

Irish Rare Bird Report 2013

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Introduction

With the exception of 2011, when numbers were inflated by an incredible influx of Nearctic waders, perusal of Irish Rare Bird Reports since 2008 reveals a relative consistency in the yearly rarity total, with numbers varying little from the average. Nonetheless, each year develops a special character that is distinctly and uniquely different, and 2013 will be remembered as the year in which, after a period of relative quiet, Cork recovered the mantle of premier rarity county in Ireland. All three additions to the Irish List in 2013 were at classic birding locations in the county — Ballymacoda Bay struck first with a Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus* in July, and Cork's famous birding islands replied with a Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* on Dursey Island in September and Ruby-

crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula* on Cape Clear Island in October. Two species occurred for the second time — Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus* (Galway) in September and Sykes's Warbler *Iduna rama* (Cork) in early October. The fifth record of both Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata* and Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus* were recorded in Wexford in September and November respectively. This report also contains details of the first Central Asian Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca balimodendri* (Louth) in 2011.

The year started with the usual scattering of wintering wildfowl, egrets and allies, and the regular Forster's Tern

Plate 26. Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*, Dursey Island, Co. Cork, September 2013 (Richard Bonser).

Sterna forsteri in Galway. As always, this regular line-up was augmented by a few major rarities remaining from the previous year – in this case, the highlights were the American Coot *Fulica americana* in Galway and the Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus hudsonius* at Tacumshin Lake (Wexford). Predictably, the year's first rarities were also water birds – the first new Forster's Tern for many years was seen in Wexford in January, but a Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* in Waterford was probably the highlight in terms of rarity. Other gulls occurred in variable numbers – there was just a single American Herring Gull *Larus smithsonianus*, but a good influx of Kumlien's Gulls *Larus glaucooides kumlieni* occurred.

A February Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* in Louth was a surprise, but less unusual was the occurrence later in the month of the first of a record number of Scandinavian Rock Pipits *Anthus petrosus littoralis*. As winter turned to spring, two wader species marked the turn of the season – a Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* in Donegal represented the last gasp of winter while small numbers of Little Ringed Plovers *Charadrius dubius* at the end of March and start of April hinted at the long days to come. These were followed by the first Hobby *Falco subbuteo* of the year in mid-April and an early Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*.

Overall, numbers of rare spring passerines were lower than in recent years, with small numbers of Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* and only one each of Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* and Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*. Non-passerines were represented by an extremely photogenic summer-plumaged White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii* in Galway in May and a large influx of Hobbys which began that month and continued strongly into June.

The summer months are always quieter for rarities but are a time when quality often replaces quantity. This year, the highlights came in the form of a Stone Curlew *Burbinus oedicephalus* in June (Cork), a Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* and two Gull-billed Terns *Gelochelidon nilotica* at Tacumshin Lake (Wexford) in July, and a Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* in August (Wexford). Seawatching always provides great excitement and it arrived with a bang at the end of July with three Fea's/Zino's Petrels *Pterodroma feae/madeira* at Galley Head on the same date as a Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* at Mizen Head. There were only a few more records of Wilson's Storm-petrel, in stark contrast to Fea's/Zino's Petrels which went on to have their best year ever, with seven more occurring during the classic period of the last two weeks of August and a further three on 15th September, although this time at different headlands!

The occurrence of two Greenish Warblers *Phylloscopus trochiloides* at the end of August and beginning of September signalled the start of a great run of rarities through September and into early October, mostly in Cork, which included three Nightingales *Luscinia megarhynchos*, a Bluethroat *Luscinia*

svecica, a Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* and a Serin *Serinus serinus*. These headline rarities were backed up by a veritable explosion of Wrynecks *Jynx torquilla* and good numbers of Common Rosefinches *Carpodacus erythrinus* and Red-backed Shrikes *Lanius collurio*. However, some of the more regular rarities that were once a staple of autumn birding in the south-west continued runs of relatively poor years – there were only three Melodious Warblers *Hippolais polyglotta* and a single Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*. For the third year in succession, no Icterine Warblers *Hippolais icterina* occurred – this is the first time they have missed three years in a row since they started being found regularly in 1955.

Not to be outdone, rarities originating from points west also arrived. There were good numbers of Baird's Sandpipers *Calidris bairdii*, Semipalmated Sandpipers *Calidris pusilla*, Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* and American Golden Plovers *Pluvialis dominica*, but numbers of White-rumped Sandpipers *Calidris fuscicollis* were down on recent years. In addition, yet another Northern Harrier arrived in south Wexford in October. However, most notable was the selection of Nearctic passerines that confirmed the year as one of the great years for that group. The Wilson's Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Eastern Kingbird already referred to were joined by two Red-eyed Vireos *Vireo olivaceus*, a Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata*, a Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata* and a Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens* – giving a total of nine individuals of seven species.

The remainder of the year continued in fine vein, although, with the exception of a Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri* in Donegal, not quite in the same class as earlier in the autumn. A small number of Siberian Chiffchaffs *Phylloscopus collybita tristis* were discovered, there was a significant influx of Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* and a very late Baird's Sandpiper in Kerry completed the line-up for the year.

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 and updated on a monthly basis. Most of the data in this report were taken directly from the 2013 Provisional List. The IRBC expresses its sincere gratitude to all those who provided information during 2013, either directly or indirectly. Although there are no 2013 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 Dr. Chris Gibbins, Joe Hobbs, Steve Howell, Bruce Mactavish, Killian Mullarney, Keith Naylor, Peter Pyle, David Sibley and Pat Smiddy for their invaluable assistance.

Records for 2014 (and previous years) should be sent to the following:

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Rarity Description forms may be downloaded from the IRBC website: 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.

Rarities: The full list of taxa requiring substantiating documentation can be found at www.irbc.ie/records/deslist.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.

2013 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) and the Taxonomic Sub-committee of the British Ornithologists' Union (Sangster *et al.* 2013). Following the latest change, the most obvious difference to readers will be the new position of the falcons, now placed between the woodpeckers and passerines. 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.

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. Some totals are minimum figures due to lack of precise numbers in historical texts – where this is the case, the total is succeeded by a '+'. 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; 30; 0)

2012 Mayo Two: Two, Barranagh East, Mullet Peninsula, 18th January to 13th March, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

2012 Wicklow Two: Two, Kilcoole, 13th January to 14th February, photographed (R.H.Coomes *et al.*).

With the addition of these late records, including the first for Mayo, the total for winter 2011/2012 increases to 21, more than two-thirds of the overall total. Prior to that, multiple records had not occurred during the same winter. Since the first definitive record of this taxon in 1993, it has been significantly more frequent than Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis fabalis*. In that time, there have been only five records of *A.f.fabalis*, involving eight birds, the most recent in 2005, compared to 14 records of 30 *A.f.rossicus*.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens* (58; 48; 1)

Donegal Zero: One, white morph, Sheskinmore Lake, from 7th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 579) remained to 29th March.

Kerry One: White morph adult, Carrahane and Black Rock Strands and Barrow Harbour, 16th September to 7th February 2014, photographed (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*).

Although there have been records from eleven counties since 1950, the vast majority of these have been in Wexford, with



Plate 27. Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*, Black Rock Strand, Co. Kerry, September 2013 (David O'Connor).

only Kerry (now with eight) and Donegal (six) having had more than two. Indeed, the Kerry individual is the first there since two at Castlemaine in December 1989 and only the fifth Kerry record in total (albeit involving eight birds).

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

Mayo Zero: One, Termoncarragh, Mullet Peninsula, 16th February to 13th March, photographed (B.Howell, L.Howell *et al.*), presumed returning.

Sligo Zero: Up to three, Lissadell, from 16th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 579) remained to 24th February.

These records continue the strong pattern of occurrences in the north-west. While most early records were found in Wexford, there has been only one record there since 1978. Since 2000, all records have been in coastal counties between Clare and Down, with the majority of these in Mayo and Sligo. The reader's attention is directed to Appendix 6, which contains corrections to last year's Canada Goose review article (*Irish Birds* 9: 613–622).

Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* (0; 38; 1)

Clare Zero: Adult, Newquay, 24th January to 14th February, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*), previously seen in Galway (*Irish Birds* 9: 580).

Dublin One: One, North Bull Island, 7th November (M.Silk).

Kerry Zero: Adult, Inch, 14th February (M.O'Connor) and, presumed same, Blennerville, 13th April (E.Carty), presumed returning; One, Barrow Harbour, 26th October to 12th November, photographed (G.Hunt) and, presumed same, Castlegregory and Scraggane, 17th November to 12th March 2014, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*), presumed returning.

Mayo Zero: One, Killala, 28th December (J.Donaldson), presumed returning.

Sligo Zero: Adult, Raghly, 8th November to 30th December, photographed (S.Feeney *et al.*), presumed returning.

Wexford Zero: Adult, Rosslare Back Strand, from 28th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 580) remained to 30th March; Adult, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve and Rosslare Back Strand, from 5th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 580) remained to 30th March; Adult, The Cull, 8th March (N.T.Keogh *et al.*) and, presumed same, Bannow Bay, 17th March (L.Ryan),



Plate 28. Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans*, Raghly, Co. Sligo, December 2013 (Seamus Feeney).

presumed returning; Adult, Rosslare Back Strand, 21st to 26th December, photographed (P.Kelly), presumed returning.

2012 Kerry One: One, Castlegregory, 6th January, photographed (D.A.O'Connor); The adult at Castlegregory from 22nd October to 16th November (*Irish Birds* 9: 580) remained until 17th November and was joined by a second adult, 5th to 17th November (M.O'Clery, D.A.O'Connor), this second individual also presumed returning.

The individual that added this taxon to the Galway list in 2012 wandered to Clare, where it became the first record for that county also! With that exception, and the first record in Dublin since 2001, occurrences for the year constitute the usual scattering of returning and wandering individuals. While recorded on the same day, the sightings in Kerry at Castlegregory (above) and Inch (*Irish Birds* 9: 580) in January 2012 are treated as referring to different birds notwithstanding that these locations are less than ten miles from each other as the goose flies!

