected at the Mirnoye Biological Station on the banks of the River Yenisei, Siberia, and therefore consistent with origins in the core range of the taxon. In comparison, sequences from *abietinus* and nominate *collybita* are typically 20-30 base pairs (2-3%) divergent from the Brownstown bird. Thus, this is the first Irish record of a *tristis* to be confirmed as such via DNA sampling, and supported by morphology and vocalizations.

## Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria* (6; 166; 8)

**Cork** Four: One, Cape Clear Island, 6th to 12th October, photographed (P.Kelly); One, Ballynacarriga, West Beara, 7th October (K.Grace); One, Firkeel, 9th to 14th October (K.Grace, A.A.K.Lancaster); One, Mizen Head, 17th to 20th October (D.Ballard *et al.*).

**Donegal** Two: One, Tory Island, 14th to 16th October, photographed (J.F.Dowdall, P.Kelly, T.Shevlin); One, Arranmore Island, 2nd September (A.McMillan).



**Plate 282.** Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*, Tory Island, Co. Donegal, October 2012 (Peter Phillips).

**Galway** One: One, Inishbofin, 6th to 8th October, photographed (A.McGeehan *et al.*).

**Wexford** One: One, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, 13th October (A.Walsh).

Although considerably lower than totals for the previous two years (19 and 17 respectively), prior to 2000 there had never been more than six in a year. Almost half of all records (88 of 180) have occurred during a series of very good years since 2000. The four counties above account for over 86% of the total, with 155 between them.

### **Subalpine Warbler** *Sylvia cantillans* (2; 49; 0)

**2011 Cork** One: Juvenile, Old Head of Kinsale, 26th October, photographed (C.Cronin).

This individual showed some characteristics suggestive of Eastern Subalpine Warbler *S.c.albistriata* – pale underparts, pale, sandy upperparts and a weak eye-ring. Unfortunately, it was not heard to call, and call is considered essential for a definitive identification of a juvenile. This individual is therefore accepted only to species level. It is the latest record ever for Ireland, by about two weeks, although whether this

supports an eastern source or not is open to speculation as there have been no definitive *albistriata* later than the beginning of September in Britain (Hudson *et al.* 2010, Hudson *et al.* 2011, Hudson *et al.* 2012, Slack 2009).

### **Savi's Warbler** *Locustella luscinioides* (0; 9; 1)

**Wexford** One: Male, Tacumshin Lake, 25th to 30th June, sound recorded (A.G.Kelly, L.Lambert, K.Mullarney *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 66: 27.

The first since one at the same location, also in song, in July 1996. All Irish records have been located by their distinctive, buzzing song, between May and July. This is similar to the situation in Britain, where most have been between April and July, and records outside this time are rare (Hudson *et al.* 2010).

### **Blyth's Reed Warbler**

*Acrocephalus dumetorum* (0; 6; 2)

**Donegal** One: One, Tory Island, 8th October, photographed (R.Vaughan *et al.*).



**Plate 283.** Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*, Inishbofin, Co. Galway, October 2012 (Anthony McGeehan).

**Galway** One: One, Inishbofin, 5th to 7th October, photographed (A.McGeehan *et al.*).

These two are the first for their respective counties. A clear pattern has emerged since the first occurred as recently as 2006 – all records so far have been on the west coast and all have occurred between 20th September and 26th October. The 2012 records are almost the earliest on record – only one in Kerry, in September 2011 was earlier. Conventional wisdom suggests that the recent surge in records in Ireland and Britain



**Plate 284.** Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, July 2012 (Mark Carmody).

is a result of a westward range expansion in Europe. However, Slack (2009) points out that most British (and, by extension, Irish) records occur later than the main departure from the western part of the breeding range, which occurs in July and August, and goes on to suggest that it is likely that many autumn birds are from farther east.

### **Cedar Waxwing** *Bombycilla cedrorum* (0; 1; 1)

**Mayo** One: First-winter, Termon, Mullet Peninsula, 10th November (D.Suddaby).

This is the sixth accepted record for the Western Palearctic, where, in addition to the Irish records, there are also two from both Iceland and Britain. With two October records (Ireland and Iceland), and now a November one, there is a bias towards autumn records. However, there have also been records in April (Iceland), February to March (England) and June (Scotland). Irish observers will hope that the Irish trend of short-staying birds will be broken soon!