Ruddy Shelduck

Tadorna ferruginea (74; 0; 0)

1871 Cork One: One, obtained, off Clonakilty, January (Harvey 1875).

This record is included following research by Pat Smiddy as it had not been published in the standard literature on Irish birds (Ussher & Warren 1900, Kennedy *et al.* 1954). Ruddy Shelduck is on the Irish list in Category B (see www.irbc.ie/topbar/categories.php) having occurred in numbers in 1886 and 1892, and singly on a number of other occasions, including one in March 1871. This occurrence coincides with that individual, obtained and verified, at Clonea Bog (Waterford) in March 1871 (Ussher & Warren 1900). Joshua Reuben Harvey (1804–1878) was a correspondent of William Thompson when the latter was writing his *Natural History of Ireland* (1849–51). He wrote a list of the birds of Cork for the British Association meeting in Cork in 1843, which was published in 1845 (Harvey 1845), with a revised edition published in 1875 (Harvey 1875). It seems likely that this record was simply overlooked because of the rather obscure nature of the place of publication. It is likely that the revised version of Harvey's paper was unknown to ornithologists at the time since it does not seem to be quoted in any source, although Ussher was aware of (or had access to) some 'notes' by Harvey (see under Common Crane in Ussher & Warren 1900).

American Wigeon

Anas americana (0; 131; 4)

Cork Two: Male, Cuskinny, 12th to 18th May, photographed (R.McLaughlin *et al.*); Male, The Gearagh, 29th September to 13th October, photographed (J.Lynch).

Donegal Two: Male, Drowes River, Tullaghan, 8th January to 24th February, photographed (B.Robson *et al.*), also seen in Leitrim; Male, Drowes River, Tullaghan, 31st October to 1st March 2014 (S.Feeney, D.Skehan), presumed returning, also seen in Leitrim; First-winter male,

Lagg, Malin Head, 23rd November to 21st February 2014 (T.Campbell, R.Murray, R.Smith).

Leitrim Zero: Male, Drowes River, Tullaghan, 8th January to 24th February, photographed (B.Robson *et al.*), also seen in Donegal; Male, Drowes River, Tullaghan, 31st October to 1st March 2014 (S.Feeney, D.Skehan), presumed returning, also seen in Donegal.

Wexford Zero: Male, Cahore Marsh, 9th to 23rd February (Sh.Farrell *et al.*), presumed returning.

The Drowes River in Tullaghan forms the border between Leitrim and Donegal and the individual there was seen on both sides of the river. Leitrim is a county that very rarely appears in these reports – this is only the fifth mention in 51 Irish Bird Reports since 1953.

American Black Duck

Anas rubripes (0; 17; 2)

Cork Two: Two males, Cockle Strand, Mizen Head and Crookhaven, 7th February to 9th March (D.Ballard *et al.*), photograph *Birdwatch* 250: 65.

Mayo Zero: Male, Sruhll Lough, Dooniver, Achill Island, from 13th September 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 581) remained to 4th April.

The Cork record is the first time that there have been two together in Ireland, although there were two in close proximity in Donegal in late 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 585 & 9: 79). There have now been six in Cork, which moves ahead of Wexford (four), and Kerry (three). Donegal and Mayo both have two, and Dublin and Kilkenny one each. Many of these have been returning birds and they have effectively been annual since 1993.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* (3; 105; 4)

Cork One: Adult male, Ballycotton, 20th to 22nd October (D.O'Sullivan



Plate 29. Two American Black Ducks *Anas rubripes*, Crookhaven, Co. Cork, February 2013 (Sean Cronin).

et al.).

Dublin Zero: Adult female, North Bull Island, from 9th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 581) remained to 17th February.

Galway One: Eclipse male, Rahasane Turlough, 19th October (D.Breen).

Kerry One: Male, Ballylongford, 27th to 30th March (D.Farrar *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 69: 27.

Limerick One: Adult male, Coonagh, 3rd September, photographed (T.Tarpey).

While a low total in comparison to the previous three years (seven in both 2012 and 2011, and 19 in 2010), it is worth noting that, previous to those years, this total has only been exceeded twice – in 1995, when there were six, and 2005, when there were five. Although not returning for winter 2013/2014, the female in Dublin, first recorded in October 2005, has missed a winter before – she was absent in winter 2008/2009.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* (0; 26; 1)

Galway One: First-winter female, Murlach, Ballyconneely, 8th November to 5th December, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*).

This is only the second individual recorded in Galway, following a male that occurred at Loughrea in 2008 and 2009 (*Irish Birds* 9: 452 & 9: 681). There is a distinct northerly bias to records – there have been 17 in Ulster (having occurred in all Ulster counties except Monaghan) and a further three in Connaught (although there has yet to be a record in Mayo). By contrast, there have only been three in Munster and four in Leinster.

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis* (4; 17; 2)

Mayo Two: First-summer male, Inishkea Islands, 17th to 21st May, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*); Female, Blacksod Bay, Mullet Peninsula, 22nd November to 4th April 2014, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

This duo continues the recent increase in numbers. Following only two recorded each decade in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, twelve have occurred since the turn of the century. Although the increase has not been as steep, numbers in Britain have displayed a similar pattern, where ten-year totals from the 1970s of 26, 27 and 39 were followed by 51 in the 2000s (BBRC 2013).

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata* (6; 189; 18)

Cork Six: Male, Ballycotton, 16th June (O.Foley); Adult male, Sandy Cove, 27th October (K.Preston); First-winter male, Courtmacsherry, 3rd November to 6th April 2014, photographed (D.Rees, P.Wolstenholme *et al.*); Female, Coolbaun, Seven Heads, 10th November to 22nd January 2014 (P.Wolstenholme); Female or immature, Garretstown, 17th November (R.O'Driscoll); One, Ballinwilling, 24th November to 1st December (A.Jeffery *et al.*).

Dublin One: Male, Balbriggan, 25th to 29th March (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Galway Two: Second calendar-year male, Manin Beg Strand, Ballyconneely, 2nd September, photographed (D.Breen); Female or immature, Kinvara, 19th November (P.Troake).

Kerry Three: Adult female, Brandon Bay, from 7th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 582) remained to 21st February; First-winter male, Reen Pier, Ballinskelligs, 6th January to 14th March (P.McDaid *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 69: 26; First-winter male, Rossbeigh and Inch, 24th April to 14th



Plate 30. Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata* with Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*, Courtmacherry, Co. Cork, November 2013 (Richard T. Mills).

June, photographed (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*); Female, Inch Strand, 30th July (M.O'Clery); Female, Brandon Bay, 1st December (M.O'Clery), presumed returning.

Louth One: Male, Salterstown, 17th March (M.Carmody).

Meath Two: Male, Ben Head, 16th March to 6th April (A.G.Kelly *et al.*); A second male, Ben Head, 20th March (P.Phillips *et al.*).

Waterford One: First-winter male, The Cunnigar, Dungarvan, from 25th November (*Irish Birds* 9: 582) remained to 4th January; First-winter female, Dungarvan, 9th to 12th November (M.Cowming *et al.*).

Wexford Two: First-winter male, Rosslare, 16th March to 12th May (P.Kelly *et al.*); Adult male, Curraclloe, 30th November (P.Kelly).

Totals for this species have been adjusted upwards by six, following a review of published records. Many earlier records were published without reference to whether a record referred to a new bird or a returning one. Underlying the statistics therefore are certain assumptions as to which records

refer to returning birds. Publishing these assumptions in this report would be unwieldy but a detailed spreadsheet is available on request from the Honorary Secretary.

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii* (0; 14; 2)

Galway One: Adult in summer plumage, Inishbofin, 18th to 23rd May (J.Brittain *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 26: 179.

Kerry One: Adult, Castlegregory, 28th October to 3rd November, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*).

This is only the second year in which more than one has occurred, following two in 2011. Records show a westerly bias, with 11 on Atlantic coasts and only five in the Irish Sea. The Galway record increases to five the total for May, almost all on the West coast, mirroring a spring passage visible in western Scotland, particularly in the Outer Hebrides and Northern Isles (Hudson *et al.* 2009).

Fea's/Zino's Petrel

Pterodroma feae/madeira (0; 78; 13)

At Sea Zero: One, 100 nautical miles south of Fastnet, Western Approaches, 22nd August, photographed (R.McLaughlin).

Clare Four: One, Bridges of Ross, 16th August (K.Langdon); One, Bridges of Ross, 1025 hours, 17th August (V.Caschera *et al.*); Presumed same, Bridges of Ross, 1750 hours, 17th August (K.Langdon *et al.*); One, Fodry and Loop Head, 20th August (K.Langdon, K.de Rouck); One, Bridges of Ross, 15th September, photographed (V.Caschera *et al.*).

Cork Seven: Three, Galley Head, 31st July (C.Barton *et al.*); One, Galley Head, 17th August (P.Moore); One, Mizen Head, 22nd August (A.Duggan); One, Mizen Head, 15th September (O.Foley); One, Dursley Island, 23rd September (A.A.K.Lancaster).

Kerry One: One, Brandon Point, 15th September (S.Enright).

Wexford One: One, 12 miles off the Wexford coast, 21st September (B.Sheils).



Plate 31. White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*, Inishbofin, Co. Galway, May 2013 (John N. Murphy).



Plate 32. Continental Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*, Rosslare Harbour, Co. Wexford, December 2013 (Paul Kelly).

A record year, three higher than the total in 2007. Apart from the first record for Dursey Island, there is very little unusual about either the temporal or geographical pattern. Most were recorded in August, with smaller numbers in July and September and most occurred at well watched sea-watching sites on the west coast. The trio of birds at Galley Head were identified as separate individuals based on plumage differences.

Wilson's Storm-petrel

Oceanites oceanicus (2; 247; 5)

At Sea Zero: One, 100 nautical miles south of Fastnet, Western Approaches, 22nd August (R.McLaughlin).

Clare One: One, Bridges of Ross, 23rd August (N.T.Keogh *et al.*).

Cork Two: One, Mizen Head, 31st July (D.Ballard, P.Connaughton); One, Mizen Head, 15th September (O.Foley).

Kerry One: One, seven kilometres west of Inishtearaght, 7th August (E.Carty *et al.*).