### **Rose-coloured Starling** *Pastor roseus* (41; 93; 9)

**Clare** One: Adult, Spanish Point, 13th June (P.Troake).

**Cork** Two: Adult, Mizen Head and Lissagriffin, 24th to 28th June (D.Ballard); Juvenile, Knockadoon Head, 28th October (P.Connaughton).

**Donegal** Two: Adult, Malin Beg, 6th July (C.Ingram); Juvenile, Arranmore Island, 3rd October, photographed (R.Vaughan *et al.*).

**Kerry** One: Adult, Great Skellig, 15th June (A.Walsh).

**Louth** One: Adult, Drogheda, 28th May (B.Sheils).

**Waterford** One: Adult, Seapark, Abbeyside, Dungarvan, 19th to 24th July, photographed (J.A.Power *et al.*).

**Wicklow** One: Adult, Wicklow Head, 18th June to 4th July, photographed (C.B.Stockdale *et al.*).

**1856 Dublin** Minus one: One, Ballsbridge, undated (Ussher & Warren 1900) was in 1854, see below.

**1854 Dublin** One: Adult male, shot, Ballsbridge, 20th July (Irby 1854). This is the joint second best year on record, following a similar sized influx in 2011. However, these influxes were different in nature, 2012 comprising largely summer adults, while 2011 comprised largely autumn juveniles. The correction to the nineteenth century record is a result of an ongoing project to examine the historical record and address any statistical or other inaccuracies that are found. See also Appendix 6 for details of a correction to the statistics.

### **Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica* (0; 39; 1)

**Donegal** One: Male, Tory Island, 20th to 22nd May, photographed (T.Campbell, C.Ingram, R.Murray, R.Smith *et al.*).

**Waterford** Zero: First-winter male, Clonea, Ballinclamper, from 20th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 483) remained to 8th January.

The presumed attempt to overwinter might seem somewhat unusual for a migratory species, but the nominate subspecies winters in the Mediterranean region, as close to Ireland as



**Plate 285.** Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*, Tory Island, Co. Donegal, May 2012 (Peter Phillips).



**Plate 286.** Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*, Galley Head, Co. Cork, 26th March 2012 (Tom Shevlin).

Spain (Cramp 1988). There has been a recent increase, with occurrences in eight of 13 years since 2000, but only in four of the previous 13. Northern records are disproportionately more common in spring – four of eleven spring records are from the northern half of the island, whereas the area only accounts for two of 29 autumn records. The Tory Island bird is the second for Donegal, and the second spring record there, following a red-spotted male on Arranmore Island in May 1996.

**Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus*  
(0; 2; 1)

**Cork** One: One, Galley Head, 26th March (C.Cronin *et al.*), photographs *Birdwatch* 239: 73, *Wings* 65: 26.

Despite departing overnight (like the previous two), this individual was found early enough in the day and, crucially, on the mainland, allowing those not fortunate enough to get to Dursey Island or Cape Clear Island for either of the previous two a good opportunity to finally connect with this gem in Ireland. Although not unprecedented, spring records are very rare in Britain – spring birds account for only five of the total of 112 there.



**Plate 287.** Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus*, South Slob, Co. Wexford, March 2012 (Paul Kelly).

**Collared Flycatcher** *Ficedula albicollis*  
(0; 0; 1)

**Donegal** One: Female, Tory Island, 29th May (R.Vaughan *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 25: 192, *Birdwatch* 241: 71, *Wings* 66: 26 (Vaughan 2012, Vaughan 2013).

A fabulous find, which, unfortunately, like many of the best birds of the year, did not remain long enough to be appreciated by a wider audience. There was a lot of discussion on-line regarding the age and sex of this bird (see [www.surfbirds.com/forum/showthread.php?10922-Tory-island-flycatcher](http://www.surfbirds.com/forum/showthread.php?10922-Tory-island-flycatcher)). The consensus is that this bird was a female, in at least its third calendar-year, based on the extent of the primary patch, and the patterns of the tertials and greater coverts. A beautifully illustrated account was published in the 2012 Tory Island Bird Report (Vaughan 2013).

**Siberian Stonechat** *Saxicola maurus* (0; 7; 1)

**Wexford** One: Female, South Slob, 5th to 20th March (T.Murray *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 25: 95, *Birdwatch* 239: 72, *British Birds* 105: 233.