Mayo One: One, Kilcummin Head, 18th September (R.Innes, C.Jones). In contrast with the preceding taxon, this is the lowest total since 2001 and well below the average of over 20 per year between 2003 and 2012.

Continental Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis (0; 26; 6)

Dublin Two: First-winter, Swords Estuary, 4th to 30th January, photographed (O.Foley *et al.*); First-winter, Swords Estuary, 28th January to 16th May, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Wexford Four: Second calendar-year, Nethertown, from 6th September 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 582–583) remained to 1st January;

Second calendar-year and third calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 27th April to 5th May, photographed (P.Kelly); Second calendar-year, Lady's Island Lake, 12th May, photographed (P.Kelly); Adult, Rosslare Harbour, 27th December to 1st March 2014, photographed (P.Kelly).

2012 Cork One: One, Lough Aderra, 1st to 10th February, photographed (S.Ronayne *et al.*).

With recent multiple records from Dublin, Cork and Wexford, the northern bias referred to in the 2011 Irish Rare Bird Report (*Irish Birds* 9: 455) is very rapidly being eroded – northern records accounted for more than 90% of records up to 2011 but now account for less than 60%. Good photographs showing the gular pouch angle are crucial for acceptance, although even on this feature a small number of birds fall into the area of overlap between *P.c.carbo* and *P.c.sinensis* and cannot be safely identified.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* (161+; 42; 1)

Donegal Zero: One, Inch Island Lake, Lough Swilly, from 30th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 583) remained to 16th February.

Galway Zero: One, Clonboo, Muckrush and Curraghmore, from 22nd October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 583) remained to 28th February.

Wexford One: Two, Tacumshin Lake, 24th February, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*), one presumed returning.

Wicklow Zero: One, Kilcoole, from 29th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 583) remained to 1st January.

Even allowing for presumed returning individuals, the occurrence of twelve since 2008 clearly suggests an upturn in fortunes for this species. This change reflects recent increases in the breeding population in Britain (Holling *et al.* 2013), which is the most likely source for Irish records.

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* (27; 49; 1)

Cork One: First-summer, Cork City, 7th June (O.Foley).

More frequently encountered between March and May, this is only the seventh record for June, a month when spring records begin to tail off. Cork's 35 records account for approximately 45% of the total, with the remainder scattered through eighteen different counties, of which only Wexford manages to reach double figures.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* (0; 242; 8)

Donegal Zero: One, Tullyowen, St. Johnston, from 10th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 584) remained to 21st March, photographs *Birding World* 26: 3, *Birdwatch* 249: 69; Presumed same adult, Porthall, 4th to 8th July, photographed (B.Hegarty *et al.*).

Limerick Five: Five, Bruff, 15th February (D.McNamara).

Waterford Two: Up to two, Bunmahon, 21st December to 29th January 2014, photographed (M.Cowming Snr., D.Weldon *et al.*).

Wexford One: One, Fethard-on-Sea, 20th August (L.Ryan).

Excluding the years of the big influx from 2007 to 2009 when 223 occurred, eight is the highest annual total. The erratically fluctuating numbers for this species contrasts with the more steady increase in records of Great White Egret *Ardea alba*.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba* (0; 55; 4)

Donegal One: One, Blanket Nook, 10th October (D.McLaughlin, R.Wheeldon).

Dublin One: One, Dublin City Centre, 24th June (P.Kelly).

Galway One: One, Oranmore, 29th September (B.O'Donoghue).

Wicklow One: One, Blackditch ECNR, 30th April (E.Dempsey).

2012 Roscommon One: Adult, Shannon Callows, 18th to 20th April, photographed (M.Craven).

2000 Cork Zero: One, colour-ringed 28th May 2000 as a nestling in Loire-Atlantique (France), Barley Cove, 23rd August (Merne 2004), same as the individual reported later the same year in Wicklow and Cork in October and November respectively (*Irish Birds* 7: 85).

The Donegal record is the first for the county. Data brought to the attention of the committee by Pat Smiddy show that the 2000 Cork record was published in the 2002 Irish Ringing Report (Merne 2004) but not published in any Irish Rare Bird Report. Thus, the bird recorded in Wicklow in late October 2000 and subsequently in Cork in November was first seen in Ireland at Barley Cove in August. This prompts the obvious question – where was it between August and October? Movements of this bird perhaps support the suggestion made in *Irish Birds* 9: 584 that numbers may be overstated. However, it is likely that there has been a real increase here as European populations have increased dramatically since 1980, when the breeding range expanded north and west. There has also been a substantial increase in the wintering population in western and central Europe since 2000 (Ławicki 2014).

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (103; 136; 34)

Cavan One: One, Lough Ramor, 21st December (P.Cullen).

Cork Four: Up to three, Timoleague, from 10th February 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 584) remained to 2nd February; One, Ballycotton, 7th December, photographed (O.Foley *et al.*); First-winter, Carrigrohane, Cork City, 26th December to 12th January 2014, photographed



Plate 33. Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*, St. Johnston, Co. Donegal, January 2013 (John N. Murphy).



Plate 34. Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, Westport, Co. Mayo, January 2013 (Pat Lonergan).

(H.Hussey *et al.*); Two, Owenahincha Cross, 27th December to 12th January 2014 (J.Maguire *et al.*).

Donegal Three: Two, one of which had a yellow Darvic ring 05PA on the left leg, Dunfanaghy, 17th to 20th December, photographed (R.Sheppard *et al.*); One, Tory Island, 18th December (A.Meenan).

Galway Six: Maximum count of six, Renvyle, 14th to 15th December (P.Flaherty).

Kerry Three: One, Finian's Bay and Portmagee, 11th to 31st December, photographed (J.N.Murphy); One, Carrahane Strand, 12th December, photographed (D.A.O'Connor); Different individual, Akeragh Lough, 19th to 21st December (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 72: 26.

Mayo One: One, Kilmeena, 30th December to 2nd January 2014, photographed (D.McLoughlin *et al.*).

Waterford One: One, Tramore Back Strand, 10th November (D.McGrath).

Wexford Fifteen: Eleven, Killinick, 15th October (K.Furlong, J.Kelly, T.Murray, A.Walsh); Maximum count of eight, South Slob, early October (per J.Kelly) and three, Tagoat, for about two weeks until 11th October (per A.Walsh) and one, near Killinick, 9th November (K.Grace), all presumed to relate to the group at Killinick; One, North Slob NNR, 10th November (K.Grace); One, Tacumshin Lake, 22nd November to 14th December, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 13th to 14th December, photographed (P.Kelly); One, South Slob, 31st December to 9th February 2014 (T.Murray).

This series includes the first record for Cavan in yet another record year for this species – exceeding by two the previous record, set in 2009 and equalled in 2012. Since 2008, the annual average has been more than 25 and 152 individuals

have occurred (more than 55% of the total). Particularly noticeable is the arrival of 20 in December, a month that had previously only recorded three new birds. Additionally, this is the second winter in three years that has featured an arrival of similar scale, although the influx in 2011/2012 was in January 2012.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* (92; 139; 5)

Cork Two: One, Cork Opera House, Cork City, 14th February (O.Foley); One, Blarney, 14th to 28th November (D.Rees *et al.*).

Dublin One: Adult, North Bull Island, 10th to 11th March, photographed (P.McMahon *et al.*); Presumed same, over St. Anne's Park, 13th March (A.Power).

Kerry Zero: Adult, Cromane Harbour, from 16th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 585) remained to 17th February; Adult, Cromane Harbour, 1st October to 9th March 2014, photographed (F.King *et al.*), presumed returning.

Waterford Zero: Adult, The Cunnigar, Dungarvan, from 8th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 585) remained to 26th February; One, presumed same, Tramore Back Strand, 19th to 22nd July, photographed (D.Sinnott *et al.*); Adult, Dungarvan, 28th October to 15th February 2014, photographed (M.Cowming *et al.*), presumed returning.

Wexford Two: Up to two, Tacumshin Lake, 20th to 24th July, photographed (P.Kelly).

The adult in Kerry has now been recorded in ten calendar years, having first been recorded in November 2005. This species was conspicuous by its absence from P.G.Kennedy's

classic book, *'An Irish Sanctuary'*, the lovingly written treatise on the avifauna of the North Bull Island (Kennedy 1953). Since then, following its first in 1958, there have been five records there, involving six birds, most of which remained for many months.

Pied-billed Grebe

Podilymbus podiceps (0; 11; 1)

Mayo One: Adult in summer plumage, Sruhillbeg Lough, Achill Island, 14th May, photographed (M.O'Briain); Presumed same, Sruhillbeg Lough, Achill Island, 27th August to 15th November, photographed (J.Devlin *et al.*).

2012 Mayo Zero: One, Lough Baun, Louisburgh, 29th to 31st October (*Irish Birds* 9: 585) remained to 4th November.

The May record above is the first for the month since the species was added to the Irish list in Wexford in May 1987. As might be expected for a Nearctic vagrant, most records have been in western counties, although surprisingly there have been none in either Kerry or Galway.

Northern Harrier

Circus cyaneus hudsonius (0; 6; 1)

Wexford One: Juvenile female, Tacumshin Lake, also seen at Lady's Island Lake, Tacumshin Village and Ring Marsh, from 19th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 585) remained to 20th April, photograph *Birding World* 26: 93; Juvenile male, Tacumshin Lake, 15th October to 17th November (P.Kelly, J.M.Murphy *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 401, *Birdwatch* 259: 12.

2012 Wexford One: Juvenile male, Churchtown and Tacumshin Lake, 6th to 20th October (N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh, T.Kilbane, K.Mullarney *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 25: 467.

Tacumshin Lake continues its incredible run of records of this taxon – with the exception of one in Wicklow in 2010, all have occurred there and 2013 was the fourth year in succession



Plate 35. Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus hudsonius*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, October 2013 (Paul Kelly).

with records from this locality. The 2012 male showed only a faint fourth bar on P10. While a fourth bar on P10 of juvenile Northern Harrier is something that occurs in the majority of birds, a not insignificant number either lack, or show only a very faint, proximal fourth bar.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* (23; 60; 3)

Dublin One: Adult male, Dublin Airport, 8th August (O.Foley).