Although the species was added to the Irish list based on the occurrence of one on Great Saltee Island, in October 1977, this is the first in Wexford since then – all other records have been in Cork. This is the first spring record for Ireland. The

early date suggests that it is unlikely to have been a new arrival, as they do not return to their Siberian breeding areas until mid-April (Cramp 1988), and the earliest spring migrant recorded in Britain was at the end of that month (Slack 2009). Although successful wintering has not yet been proven in Britain, a handful have been seen through to early February (Slack 2009), so it seems plausible that this individual may have arrived in Ireland the previous autumn and wintered on the South Slob during the mild winter – the nearby Johnstown Castle weather station recorded only 63% of average rainfall and temperatures 0.8 degrees above average for winter 2011/2012 (Met Éireann 2012).

**Blue-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla flava flava*  
(0; 61; 1)

**Galway** One: Male, Inishbofin, 25th to 27th August, photographed (A.McGeehan).

**2008 Cork** Zero: Adult and juvenile, Cape Clear Island, 11th to 14th October (*Irish Birds* 9: 99), were also present 10th October.

**1963 Antrim** Zero: Male, Bog Meadows, Belfast, 22nd to 23rd August (Ruttledge 1966).

This taxon is very rare on the west coast – this is only the second record for Galway, following one there in 2011. The 1963 Antrim record was published in Ruttledge (1966) but

never in an Irish Bird Report, although included in the statistics for the taxon in *Checklist of the Birds of Ireland* (IRBC 1998). See also Appendix 6 for a correction to the statistics.

### **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi* (2; 96; 7)

**Cork** Four: One, Shanagarry, Ballycotton, 19th October (D.O'Sullivan); One, Cape Clear Island, 24th October (E.O'Donnell); One, Galley Head, 25th October, photographed (C.Barton, C.Cronin); One, Tillickafinna, Dursey Island, 16th November (D.A.Scott).

**Donegal** One: One, Tory Island, 14th to 18th October (J.F.Dowdall, P.Kelly, T.Shevlin).

**Dublin** One: One, Balbriggan, 21st October (M.Stewart).

**Wexford** One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 16th November (R.Vaughan). This is the best year since the record influx of 13 in 1994 and, with 1988, is the joint second best year on record. Although the first two for Ireland were found in Dublin, the 2012 record is only the third for the county and the first in almost exactly 101 years – one was caught at Kilbarrack on 23rd October 1911. Although the geographic spread is somewhat wider than normal, the temporal pattern from late October to November is typical.

### **Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni* (0; 7; 1)

**Galway** One: One, Kilmurvey, Inishmore, 22nd to 29th October, photographed (H.Delaney *et al.*).

The final 'mega' of the Inishmore purple patch, which was (inevitably!) an addition to the Galway list, and the first occurrence of this species away from the south coast. The timing was typical – five of the previous six were also found in October. The sole exception was one in Cobh, County Cork,



**Plate 288.** Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*, Inishmore, Co. Galway, October 2012 (Dick Coombes).

in January 1991. The first was found in Wexford in 1978, and the remaining records were all in Cork, clustered between 1990 and 1993. On a technicality, there have been no records on the mainland, although those driving to Cobh could be forgiven for forgetting that it is situated on Great Island!

### **Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus* (0; 48; 3)

**Cork** Two: One, Cape Clear Island, 14th October (M.Hanafin); One, Ballycotton, 21st October (O.Foley).

**Wexford** One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 2nd November (Sh.Farrell).

These two counties account for over 80% (42) of the records. Indeed, between them, the three locations graced this year (which are certainly among the best locations for vagrant birds on this island) account for over one-third of the total – ten have been found on Cape Clear Island, five at Ballycotton, and four at Tacumshin Lake.

### **Scandinavian Rock Pipit**

*Anthus petrosus littoralis* (0; 49; 5)

**Cork** One: One, Sherkin Island, 23rd March (J.Wyllie).

**Kerry** Two: One, Black Rock Strand, 13th February, photographed (D.O'Connor); One, Valentia Island, 31st March, photographed (P.McDaid).

**Mayo** Two: Two, Downpatrick Head, 27th April (J.Furphy).

Continuing a run of good years, this is the fourth consecutive year during which at least five occurred. Since 1996, when the second for Ireland was found, they have been almost annual, only 1999 and 2002 being without records. It seems likely that this taxon has always occurred and that increased observer awareness is responsible for recent occurrences.

### **Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta* (2; 134; 3)

**Cork** One: One, Garrettstown, 4th November (O.Foley); One, Pilmore Strand, 7th November to 15th December (P.Moore *et al.*), presumed returning.