Wexford Two: Second calendar-year female, Cahore Marsh, 22nd to 25th May (C.Foley, D.Foley *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 8th to 9th June (V.Caschera, J.F.Dowdall, K.Grace *et al.*).

There is a distinct easterly bias to records – 60 (almost three-quarters of the total) have occurred in east coast counties and, underlining its attraction to harriers, there have now been 20 recorded at Tacumshin Lake.

American Coot *Fulica americana* (0; 3; 0)

Mayo Zero: One, Murlach, Ballyconneely, from 28th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 588) remained to 13th April, photographs *Birding World* 26: 6, *Birdwatch* 249: 64.

Following the long gap after the first in 1981, this species has now been present for four consecutive calendar years (albeit involving two long staying birds) – one wonders how long it will be before the next record!

Crane *Grus grus* (29; 156; 4)

Dublin Two: One, Rogerstown, 6th April, photographed (L.Kane); Adult, Rogerstown, 9th to 27th September, photographed (H.Dawe, B.Sheils *et al.*).

Limerick One: One, Castleconnell, 20th September (P.Troake).

Wexford Zero: The group of five, mainly at Tacumshin Lake and South Slob, from 29th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 588) remained to 14th February.

Wicklow One: Adult, Newcastle and Kilcoole, 23rd November to 22nd March 2014, photographed (C.Cardiff, T.Cardiff *et al.*).

After two very good years during which 89 were recorded, numbers return to a more normal level – the average between 2000 and 2010 was just under three per year.

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedipnemus* (15; 10; 1)

Cork One: One, Bantry, 3rd June (N.Leahy).

This is the sixth for Cork. All except one of that total have been on islands and this is the first on the Cork mainland in over a century, since an adult female was shot at Castletownshend in February 1913.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* (34; 116; 3)

Cork One: One, The Gearagh, 2nd to 5th October (A.Duggan *et al.*).

Meath Two: Two, Gormanston and Laytown, 22nd April, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Records in October are unusual – the record at The Gearagh is only the ninth for October and only one of these was in the first half of the month. Indeed, there had previously been only three records between 7th August and 11th October.

American Golden Plover

Pluvialis dominica (1; 233; 26)

Clare One: Adult, Kilkee, 15th to 23rd September, photographed (J.F.Dowdall, K.Mullarney *et al.*).

Cork Three: One, Ballymaloe, 27th September (D.O'Sullivan); Adult, Dursey Island, 22nd October (K.Grace); One, Ballycotton, 2nd to 17th November (J.N.Murphy *et al.*).

Donegal One: Adult, Derrybeg, 20th September (C.Ingram, R.Sheppard).

Galway One: Juvenile, Rahasane Turlough, 20th September to 27th October (A.Ó'Dónaill *et al.*).

Kerry Two: One, Carrahane Strand, 24th September (E.Carty); One, Carrahane Strand, 25th October (E.Carty).

Louth One: Adult, The Hermitage, 15th September (B.Sheils).

Mayo Seven: Adult, Inishkeas, 17th May (D.Suddaby); Adult, Annagh Strand and Erris Head, 20th to 22nd August (M.Reilly *et al.*); Adult, Annagh Strand, 1st to 3rd September, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*); Adult, Tarmon Hill, Mullet Peninsula, 1st to 2nd September (D.Suddaby); Adult, Corragaun Lough, 14th September (P.Lonergan), photograph *Birding World* 26: 358; Adult, Annagh Strand, 4th to 10th October (D.Suddaby *et al.*); Juvenile, Leam Lough, Mullet Peninsula, 14th October (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Nine: One, Tacumshin Lake, 1st March (P.Kelly); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 30th to 31st August, photographed (L.Feeney, P.Pycket *et al.*); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 7th to 14th September, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); Adult, Tacumshin Lake and Lady's Island Lake, 13th to 15th September, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); Another adult, Lady's Island Lake, 15th to 29th September (K.Grace, P.Kelly *et al.*); Up to two adults, Tacumshin Lake, 21st to 29th September, photographed (S.Feeney, P.Kelly, S.Knott *et al.*); Adult, Rosslare, 29th September (P.Kelly); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 18th to 19th October (P.Kelly).

Wicklow One: One, Kilcoole, 28th April to 3rd May, photographed (N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh *et al.*).

This series includes the second record for Dursey Island (Cork). The recent upsurge in records has previously been commented on (*Irish Birds* 9: 589) and 26 in 2013 is the third highest annual total. This dramatic increase has also been apparent in Britain, where the period 2001 to 2010 accounted for 47% of the total between 1958 and 2010 (White & Kehoe 2014a). The equivalent figure for Ireland is more than 75%.

Little Ringed Plover

Charadrius dubius (0; 114; 15)

Cork Four: One, Kinsale, 2nd April (R.O'Driscoll); Adult, Dooniskey, 6th April, photographed (J.Lynch); One, Ballycotton, 9th April (D.O'Sullivan); One, Pilmore, 23rd August (D.O'Sullivan).

Wexford Seven: Two, Carnsore Point, 31st March (K.Grace); Adult male, Cahore Marsh, 7th to 8th April (Sh.Farrell *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 21st May, photographed (T.Moore); One, Churchtown, 30th June (T.Moore); One, Tacumshin Lake, 30th July (T.Moore); Presumed same, Tacumshin Lake, 3rd August (P.Kelly); One, Cahore Marsh, 28th September (Sh.Farrell, R.Vaughan).

Wicklow Four: Adult female, Kilcoole, 6th April (B.Haslam); One, Kilcoole, 1st June (N.T.Keogh); Juvenile, Poulaphuca Reservoir, 16th



Plate 36. American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*, Corragaun Lough, Co. Mayo, September 2013 (Pat Lonergan).

September, photographed (S.Millar); Juvenile, Kilcoole, 27th September, photographed (N.T.Keogh).

The duo at Carnsore Point in March was seen to fly in off the sea and head northwards. The occurrence of four in Wicklow almost doubles the total for the county, where the previous five have all occurred since 1997. Additionally, the presence of two juveniles there, particularly the inland bird, seems suggestive of local breeding.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* (3; 18; 1)

Donegal One: One, Killybegs, 29th March (G.Thomas), photographs *Birding World* 26: 93, *Birdwatch* 251: 66 (Thomas 2013).

The lucky finder of this bird went on to find a Killdeer on his local patch in Lancashire (England) only ten days later (Thomas 2013) – clearly lightning can strike twice! Uniquely among vagrant waders from the Nearctic, Killdeer tend to be found through the winter, with this the third found in March. Indeed, they have never occurred in August, a month virtually synonymous with Nearctic waders, and only one has been found in September, the famous individual on North Bull Island (Dublin) in 1980.

Lesser Sand Plover

Charadrius mongolus (0; 0; 1)

Cork One: Adult, showing characteristics of *C.m.mongolus*, Ring Strand, Pilmore and Clonpriest (all in Ballymacoda Bay), 27th to 28th July (D.O'Sullivan *et al.*), photographs *Birdwatch* 255: 62, *Duch Birding* 35: 334, *Wings* 71: 27.



Plate 37. Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*, Ballymacoda, Co. Cork, July 2013 (Aidan G. Kelly).

One of the great finds of the year. While a Sand Plover had been expected for many years, it was somewhat surprising that it turned out to be a Lesser Sand Plover rather than a Greater Sand Plover *C.leschenaultii*. Five Lesser Sand Plovers have occurred in Britain since the first in 1991 (BBRC 2013),

whereas there have been 16 Greater Sand Plovers since the first in 1978 (Hudson *et al.* 2013). However, numbers have not been very different since 1990 with five of the former and only seven of the latter. It is interesting to note that the first accepted British record of both species occurred at Pagham Harbour, West Sussex – perhaps another reason for Dennis O’Sullivan to keep frequenting Ballymacoda!

Fortunately, this individual was in summer plumage, considerably simplifying the identification. The generally small size and proportionally short ‘nail’ fit Lesser Sand Plover better than even the shorter-billed *columbinus* race of Greater Sand Plover. In addition, the dark flank markings remove all doubt – on current knowledge, these are diagnostic for birds of the *mongolus* group of Lesser Sand Plover, sometimes suggested as a distinct species, Mongolian Plover. The thin black line separating the white throat from the reddish-orange breast is also a feature shown by *C.m.mongolus* and not by either *C.m.atrifrons* or *C.leschenaultii*. Identification of this species is well covered in Garner *et al.* (2003).

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* (146; 150; 6)

Cork One: One, Ballycotton, 25th August (O.Foley).

Kerry Four: Up to four adults, Ballinskelligs, 23rd April to 1st May, photographed (P.McDaid *et al.*).

Wexford One: Female, Tacumshin Lake, 6th to 9th June (K.Mullarney *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 70: 26.

June records are unusual and the Wexford record is only the third for the month, following one at Slievenamon (Tipperary) in 1835 and one on Inishbofin (Galway) in 1992.



Plate 38. Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, June 2013 (Victor Caschera).

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* (0; 136; 12)

Cork Two: Adult, Owenahincha, 26th August, photographed (C.Cronin); One, Ballycotton, 8th to 10th October (O.Foley *et al.*).

Donegal One: Juvenile, Fanad, 26th October (W.Farrelly).

Dublin One: One, Rogerstown, 13th September (Sh.Farrell).

Kerry Five: Juvenile, Ventry, 19th to 24th September, photographed (C.Foley *et al.*); Juvenile, Black Rock Strand, 24th September to 21st October (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 71: 26; Juvenile, Carrahane Strand, 27th to 30th September, photographed (E.Carty *et al.*); Juvenile, Derrymore Island, 28th September (K.Kelly); One, Blennerville, 28th December (M.Hanafin).

Mayo Two: Juvenile, Annagh Strand, 9th to 11th September, photographed (M.Reilly *et al.*); Juvenile, Ross Strand, Killala, 15th to 17th September (D.Charles *et al.*).

Wexford One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 30th to 31st August (L.Feeney, P.Pycket *et al.*).

An excellent year – only 2011 (14) and 2008 (12) had previously recorded more than ten in a year. Only eight records have occurred outside the classic autumn Nearctic wader window between August and October – three in July, two in November and one each in May, June and now December. The December record in Kerry is almost unprecedented – the previous latest was at nearby Black Rock Strand, from 30th November to 12th December 2012.

White-rumped Sandpiper

Calidris fuscicollis (0; 314; 10)

Cork One: Juvenile, Ballycotton, 31st October to 2nd November (D.O'Sullivan *et al.*).

Dublin One: Adult, Swords, 2nd to 4th September, photographed (P.J.O'Keefe *et al.*).

Galway One: Juvenile, Inishbofin, 8th to 9th October (A.McGeehan).

Kerry Two: Adult, Blennerville, 21st to 22nd July, photographed (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*); Juvenile, Blennerville, 3rd September (M.O'Clery).

Mayo One: Juvenile, Leam Lough, Mullet Peninsula, 14th October (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Four: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 3rd June (K.Mullarney), photograph *Birding World* 26: 225; One, The Cull, 4th August (K.Grace); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 6th to 11th August (J.M.Murphy *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 26: 315; One, Tacumshin Lake, 21st August (P.Robinson, V.Tohill).

The worst year since 2009, when there were only four. As might be expected, the vast bulk of records are from coastal counties in the west and on the south coast as far as Wexford. Nonetheless, east coast records are far from unprecedented – the Dublin record is the 13th for Dublin and 46th for the east coast. The adult at Tacumshin Lake is the first to be found in June and the only months without records are March and April, although one in late February 1965 remained into March.

Semipalmated Sandpiper

Calidris pusilla (0; 177; 16)

Clare Two: One, Shannon Airport Lagoon, 30th August (O.Foley); Adult, Aughinish Island, 1st to 7th September, photographed (P.Troake).

Cork Two: Juvenile, Ring Strand and Pilmore Strand, 22nd September (D.O'Sullivan); Juvenile, Ballycotton, 26th October (O.Foley).

Donegal One: Juvenile, Derrybeg, 28th September to 5th October (D.Charles).

Kerry Two: Adult, Beale Strand, 11th to 17th September, photographed (D.Farrar *et al.*); One, Beale Strand, 13th September (I.Jones), in addition to the adult already present.

Mayo One: Juvenile, Bunlough Strand, Louisburgh, 7th September, photographed (D.Breen).

Wexford Seven: Three adults, Tacumshin Lake, 30th to 31st August, photographed (P.Kelly, K.Mullarney *et al.*); An additional adult, Tacumshin Lake, 31st August to 6th September, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 1st to 14th September, photographed (A.G.Kelly *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 13th to 23rd September, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 22nd to 27th September, photographed (P.Kelly, N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh *et al.*).

Wicklow One: Juvenile, Poulaphuca Reservoir, 9th to 10th September, photographed (S.Millar).

Another very good year for this species – third behind 2011 (63) and 1999 (18), and including the first record for Wicklow. The duo in Clare is also noteworthy as only four had previously occurred there. Timing of records in 2013 is normal – most records occur from the end of August through September. However, the late date of the Ballycotton bird on 26th October makes it the third latest ever; coincidentally both later records (29th October 2007 and 6th November 2010) were also at Ballycotton. This is one of the few species that has occurred more frequently in Ireland than in Britain, where there have been 115 records to the end of 2011 (BBRC 2013), compared to 173 in Ireland. Quite why this species more than



Plate 39. Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*, Bunlough Strand, Co. Mayo, September 2013 (Dermod Breen).



Plate 40. Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*, Tory Island, Co. Donegal, October 2013 (Victor Caschera).



Plate 41. Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*, Murlach, Co. Galway, September 2013 (Dermot Breen).

any other should be more common here is not immediately clear. Could it be that a higher proportion of those that arrive in Ireland are found? Perhaps this species gravitates more to well known, well-watched sites whereas others are distributed more widely?

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Donegal One: Juvenile, Tory Island, 17th to 21st September, photographed (R.Rodgers).

Mayo Four: Two females, Inishkeas, 17th to 21st May, photographed (D.Suddaby); Two additional females, Inishkeas, 21st May, photographed (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Two: Female, Tacumshin Lake, 10th June, photographed (E.Dempsey *et al.*); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 2nd August, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

The Mayo records are the earliest ever recorded in Ireland – there had previously never been a record earlier than the last week of May. Most spring arrivals have been in June, while August records are also rare and the Wexford individual above is only the fourth for the month. Henceforth, these reports will only publish records of non-breeding birds and any breeding birds will be included in the Irish Rare Breeding Bird Report.

Terek Sandpiper

Xenus cinereus (0; 5; 1)

Wexford One: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 9th July, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*).

The first for Ireland was as recently as 1996, also in Wexford, which now draws level with Kerry and Dublin on two each.

This is the third in July, all of which have arrived between 9th and 11th. Five have been adults and the sole juvenile occurred in Kerry in 2004.

Spotted Sandpiper

Actitis macularius (1; 41; 2)

Donegal One: Juvenile, Tory Island, 5th to 6th October (V.Caschera, J.F.Dowdall, T.Murphy *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 72: 25.

Galway One: Juvenile, Inishmore, 7th October (P.Kelly).

2012 Clare One: Juvenile, Moyasta, 13th October to 3rd November, photographed (G.Butler, F.MacGabhann, T.Mee, J.N.Murphy, T.Tarpey *et al.*).

The tenth year in succession in which this species has occurred and this series includes the first for Donegal. Prior to 2004 it was genuinely rare here, with only 12 recorded. Since then, it has averaged over three per annum.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* (0; 138; 8)

Galway Two: Juvenile, Ballyconneely, 20th to 26th September (M.A.Harris, M.J.Harris *et al.*), photograph *Birdwatch* 257: 69; Juvenile, Muckrush, Lough Corrib, 4th to 5th October (A.Ó'Dónaill *et al.*).

Louth One: Adult, Dundalk, 29th April to 2nd May, photographed (E.Larrisey *et al.*).

Mayo One: First-summer, Inishkeas, 7th May, photographed (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Four: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 27th April to 2nd May, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); One, Rosslare Back Strand, 16th July, photographed (K.Mullarney); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 20th to 26th August, photographed (J.Cassidy, J.M.Murphy, J.Sheehan *et al.*); Juvenile, North Slob NNR, 15th to 25th September, photographed (B.Burke, A.Butler, T.Murray *et al.*).



Plate 42. Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*, Lady's Island Lake, Co. Wexford, February 2013 (John N. Murphy).

Along with 2006, the joint second best year ever – just three behind the total set in 2005. There is a history of spring records and the April and May birds neatly fit the pattern of a small peak in numbers around that time. The continued regularity of this species flags the extreme rarity of Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*, which has only occurred twice since 1983, despite the fact that up to the mid 1960s they occurred at roughly the same rate.

Long-billed Dowitcher

Limnodromus scolopaceus (2; 120; 1)

Wexford One: Adult winter, Lady's Island Lake and Tacumshin Lake, 14th January to 9th March (K.Mullarney *et al.*), photograph *Dutch Birding* 35: 48.

Winter records and long stays are relatively common – the average stay is almost 40 days and more than one-third of records are of birds staying for more than a week.

Little Auk *Alle alle* (90; 1807; -)

2008 Louth One: One, at sea, approximately 1.5 kilometres north of the Dunany Buoy, 4th September (D.Branagh).

This species was removed from consideration by the IRBC from 1st January 2012 (see www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce60.php). However, for completeness, records prior to that date will continue to be published, and species statistics will only reflect occurrences up to 31st December 2011. Although very unusual at this time of year, this record is not without precedent as one was collected after it hit the Arranmore Lighthouse (Donegal) in late August 1913 (Barrington 1913). This individual was



Plate 43. Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, August 2013 (Paul Kelly).

watched at close quarters and all of the diagnostic features were noted.

Gull-billed Tern

Gelochelidon nilotica (0; 17; 2)

Wexford Two: Two adults, Tacumshin Lake, 3rd to 20th July, (K.Mullarney *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 26: 272; One of this duo, Lady's Island Lake, 4th to 11th August, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

A classic mid-summer bird – twelve of the total have occurred in either June or July. This is the second time that two have occurred together – the previous occasion, in 2000, was also at Tacumshin Lake. The length of stay of these birds is noteworthy as they tend not to stay long. Eleven visits have been three days or less and only two others have stayed more than seven days – one at Tacumshin Lake in 1996 stayed for 15 days and one was seen for up to 14 days in the Courtmacsherry area of Cork in 1998.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* (0; 10; 1)

Wexford One: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 23rd August (P.Kelly *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 26: 317.

This is a big bird in more ways than one – it is both the largest tern on the planet and a very difficult bird to see in Ireland. With more than half of the total occurring in August, this is clearly the best month to see them. However, like this individual (the first for Wexford), many have only put in brief occurrences, often only a few hours. Only twice, and not since 1998, has one stayed for more than a day.

White-winged Black Tern

Chlidonias leucopterus (9; 86; 4)

Louth One: Juvenile, Cruisetown, 24th to 29th August, photographed (B.McCloskey *et al.*).

Meath One: Juvenile, Gormanston, 5th September (P.Kelly).

Wexford Two: Adult, Lady's Island Lake, 23rd to 26th May (D.Daly *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 18th to 24th September, photographed (R.H.Coombes, D.Murphy *et al.*).

Occurrences of this species seem to be increasing – there were 12 in the 1980s, 15 in the 1990s, 25 in the 2000s and there have already been 10 in only four years since 2010. In common with seasonal patterns in Britain (White & Kehoe 2014a), there is a relatively small spring peak between mid-May and mid-June. Autumn numbers are higher and the season is more protracted – from mid-July through to a single November record with the vast majority in August and September.



Plate 44. White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, September 2013 (Killian Mullarney).

Forster's Tern

Sterna forsteri (0; 35; 2)

Cork One: First-winter, Garretstown, 14th December (O.Foley).

Dublin Zero: Adult winter, Rogerstown, Rush and Portrane, 29th September to 22nd October, photographed (P.J.O'Keeffe *et al.*), presumed same as Louth bird from previous years.