**Wexford** Two: Up to two, Tacumshin Lake, from 6th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 486) remained to 26th February; Up to two, The Cull, 13th January to 15th March, photographed (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 3rd November to 23rd February 2013 (P.Kelly), presumed returning.

A very quiet year by recent standards – this is the lowest number of new birds since 2002, when none occurred. Within this series though, the recent run of occurrences in Cork continues - there have now been 22, all since November 2007. Although there is still a bias towards the east (see *Irish Birds* 9: 277), western counties now account for over 26% of records compared to less than 5% until 2007.

### **Buff-bellied Pipit** *Anthus rubescens* (0; 18; 1)

**Kerry** One: One, Baile an Reannaigh, Smerwick Harbour, 28th September to 13th October, photographed (D.Farrar *et al.*).

Given that this species has been annual since 2007, it is somewhat surprising that this is the first for Kerry. This is the

earliest record (albeit by only three days) and the first for September. The majority have been found during October, but there have also been six records in November, and one in December.

## Mealy Redpoll

*Carduelis flammæ flammæ* (21; 97; 0)

**2009 Limerick** One: One, Castletroy, 22nd February, photographed (T.Tarpey).

**2007 Mayo** Four: Four, Tarmon, Mullet Peninsula, 30th October to 4th November (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

Identification of the Redpoll complex is far from straightforward. Many Mealy Redpoll claims in Ireland are from late winter and early spring, a time when our resident birds are most worn. These can look surprisingly pale and can therefore resemble *C.f.flammæ*. Many late winter or early spring birds in northern climes are problematic and cannot be assigned to race with certainty, even in the hand! Indeed, Svensson (1992) has commented that plumage differences between *cabaret* and *flammæ* are generally rather slight and not always diagnostic when holding a single bird in the hand. Making a confident determination, often based on just a single photograph, is a very difficult task, especially of birds at that time of year, hence many records must be considered 'not proven'.

## Greenland/Iceland Redpoll

*Carduelis flammæ rostrata/islandica* (13; 45; 0)

**2010 Kerry** One: One, Sleah Head, 15th September, photographed (A.Matthews).

**2008 Donegal** Two: Two, Malin Head, 27th September (D.Allen, C.Mellon).

**2007 Mayo** Five: One, Erris Head, Mullet Peninsula, 8th October (D.Suddaby); One, Tarmon, Mullet Peninsula, 17th October (D.Suddaby); Three, Blacksod, Mullet Peninsula, 3rd November (D.Suddaby).

Individuals from the north-western populations of Redpoll are perhaps the most distinctive of the complex, but even here there is considerable individual variation, rendering the task of assigning a vagrant to a taxon particularly difficult.

## Arctic Redpoll *Carduelis hornemanni* (0; 8; 1)

**Galway** One: One, showing characteristics suggestive of the race *hornemanni*, Dog's Bay, Roundstone, 13th April, photographed (P.Gilbert).

**2007 Mayo** Two: Two, Termon, Mullet Peninsula, 30th October to 4th November, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

The first for Galway, reinforcing the westerly distribution in Ireland, following two each in Donegal and Cork, and now four in Mayo. That all nine have occurred since 1999 suggests that this species was overlooked in the past. This conclusion seems to be backed up by the fact that they have been no more common in Britain since 1999 than they were earlier,

although there has been an increase of occurrences of *C.b.hornemanni* in Britain since 2003 (BBRC 2013).

## Common Rosefinch

*Carpodacus erythrinus* (0; 197; 9)

**Cork** Three: Juvenile, Dursley Island, 6th October (G.Hunt); Juvenile, Cape Clear Island, 7th to 11th October, photographed (M.Cadogan *et al.*); Juvenile, Old Head of Kinsale, 13th October (K.Preston).

**Donegal** Three: Male, Meenabanad, Burtonport, 28th May, photographed (T.Gallagher); Male, Arranmore Island, 17th August (R.McLaughlin); Juvenile, Tory Island, 28th October, photographed (A.G.Kelly *et al.*).

**Galway** Two: Juvenile, Inishbofin, 3rd October (A.McGeehan); Juvenile, Inishbofin, 9th October (A.McGeehan).

**Kerry** One: One, Baile an Reannaigh, Smerwick Harbour, 12th October (E.Carty).

Over 57% (119) of the total has occurred since the turn of the century. The annual average since then has been just over nine, compared to an average before that of less than two per year.



**Plate 289.** Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*, Cape Clear Island, Co. Cork, October 2012 (Dick Coombes).

## Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* (Unknown; 198; 1)

**Limerick** One: One, Curraghchase Forest Park, 17th November, photographed (U.Hogan *et al.*).

Yet another record for this location, which has been frequented on-and-off since 1988. It seems unlikely that this is the only regularly used wintering location in Ireland –

perhaps checking some of the historical wintering locations such as Phoenix Park in Dublin might bring a reward? See also Appendix 6 for details of corrections to the statistics.

### **Oortolan Bunting** *Emberiza hortulana* (0; 116; 4)

**Cork** Three: One, Skibbereen, 20th September (D.Ballard); One, Lissagriffin, 1st to 3rd October, photographed (P.Wolstenholme *et al.*); One, Mizen Head, 4th October (O.Foley).

**Galway** One: First-winter, Inishbofin, 10th to 12th September (C.Nash *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 25: 366.

Between 1960 and 2009, this species averaged almost two per year (although not occurring annually). The present decade is ahead of that average with 12 so far, and this series includes the first for Galway. The timing of 2012 records between mid-September and early October is typical, and there have been only twelve spring records. The remainder have occurred from the last week of August (11), throughout September (75), through to 20th October (22), and the majority of October records have been in the first week.

### **Blackpoll Warbler** *Setophaga striata* (0; 8; 1)

**Mayo** One: One, Termon, Mullet Peninsula, 9th November, photographed (D.Suddaby).

This record, the first for Mayo, is only the second for the west coast, following one in Galway in 2000. Seven of the previous eight were in early October, and only one, 24th October 1982, was later than the 11th. However, late records are not unprecedented, as there have been two November records and one in December in Britain, although early October is also the peak time there.



**Plate 290.** Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata*, Termon, Co. Mayo, 9th November 2012 (Dave Suddaby).

### **Yellow-rumped Warbler**

*Setophaga coronata* (0; 13; 2)

**Galway** Two: One, Kilonan, Inishmore, 6th October (C.Batty *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 25: 417, *Birdwatch* 245: 63, *Wings* 68: 26; One, Gort na gCapaill and Kilmurvey, Inishmore, 6th October,

photographed (G.Butler, J.K.Lovatt, F.MacGabhann, T.Mee, J.N.Murphy, G.Murray *et al.*).

These are the second and third for Inishmore, following one there in 2010. The only previous occasion where two were in such close proximity was on Cape Clear Island in October 1983.

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## Appendix 1: Category D records

### Category D2 records

Species that have arrived through ship or other human assistance.

### House Crow *Corvus splendens* (2; 0)

**Cork** Zero: Adult, Cobh, from 5th September 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 313 & 9: 488) was last reported, near Cobh Hospital, 21st July.

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## Appendix 2: Category E records

Species that have been recorded as introductions, transportees or escapes from captivity.

### Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

**Dublin** Six: Three males and three females, Bushy Park, 1st January, photographed (C.McMullan *et al.*).

**2010 Dublin** Three: Three males, Saint Stephen's Green, 29th December (J.Bruton).

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## Appendix 3: Contributors

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Irish Rare Breeding Birds Panel (IRBBP)

BirdWatch Ireland (BWI)

Cape Clear Bird Observatory (CCBO)

Copeland Bird Observatory (CBO)

Northern Ireland Birdwatchers' Association (NIBA)

## Appendix 4: List of records not proven

This list includes all records of taxa set out in *Irish Birds* 7: 416-418 (and subsequent updates online at [www.irbc.ie/records/desclist.php](http://www.irbc.ie/records/desclist.php) and [www.irbc.ie/records/desclist1.php](http://www.irbc.ie/records/desclist1.php)) which, after circulation to the Irish Rare Birds Committee or the Northern Ireland Birdwatchers' Association Rarities Committee as appropriate, were found to be not proven. Records of birds not attributed to any definite species by the observers are not included, nor are birds considered to have been escapes from captivity.

### 2012 records not proven

#### **Black Kite** *Milvus migrans*

One, Roundwood, Wicklow, 24th March.

#### **Snowy Owl** *Bubo scandiacus*

Two, Glannalappa East, Moyvane, Kerry, 18th May.

#### **Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti*

One, Coolgrainey Forest, Curracloe, Wexford, 7th May.