Galway Zero: Adult, Nimmo's Pier, Kinvara and Newtownlynch Pier, from 29th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 594) remained to 28th March; Adult, Galway Bay, 4th November to 4th December, photographed (T.Cuffe *et al.*), presumed returning.

Wexford One: First-winter, Lady's Island Lake, 20th January (K.Mullarney), photograph *Dutch Birding* 35: 50.

The first-winter individuals are the first new birds since 2008. It is interesting to note the absence of the adult that had

frequented Tacumshin Lake since 2008, thought by some to be the same as the returning Galway individual but treated as different in the statistics (see *Irish Birds* 9: 474–475).

Bonaparte's Gull

Chroicocephalus philadelphia (1; 66; 4)

Dublin One: Adult winter, Skerries, 2nd to 18th March, photographed (A.G.Kelly *et al.*); Adult winter, Rush, 17th October (M.Stewart), presumed returning.

Kerry One: Adult summer, Castlegregory, 13th to 14th May (M.O'Clery *et al.*), photographs *Birdwatch* 253: 66, *Wings* 70: 27.

Waterford One: Adult summer, between Ardmore and Whiting Bay, 9th July (S.Cronin).

Wexford One: Adult summer, Tacumshin Lake, 2nd to 13th May, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Formerly a very rare bird, with only two records until 1980, each decade since has seen increasing numbers – there were eight in the 1980s, followed by 12 in the 1990s, but numbers exploded in the 2000s to 38. In the twenty years between 1994 and 2013, only 1994 and 2001 were without records.



Plate 45. Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*, Castlegregory, Co. Kerry, May 2013 (David O'Connor).

Atlantic Gull

Larus michahellis atlantis (0; 11; 0)

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

2012 Cork One: Third calendar-year, Muckross, Clonakilty, 9th to 17th September, photographed (M.O'Keeffe).

2004 Dublin Zero: Adult, Sandymount Strand, 9th October (N.T.Keogh).

The 2004 Dublin record is presumed to be the first sighting of the adult subsequently seen intermittently at the same location between 2005 and 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 385, 8: 404 & 8: 597). With the recent increase in records of this taxon one wonders whether they might be a precursor to Ireland's first Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii*, which has occurred recently in north-western Europe in Germany (Flore 1997), Holland (Wolf 2003) and Britain (Walker 2004).

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* (0; 12; 1)

Waterford One: First-winter, probably a female, Dunmore East, 24th January to 9th February, photographed (P.Archer *et al.*).

Based on its small size, this individual was almost certainly a female. The finder initially expressed some concern that the scapulars were slightly dark for a classic Caspian Gull of this age. However, subsequent research and expert opinion indicated that the colour was within the normal variation of the species. Photographs (plate 42) show the classic features – thin-looking legs, a narrow, dark bill, clean white head and isolated dark eye, solid, un-notched tertials, clean underparts and a solidly dark tail-band, contrasting with a very clean upper-tail.



Plate 46. Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*, Dunmore East, Co. Waterford, January 2013 (Paul Archer).

American Herring Gull

Larus smithsonianus (0; 91; 1)

Cork One: First-winter, Baltimore, 2nd to 9th February (O.Foley *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 52.

A classic date, location and age for a species that has become strangely scarce recently – this is the fourth year in succession in which only one individual has occurred.

Kumlien's Gull

Larus glaucooides kumlieni (0; 190; 23)

Cork Six: Fourth-winter, Cobh, from 26th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 595) remained to 3rd April; First-winter, Eyerics, West Beara, 3rd February, photographed (F.Moore); Two first-winters, Castletown Bearhaven, 9th February to 31st March, photographed (O.Foley, H.Hyvonen *et al.*); First-winter, Timoleague, 7th March to 29th April (R.Mundy *et al.*); First-winter, Dinish Island, 9th March, photographed (F.Moore); First-winter, Kilkerran Lake, 17th April (C.Barton).

Donegal Ten: Eight at Killybegs as follows: First-winter, 12th January to 23rd February, photographed (D.Charles *et al.*); Third-winter, 2nd February, photographed (D.Charles); Three first-winters, 23rd February to 29th March (D.Charles *et al.*); Adult, 16th March (D.Charles); Fourth-winter, 16th March (D.Charles); First-winter, 23rd November, photographed (D.Charles); Two at locations other than Killybegs, as follows: First-winter, Tory Island, 30th March (M.Boyle, A.McMillan); First-winter, Magheraroarty, 9th April, photographed (G.Murray, P.Phillips).

Galway Three: First-winter, Rossaveal, 30th January to 24th March, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*); Second-winter, Nimmo's Pier and Rossaveal, 22nd October to 8th March 2014, photographed (H.Delaney *et al.*); Adult winter, Ross Beach, 13th November, photographed (D.Breen).

Kerry Two: First-winter, Cromane Harbour, 31st January to 15th February, photographed (S.Enright *et al.*); First-winter, Cromane Harbour, 10th March (S.Enright).

Louth One: Adult, Lurgangreen, 19th January, photographed (P.Kelly).

Wexford One: First-winter, Kilmore Quay, 29th December to 12th January 2014, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

2011 Donegal Zero: Adult, Killybegs, from 20th November 2011 to 28th February 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 473 & 9: 595) was still present 8th April 2012.

Another very good year, only 2012 (37) and 2007 (27) have had higher totals. Records in the early part of the winter are unusual – the Galway record for October is only the fourth for that month. In common with Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea* and Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea*, also originating in the Arctic, most records occur between January and March.

Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri* (0; 8; 1)

Donegal One: Adult, Killybegs, 16th December (D.Charles *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 489, *Birdwatch* 260: 12 (Charles 2013). This is only the second adult to be found in Ireland – the previous record was found at the same location in 1998 (*Irish Birds* 7: 231). This individual shows a strong set of features consistent with Thayer's Gull, including a complete band on p5, a feature that was not present on the 1998 bird. Other features supporting the identification include a complete black sub-terminal band on p10 with a very small white tip, the fact that the white mirror on p9 does not extend onto the



Plate 47. Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*, Killybegs, Co. Donegal, December 2013 (Derek Charles).

outer web, dark heavily flecked irises and pink orbital ring, dark grey-blue upperparts (darker even than *argenteus* Herring Gull), raspberry pink legs, large white tertial crescents, slight greenish tones to the lower mandible and to the base of the upper mandible and a ring of heavy nicotine coloured staining around the neck and breast.

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* (55; 24; 0)

Donegal Zero: Adult male, Arranmore Island, 31st May to 6th September, photographed (M.Glynn), presumed returning; Presumed same, Ardara, 1st October, photographed (E.Ward).

Mayo Zero: One, feather found, Inishkea North, 21st May (D.Suddaby), presumed to relate to the female that has been seen around west Mayo since 2006.

2009 Mayo Zero: Adult female, Tarmon Hill, Mullet Peninsula, from 8th August to 10th October (*Irish Birds* 9: 270) was still present 14th October (D.G.McAdams).

There have been intermittent records from the Donegal mainland and islands since 2004. Based on differences in age and sex there are clearly four different individuals involved. A female or immature bird was on Arranmore Island in August 2004, a second calendar-year female at Dooey Point in October 2006, another second calendar-year female on Tory Island in 2009 and a male on Arranmore Island from July to September 2012.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba* (7; 69; 2)

Cork One: One, Old Head of Kinsale, 26th September (T.C.Kelly).

Dublin One: One, Glasnevin, 17th April (F.Buckley).

The Cork record is almost the latest on record – only one at Tacumshin Lake (Wexford) on 30th September 1979 is later, although a very late bird was at the Marathon Gas Platform on 9th November 1988 (treated as an 'at sea' record).

Roller *Coracias garrulus* (12; 7; 0)

1884 Cork Minus one: Immature male, obtained near Skibbereen, 29th October (Ussher & Warren 1900, Kennedy *et al.* 1954) was in 1883, see below.

1883 Cork One: Immature male, obtained near Skibbereen, 29th October (More 1890).

1851 Cork Zero: One, obtained near Dunmanway (Ussher & Warren 1900, Kennedy *et al.* 1954) was in September 1851 (Harvey 1875).

The year of occurrence for the Skibbereen record was published as 1884 in Ussher and Warren (1900), quoting from 'More's List'. However, More (1890) gives the year of the record as 1883. As there is no indication that Ussher & Warren were making a correction of More's work, it is assumed that the correct year is 1883. Both of these corrections are based on research provided to the committee by Pat Smiddy.



Plate 48. Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*, Great Saltee Island, Co. Wexford, September 2013 (Paul Archer).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* (9; 262; 29)

Clare One: One, The Fodry, Loop Head, 30th September, photographed (J.Hayes).

Cork Eighteen: Up to two, Cape Clear Island, 24th to 25th September (G.Murray, P.Phillips, S.Wing, J.Wylie *et al.*); One, Firkeel, 24th September to 3rd October (A.A.K.Lancaster *et al.*); One, Mizen Head, 25th September (D.Ballard); Up to four, Galley Head, 26th to 30th September, one photographed (C.Barton, K.Cronin, R.Cronin *et al.*); One, Baltimore, 26th September (M.Mitchell); One, Ballycotton, 27th September (O.Foley); One, Power Head, 27th to 29th September, photographed (S.Ronayne *et al.*); One, Cape Clear Island, 5th to 8th October (P.Lynch *et al.*); One, Mizen Head, 5th to 11th October (P.Wolstenholme *et al.*); One, Ballymacrown, 6th October (M.O'Keefe); One, Ballycotton, 7th October (G.Walsh); One, Dursley Island, 11th October (A.A.K.Lancaster); One, Mizen Head, 28th October, photographed (F.Hillig, M.Reimann *et al.*); One, Dursley Island, 1st to 3rd November (D.Cooke, P.Rowe *et al.*).

Donegal Two: One, Tory Island, 27th September (A.Meenan); One, Arranmore Island, 3rd to 4th October, photographed (R.Vaughan *et al.*).

Galway Two: Two, Inishbofin, 25th to 26th September (C.Batty *et al.*).

Kerry One: One, Dunquin, 1st October (D.Farrar).