#### **Hume's Warbler** *Phylloscopus humei*

One, Mizen Head, Cork, 18th October.

#### **Rose-coloured Starling** *Pastor roseus*

Adult, Bray Head, Wicklow, 1st September.

#### **Mealy Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea flammea*

Two, Clane, Kildare, 19th to 22nd April.

One, Ineuran Bay, Malin Head, Donegal, 2nd June.

#### **Corn Bunting** *Emberiza calandra*

One, Kilcornan, Limerick, 1st August.

## Supplemental 2011 records not proven

#### **Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Adult, Tacumshin Lake, Wexford, 13th February.

Juvenile, Castlebellingham, Louth, 22nd to 27th November.

#### **Franklin's Gull** *Larus pipixcan*

First-winter, Lenadoon Point, Sligo, 18th September.

#### **Caspian Gull** *Larus cachimans*

Third-winter, Galway City, Galway, 13th February.

Third-winter, Nimmo's Pier, Galway, 13th February.

#### **Iberian Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus ibericus*

One, Barrow, Kerry, 14th to 15th April.

#### **Mealy Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea flammea*

One, Glenlara, Belmullet, Mayo, 3rd January.

Two, Coonagh Settlement Ponds, Limerick, 22nd January to 17th February.

Two, Raheen, Limerick, 28th January.

Two, Leap, Cork, 6th to 23rd February.

One, Cooley, Louth, 10th February.

Two, Kildavin, Carlow, 10th to 28th February.

One, The Gearagh, Cork, 13th February.

## Supplemental 2010 record not proven

#### **Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygargus*

One, Inishbofin, Galway, 25th August.

## Supplemental 2009 records not proven

#### **Atlantic Gull** *Larus michabellis atlantis*

Near adult, Ventry, Kerry, 15th August.

#### **Mealy Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea flammea*

One, Castletroy, Limerick, 15th February.

## Supplemental 2008 records not proven

### **Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis*

Male, Lough Ennell, Westmeath, 17th February to 16th March.

### **White-billed Diver** *Gavia adamsii*

Adult, Cape Clear Island, Cork, 3rd June.

### **Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Juvenile, Farranfore Airport, Kerry, 18th July.

### **Gyr Falcon** *Falco rusticolus*

Female, Annagh Head, Mayo, 31st March.

### **Scandinavian Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

One, Goat Island, Waterford, 1st June.

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## Appendix 5: List of anonymous records not accepted

The following reports concern Appendix 2 rarities that were entered in the Provisional List of Rare Bird Sightings during 2012 but where the observers have to date remained unknown. Some or all of these reports may yet qualify for publication in a future IRBR, should the observers become known to the IRBC and be prepared to validate the claim.

### **Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*

One, Bandon, Cork, 26th July.

### **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*

One, Skibbereen, Cork, 11th January.

### **Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

One, Cape Clear Island, Cork, 25th to 26th May.

One, Tullamore, Offaly, 31st May.

### **Crane** *Grus grus*

One, Belgooly, Cork, 13th February.

### **Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus*

Male, Cape Clear Island, Cork, 5th May.

## Supplemental anonymous records for 2007

### **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*

Four, Kilbrittain, Cork, 11th December.

### **Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus*

One, Cape Clear Island, Cork, 21st October.

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## Appendix 6: Corrigenda to previous reports

**2007 Irish Bird Report** – Appendix 3 (*Irish Birds* 8: 609) – The contents of the list of 2007 records not accepted contains

records referring to both 2006 and 2007. All records were from 2006 except that of American Robin, Tralee, Kerry, 20th November which should have been the sole 2007 record.

**Rough-legged Buzzard** *Buteo lagopus lagopus* – Reported totals for this species have consistently understated the national total. Examining the literature, Thompson (1849-1851) published four records involving five birds. A further seven were published in Ussher and Warren (1900), and another 16 records involving 17 birds in Kennedy *et al.* (1954). These comprise a total of 27 prior to 1950, and a further two prior to the advent of Irish Bird Reports in 1953. Those reports, and their successors, have published a further 17 records. Totals published in this report reflect this analysis. For clarity, these statistics exclude the 2005 record of the Nearctic race *B.l.sanctijohannis*.

**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus* – An incorrect date was given in the 2011 Irish Rare Bird Report (*Irish Birds* 9: 469). The text:

**2008 Louth Zero:** One, Dundalk Docks, 19th October to 15th March 2009 (*Irish Birds* 9: 92 & 9: 264) remained until 25th April 2009.

should be replaced with:

**2008 Louth Zero:** One, Dundalk Docks, 28th October to 15th March 2009 (*Irish Birds* 9: 92 & 9: 264) remained until 25th April 2009.

**Alpine Swift** *Apus melba* – Recent totals for this species (e.g. *Irish Birds* 9: 480) erroneously included two records from the Marathon Gas Platform, in March and November 1988 (*Irish Birds* 4: 103), which is 49 km (26 nautical miles) from land. Records that occur more than 30 km from land are considered 'At sea', and should be excluded from the total. Totals in the current report have been reduced by two to reflect this correction.

**Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla* – Reported totals for this species have consistently overstated the national total. Examining the literature, Ussher and Warren (1900) published details of six, and a further four were published in Kennedy *et al.* (1954). Details of 31 were published in Irish Bird Reports between 1953 and 1975, and a further 224 have been published in *Irish Birds* since 1976. Totals published in this report reflect this analysis.

**Rose-coloured Starling** *Pastor roseus* – The total has been reduced by one, following a review of published literature. Thompson (1849-1851) refers to a record in Clare 'about 30 years' prior to 1838. Despite not being referenced in any subsequent works on Irish birds, this record has traditionally been included in the statistics. As it cannot be substantiated, this third hand sight record is now excluded from the total. In contrast, a record of a specimen thought to be from

Roscommon in August 1845 is included in the statistics, notwithstanding that it also was not referenced in any subsequent literature. The key difference in this case is that a specimen was seen at the time. Note that the records for Spanish Point (Clare) in July 2000 published in *Irish Birds* 7: 106 and *Irish Birds* 7: 237 refer to the same individual.

**Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus* – Recent totals for this species (e.g. *Irish Birds* 9: 480) erroneously included a November 1988 record at the Marathon Gas Platform (*Irish Birds* 4: 107), which is 49 km (26 nautical miles) from land. Records that occur more than 30 km from land are considered 'At sea', and should be excluded from the total. Totals in the current report have been reduced by one to reflect this correction.

**Blue-headed Wagtail** *Motacilla flava flava* – Since statistical information was first published for this taxon in the Forty-eighth Irish Bird Report, 2000 (*Irish Birds* 7: 103), the total has consistently been overstated by four. The total prior to 2000 should have read 39, to agree with the total given in *Checklist of the Birds of Ireland* (IRBC 1998). This overstatement has been perpetuated since and the total reported in the current report has been adjusted downwards by four to correct this error.

**Hawfinch** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* – The statistics reported in the Irish Rare Bird Report 2006 (*Irish Birds* 8: 407) understated the starting total for the year by seven and should have read (167; 1). The Irish Rare Bird Report 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 608) further understated the total by one and should have read (175; 1). This understatement by eight has been perpetuated since then and the statistics are now adjusted to correct these errors.

## Appendix 7: Black Brant analysis

Following is a summary of all records of Black Brant in Ireland by county, up to 2011.

**Cork** One: Adult, Cork Harbour, winter 2009/2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 253, 9: 285 & 9: 449).

**Derry** Two: One, October 1980 (*Irish Birds* 3: 299) and October to November 1982 (*Irish Birds* 3: 108); Adult, Lough Foyle, Carrickhugh and Roe Estuary, most autumns from 1988 to 2006 (*Irish Birds* 4: 432, 5: 84, 5: 330, 5: 453, 6: 292, 6: 549, 7: 216, 7: 551, 8: 374 & 8: 585).

**Down** Five: Two, Strangford Lough, from winter 1978/1979 to September 1987 (*Irish Birds* 2: 552, 3: 108, 3: 299 & 3: 615), presumed also seen in Louth; One, Dundrum and Killough, most winters from 1987/1988 to 1995/1996 (*Irish Birds* 4: 85, 4: 432, 5: 84, 5: 330, 5: 453 & 6: 68); Up to two, Strangford Lough and Kinnegar from October 1998 to October 2008 (*Irish Birds* 6: 549, 7: 87, 7: 216, 7: 551, 8: 374, 8: 585 & 9: 79).

**Dublin** Six: Two adults, Corballis, Malahide, Rogerstown Estuary and Sandymount Strand, from winter 1984/1985 to October 1986 (*Irish*

*Birds* 3: 108, 3: 299 & 3: 460); Two adults, mainly Swords Estuary and Rogerstown Estuary, but also North Bull Island from April 1990 to February 1995 (*Irish Birds* 4: 432, 4: 579, 5: 84, 5: 214, 5: 330 & 5: 453); Adult, Poolbeg, 1st April 1994 (*Irish Birds* 5: 330) and February to March 1995 (*Irish Birds* 5: 453); Adult, Swords and North Bull Island, winter 1999/2000 and 27th November 2001 (*Irish Birds* 7: 87 & 7: 286).

**Kerry** Three: Adult, Castlegregory, Barrow, Dingle and Black Rock Strand, winter 2001/2002 (*Irish Birds* 7: 216 & 7: 388); One, Blennerville, winter 2005/2006 (*Irish Birds* 8: 374 & 8: 396); Adult, Castlegregory, December 2009 (*Irish Birds* 9: 253) and 6th December 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 285), presumed same as Ventry, 31st March 2011, Inch, 1st November 2011 and Barrow, 17th November 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 450).

**Louth** Three: Two, Carlingford Lough, winter 1984/1985 (*Irish Birds* 3: 108 & 3: 299), winter 1985/1986 (*Irish Birds* 3: 615) and winter 1986/1987 (*Irish Birds* 3: 615), presumed previously and subsequently seen in Down; Adult, Annagassan, 6th April 1994 (*Irish Birds* 5: 330); Adult, Carlingford Lough, November 2006 (*Irish Birds* 8: 396); One Cruisestown Strand, 10th October 2009 (*Irish Birds* 9: 253).

**Mayo** Two: Adult, Mullet Peninsula, most winters since 2002 (*Irish Birds* 7: 388, 8: 108, 8: 374, 8: 396, 8: 585, 9: 79, 9: 253 & 9: 450); Adult, Killala Bay, intermittently since January 2004 (*Irish Birds* 8: 108, 8: 374, 9: 79 & 9: 285), presumed to have been the second bird seen on the Mullet Peninsula, February 2004 (*Irish Birds* 8: 108).

**Sligo** Two: Adult, Carton and Ballyconnell, January to May 2004 (*Irish Birds* 8: 108); Adult, various locations, since February 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 585, 9: 79, 9: 253, 9: 285 & 9: 450).

**Waterford** Five: Adult, Tramore, winter 1978/1979 (*Irish Birds* 3: 460) and winter 1980/1981 (*Irish Birds* 3: 460); Adult, Tramore, winter 1986/1987 (*Irish Birds* 3: 460) and 11th October 1988 (*Irish Birds* 4: 85); Two adults, Dungarvan, 13th January 2001 (*Irish Birds* 7: 216), one presumed same as individual 24th March 2000 (*Irish Birds* 7: 87); Adult, Tramore Back Strand, 1st November 2005 (*Irish Birds* 8: 374), presumed same as next individual; Adult, Dungarvan, each winter since winter 2004/2005 (*Irish Birds* 8: 374, 8: 396, 8: 585, 9: 79, 9: 253, 9: 285 & 9: 450).

**Wexford** Three: Wexford Harbour, 2nd January 1983 (*Irish Birds* 2: 551-552); Adult, mainly North Slob, but also at Rosslare Back Strand, South Slob and Tacumshin Lake, since winter 1997/1998 (*Irish Birds* 6: 384, 6: 549, 7: 87, 7: 551, 8: 108, 8: 374, 8: 396, 8: 585, 9: 79, 9: 253, 9: 285 & 9: 450); Adult, mainly Rosslare Backstrand, but also on North Slob, since winter 2008/2009 (*Irish Birds* 9: 79, 9: 253, 9: 285 & 9: 450).

**Wicklow** Two: One, Kilcoole, 18th April 1989 (*Irish Birds* 4: 579); Adult, Kilcoole, 16th December 2001 (*Irish Birds* 7: 216).

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#### Abbreviations used

- AERC: Association of European Rarities Committees.  
BOURC: British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee.  
IBR: *Irish Bird Report* – annual from 1953 to 1975.  
IN: *Irish Naturalist* – monthly journal between 1892 and 1924.  
INJ: *Irish Naturalists' Journal* – monthly journal from 1925.  
NIBARC: Northern Ireland Birdwatchers' Association Rarities Committee.  
NIBR: *Northern Ireland Bird Report* – periodically from 1980 onwards.