Mayo Two: One, Tarmon Hill, Mullet Peninsula, 23rd September, photographed (D.Suddaby); One, Glenlara, Mullet Peninsula, 27th to 29th September, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

Waterford One: One, Brownstown Head, 27th September (P.M.Walsh).

Wexford Two: One, Carnsore Point, 27th September, photographed (A.Walsh); One, Great Saltee Island, 28th to 29th September, photographed (K.Grace, A.Walsh *et al.*).

2004 Antrim One: One, found dead, Portrush, 17th August (*NIBR* 16: 118).

Almost annual in occurrence, numbers have increased considerably since 2000 and this is the second highest total of all time, seven fewer than in 2010. Given that Wryneck numbers have been stable in Britain, and that the European breeding population has undergone a moderate decline since the 1980s (White & Kehoe 2014a), it seems likely that the increase here may reflect increased observer coverage and the removal of the requirement by IRBC for substantiating documentation since 2005 (see www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php), rather than any real increase. The occurrence of eight on the west coast between Kerry and Donegal is particularly noteworthy as there had previously been only 12 recorded there – the Clare record is only the second for the county, and the first since October 1931. The two records for Galway are only the third and fourth records for the county, and the first in over 100 years – the previous two were found dead at the North Aran Lighthouse in 1886 and 1912 and constituted the third and seventh records for Ireland. The Antrim record in 2004 was published in the *Northern Ireland Bird Report* but was not previously published in an *Irish Bird Report*.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo* (14; 288; 31)

At Sea Zero: Second calendar-year, 100 nautical miles south of Fastnet Rock, Western Approaches, 22nd August, photographed (R.McLaughlin).

Clare Two: One, Lickeen Lake, 11th July (D.McNamara); One, Lissycasey, 21st July (P.Troake).

Cork Nine: One, Ballycotton, 14th April (O.Foley, H.Hyvφnen); One, Copperingstown, 11th May (P.Moore); One, Shanagarry, 21st May (D.O'Sullivan); Second calendar-year, Connonagh, 27th May (C.Jones); One, Rostellan, 23rd June (O.Foley); Adult, Midleton, 21st July (F.O'Connell); One, Mizen Head, 25th August (D.Ballard, P.Connaughton); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 12th to 15th October (O.Foley *et al.*); One, Ballycotton, 20th October (C.Foley, D.Foley).

Dublin Three: One, Chapelizod, 7th June (J.Geraty); One, Skerries, 24th June (J.Hayes); Immature, Knock Lake, 19th September (S.Pierce).

Galway One: Juvenile, Rahasane Turlough, 10th September (P.Capsey).

Kerry One: Adult, Castleisland, 18th May (E.Carty).

Waterford Two: One, Carriganvantry, 5th June (A.Jacques); One, Carriganvantry, 11th July (A.Jacques).

Wexford Nine: Second calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 10th to 24th May (P.Kelly *et al.*); Second calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 24th May to 19th June, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); One, Scarawalsh, Enniscorthy, 14th June (K.Grace); One, South Slob, 17th June (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly); One, Tacumshin Lake, 9th August (P.Kelly); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 21st to 26th August (P.Phillips *et al.*); One, Cullenstown, 31st August (M.Wink); One, Carnsore Point, 26th September (S.Feeney); One, Cahore Marsh, 9th October (N.Veale).

Wicklow Four: Adult, Killoughter, 8th May (H.Delaney, P.King); One, Kilcoole, 5th June (N.T.Keogh); One, Newcastle, 15th June (M.Hogan, M.Jenkins); Second calendar-year, Newcastle, 6th to 8th October, photographed (C.Cardiff, T.Cardiff *et al.*).

Yet another excellent year – only 2010 (45) and 2012 (33) had higher totals than 2013. This upsurge in records is relatively recent – the annual average for the six years between 2008 and 2013 is 30, compared to an average of just over five for the previous six years. For the second year in succession, the number of records in June (ten) exceeds that for May (seven). While this may be a mere statistical blip, it could also perhaps be evidence of a small breeding population – only time will tell.

Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus* (87; 37; 1)

Kerry One: Juvenile white morph, Ferriter's Cove and Dunquin, 19th to 28th November, photographed (J.Crosher, M.Manning *et al.*).

As can be seen from the statistics, this species was reasonably regular before 1950. There were 38 in the nineteenth century and 49 in the first half of the twentieth century, but only 29 in the second half. The highest annual total was in 1905 when 12 occurred, including eight 'obtained' in western counties in March (Kennedy *et al.* 1954). This influx may well have been a result of inclement weather during the latter half of February that year, which was characterised by strong gales, mostly from a generally westerly direction, and both Malin Head and Blacksod Point recorded gale force winds on eleven days that month (Met Office 1905).

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

Galway One: Adult, Inishbofin, 24th September (A.McGeehan), photographs *Birding World* 26: 354, *Birdwatch* 257: 58, *Dutch Birding* 35: 398 (McGeehan 2013).

Hot on the heels of the first record for Ireland in 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 596) comes a repeat show, but on this occasion to an even smaller audience! The considered view of expert opinion canvassed is that this individual can be aged based primarily on the state of moult and feather wear. The apparent differences in the state of moult, between the fresher and darker back feathers and the more-worn wing coverts, are very typical of an adult after the pre-alternate moult and would not be found on September juveniles. In addition, the sixth secondary on the right wing and one of the rectrices on the right side have been replaced accidentally sometime during the previous few months. A juvenile would not show such contrasts in wear between these replaced feathers and the older adjacent feathers, and would probably not have had time to grow these new feathers in the first place. The shape of the newer and older rectrices are similar – in a juvenile, the shape of the replaced rectrix would be noticeably broader and squarer than that of the retained juvenile rectrices. The head plumage, with a very black and clean-edged cap is crisper than is found in juveniles. In addition, the tip to the outer primary, although difficult to be definitive based on the photograph, seems pointed and more like an adult (P.Pyle, D.Sibley pers. comm.). As an adult, there is a possibility that this may actually be a return visit from the 2012 Inishmore bird. However, there is no strong evidence to conclude this to be the case and it is treated as a different individual in the statistics.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* (0; 56; 2)

Cork One: One, Inch Strand, 26th September (P.Moore).

Kerry One: One, Dunquin, 1st to 2nd October (D.Farrar *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 72: 26.

Although it has averaged almost one a year since the first in 1951, this species is far from annual – it has occurred at a rate of one year in three. It is often the precursor to a good year for Nearctic land-birds and is associated particularly with the 'great years' when it is often accompanied by a panoply of colourful Nearctic warblers – in particular, 1985, 1990 and 2008 – to which list 2013 must surely be added!

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* (62; 149; 5)

Cork One: Female or first-summer male, Dursey Island, 4th June (J.K.Wolstencroft *et al.*).

Galway One: Adult male, Inishbofin, 22nd April to 1st May, found dead on the last date (A.Herlihy).

Wexford Three: Female or first-summer male, Hook Head, 8th May (J.K.Lovatt); Two males, Hook Head, 14th May (T.Murray).

April records are not uncommon, accounting for just over one-eighth of all records. However, only six have been earlier than the Galway individual.



Plate 49. Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*, Dunquin, Co. Kerry, October 2013 (David O'Connor).

Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus* (0; 4; 1)

Wexford One: First-winter, showing characteristics of *L.i.isabellinus*, Rostoonstown, 24th to 25th November, photographed (N.Keogh *et al.*).

Although this is the latest arrival on record, the previous individual in Wexford (which was found on 20th November 2000) stayed until 9th December. This is the fourth individual showing characteristics of 'Daurian Shrike' *L.i.isabellinus*, often considered to be a species in its own right. The remaining record, in Mayo in 2009, was considered indeterminate at sub-specific level and there are no accepted records of 'Turkestan Shrike' *L.i.phoenicuroides*.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* (7; 165; 8)

Cork Four: First-winter, Galley Head, 26th to 28th September, photographed (C.Barton); First-winter, Mizen Head, 1st to 7th October (D.Ballard, P.Wolstenholme *et al.*); First-winter, Long Strand, 2nd October, photographed (C.Barton *et al.*); First-winter, Dursey Island, 2nd October, photographed (K.Grace *et al.*).

Louth One: First-winter, Cooley Point, 10th to 12th October, photographed (B.Martin *et al.*).

Wexford Three: Adult male, Tacumshin Lake, 19th June, photographed (M.McLoughlin, M.Power *et al.*); First-winter, Hook Head, 24th to 30th September, photographed (H.Gallagher, K.Mullarney *et al.*); First-winter, Carne, 6th to 9th October (S.Collins *et al.*).

1981 Down One: Male, trapped, Copeland Bird Observatory, 31st May (NIBR 1981: 38).



Plate 50. Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*, Rostoonstown, Co. Wexford, November 2013 (Tom Shevlin).



Plate 51. Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*, Hook Head, Co. Wexford, September 2013 (Aidan G. Kelly).

For the second year in succession a near record eight were recorded, and on this occasion including the first record for Louth. The June record at Tacumshin Lake is only the fourth for the month, following two in the first week of June 1960, in Wexford and Antrim, and one near Glencree in Wicklow in 1986. The latter record, on the 28th, is the latest spring record and is one of only two inland spring records – the other was at Portadown, Co. Armagh in May 1953. See also Appendix 5 for details of corrections to the statistics.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* (2; 94; 4)

Cork One: First-summer male, Courtmacsherry, 27th April, photographed (N.Mitchell, P.Wolstenholme *et al.*).

Galway One: First-winter, Inishbofin, 26th September, photographed (A.McGeehan *et al.*).

Wexford Two: One, Ring Marsh, 2nd to 6th May, photographed (T.Murray *et al.*); One, Hook Head, 14th May, photographed (T.Murray, A.Walsh *et al.*).

In a bizarre coincidence, the fortunes of this species in Galway parallels no less a rarity than Eastern Kingbird – both were added to the Galway list on Inishmore in autumn 2012 and both had their second occurrence on Inishbofin in autumn 2013!

Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Regulus calendula (0; 0; 1)

Cork One: First-winter female, Cape Clear Island, 27th October, trapped and ringed (E.O'Donnell *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 425 & 426, *Birdwatch* 258: 7, *Dutch Birding* 35: 398, *Wings* 72: 24 (O'Donnell 2013a, O'Donnell 2013b).

This, the Nearctic counterpart of Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*, is very rare on this side of the Atlantic. There are only two accepted Western Palearctic records – on 23rd November 1987 and 10th to 11th October 1998, both on Heimaey, Vestmannaeyjar, Iceland. One, said to have been shot at Loch Lomond, Strathclyde, Scotland in the summer of 1852, and reviewed on multiple occasions, is not regarded as acceptable by the BOURC due to confusion over the provenance of the specimen (Mitchell 1992, Knox 1994). As the bird on Cape Clear Island was a first-year, occurring during the appropriate season for Nearctic passerines and following the arrival of a fast-moving Atlantic depression with strong winds and rain, there is no hesitation in adding the species to Category A of the Irish List (see www.irbc.ie/topbar/categories.php for details of the various categories used).



Plate 52. Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*, Cape Clear Island, Co. Cork, October 2013 (Kerri Gorentz).

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus* (0; 88; 29)

Wexford Twenty-nine: The group of up to 24 at Tacumshin Lake, from 3rd July 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 478 & 9: 598) remained to at least 31st March 2014, with a peak count of 27 on 18th June 2013 (N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh *et al.*); Three males and three females, Ring Marsh, from 19th February 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 598) remained to 12th April 2014, peaking at 22 on 10th November 2013 (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly), photograph *Wings* 70: 27, presumed to include the six from February 2012; Ten, including both males and females, South Slob, 17th November, photographed (P.Kelly).

2012 Wexford Five: Male and four juveniles, Cahore Marsh, 10th June to 12th April 2013 (Sh.Farrell *et al.*).

Although present in south Wexford since November 2010, there is no sign of any occurrences farther afield – unlike the 1970s and 1980s when they were regular in both Wicklow and Cork. Surprisingly, given the available habitat, a party of three at Ring Marsh in September 1979 was the only record in Wexford during those two decades.

Short-toed Lark

Calandrella brachydactyla (1; 73; 2)

Cork Two: One, Ballycotton, 7th to 21st October, photographed (P.Moore *et al.*); One, Cape Clear Island, 9th October (M.Cowming).

Twenty-one, more than a quarter of records, have been found in the first two weeks of October, and between them, Ballycotton and Cape Clear Island have a similar total.

Red-rumped Swallow

Cecropis daurica (0; 47; 1)

Wexford One: One, Great Saltee Island, 6th May, photographed (J.Adamson *et al.*).

Traditionally considered an early migrant, with occurrences from mid-February, this is the fifth May record in two years. As a result of these two years, May has superseded April as the peak month for occurrences.

Greenish Warbler

Phylloscopus trochiloides (0; 37; 2)

Cork One: One, Baltimore, 1st September (J.Wylie).

Wexford One: One, Great Saltee Island, 30th August (K.Grace).

With the exception of three spring records, all have occurred between 25th August and 19th October. September is the peak month and records are evenly distributed across the three ten-day periods of the month. As might be expected, these records are among the earliest autumn occurrences – there had previously been only three August records.

Western Bonelli's Warbler

Phylloscopus bonelli (0; 13; 1)

Cork One: One, Garinish, 27th September to 4th October, photographed (A.A.K.Lancaster, P.Troake *et al.*).

This, the first for the Beara Peninsula, is at the later end of the normal arrival period – there have been four in August, eight in September (of which this individual is the latest) and two records from the last week in October. We still await Ireland's first record of Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus orientalis* which has occurred at the rate of roughly one for every thirteen *P.bonelli* in Britain since the first *orientalis* there in 1987 (BBRC 2013) – on this basis, we should be due one soon!

Siberian Chiffchaff

Phylloscopus collybita tristis (2; 30; 4)

Galway One: One, Slyne Head, 29th October, photographed (D.Breen).

Kerry One: One, Tralee, 7th December, photographed (D.A.O'Connor).

Waterford One: One, Dunhill, 29th March, photographed and sound recorded (M.Cowming).

Wexford One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 17th November, photographed (K.Mullarney).

2007 Cork One: One, Lee Road, Cork City, 13th to 27th March, photographed and sound recorded (H.Hussey *et al.*).

Four in a year is as good as we have had in recent times – only 1975 (when there were eleven) has had more.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria* (6; 174; 10)

Cork Four: One, Mizen Head, 14th September (D.Ballard); One, Mizen Head, 3rd October (D.Ballard); First-winter, Garinish, 5th October (K.Grace, A.A.K.Lancaster); First-winter, Firkeel, 10th October (K.Grace).

Galway One: First-winter, Inishbofin, 24th September (A.McGeehan *et al.*).

Mayo One: First-winter, Tarmon Hill, Mullet Peninsula, 20th October, photographed (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Four: First-winter, Hook Head, 26th September to 2nd October, photographed (G.Lyons *et al.*); One, Churchtown, 5th October (B.Haslam); First-winter, Churchtown, 4th November (K.Fahy); First-winter, Fethard-on-Sea, 8th to 15th November, photographed (L.Ryan *et al.*).

2010 Kerry Zero: First calendar-year, Mwееvее, 17th October (*Irish Birds* 9: 306) had been present since 16th October (Carty 2014).

Barred Warbler is exclusively an autumn passage migrant in Ireland with records from the last third of August through to the end of November. White and Kehoe (2014b) comment on a similar extreme scarcity of spring records in Britain where there have only been 18, of a total for Britain of 6,488 between 1968 and 2010. They postulate that perhaps autumn numbers might represent a migration strategy to allow young birds to take advantage of a glut of autumn fruits in northern Europe prior to a more concerted migration to winter quarters.

Central Asian Lesser Whitethroat

Sylvia curruca halimodendri (0; 1; 0)

2011 Louth One: One, Westcourt, Drogheda, 13th January to 31st March, photographed, trapped and ringed (C.Honan, K.McGuigan, K.Mullarney, A.Walsh *et al.*).

This individual, the first for Ireland, provided a very instructive lesson! Field identification of out-of-range Lesser Whitethroats to a particular taxon is effectively impossible, though there are several characters that may be used to separate Asian forms, in a broad sense, from the familiar nominate form that breeds throughout Western Europe. Biometrics offer further clues, but DNA may ultimately be required to assign birds to a definite taxon with a high degree of confidence. In this bird, the wing formula, very extensive clean white in the outer tail



Plate 53. Central Asian Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca halimodendri*, Drogheda, Co. Louth, January 2011 (Aidan G. Kelly).

feathers and distinctive call all pointed strongly to one of the Asian forms.

DNA sequencing on a feather taken when the bird was trapped was carried out by Professor Peter de Knijff in The Netherlands. The analysis confirmed that it is a somewhat atypical *balimodendri*, identical to birds previously found wintering in The Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden and Scotland. The precise area of origin of these birds remains a mystery. So far, in spite of numerous samples from the Middle East and Central Asia having been sequenced, an exact match has not been found, other than in these few wintering birds in north-west Europe. No doubt an answer to this puzzle will emerge as work continues.

Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* (2; 49; 1)

Cork One: First-summer male, Inch Strand, 7th to 8th May, photographed (B.Lynch *et al.*).

This record continues the distinctly southerly bias to records – only five have occurred away from the south coast, with two in Down and one each in Antrim, Kerry and Mayo.

Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata* (0; 4; 1)

Wexford One: Juvenile, Hook Head, 24th to 27th September, photographed, trapped and ringed (H.Gallagher, K.Mullamey, A.Walsh *et al.*).

The first record for Wexford and the first for Ireland since 2006. All five have occurred between 26th August and 27th September. The arrival of the first four between 2003 and 2006 led to the hope that perhaps this species would become a regular, if scarce, visitor to our shores. This has not so far transpired to be the case, notwithstanding that British sightings have continued to occur at a fairly constant rate (Hudson *et al.* 2013).

Sykes's Warbler *Iduna rama* (0; 1; 1)

Cork One: One, Garinish, 2nd October, photographed (K.Grace, A.A.K.Lancaster).

This record shows many similarities to the only other Irish record, in 1990 – both were in October, in west Cork and neither stayed long. However, in 1990 this taxon was almost unknown among European birders and its true identification, while suspected soon after its occurrence, was only confirmed many years later (McGeehan 1990, IRBC 2003). In contrast, the identification of this individual, while subtle and requiring careful attention to detail was more straightforward, with the observers forearmed by knowledge of both this species and its confusion species.

Melodious Warbler

Hippolais polyglotta (2; 197; 3)

Cork Two: One, Mizen Head, 3rd September (D.Ballard); One, Cape Clear Island, 8th October (M.Cowming).



Plate 54. Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata*, Hook Head, Co. Wexford, September 2013 (Hugh Gallagher).



Plate 55. Sykes's Warbler *Iduna rama*, Garinish, Co. Cork, October 2013 (Tony Lancaster).

Wexford One: One, Cahore Marsh, 28th September (R.Vaughan). In the half century between 1964 and 2013 this species averages about three a year, although numbers have been as high as 15 (1983) and there have been a number of years in which there were none.

Rose-coloured Starling

Pastor roseus (41; 101; 1)

Donegal One: Juvenile, Tory Island, 3rd October to 1st November, photographed (T.Murphy *et al.*).

A very quiet year by recent standards. Since the turn of the century, the annual average has been more than five and only 2009, when none occurred, had fewer records than 2013. See also Appendix 5 for details of a correction to the statistics.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* (0; 29; 3)

Cork Two: One, Mizen Head, 4th September (J.N.Murphy *et al.*); One, Garinish, 21st September (O.Foley).

Wexford One: One, Hook Head, 13th September (K.Grace).

This equals 1955 and 2010 as the highest annual total, although in 1955 all occurred in spring. Prior to 1970, records were far more common in spring (ten records) than in autumn (two records). Since 1970, the temporal distribution has shifted towards autumn, with 14 recorded, and only six in spring. With eight spring records on Great Saltee Island (Wexford) from 1953 to 1963, one wonders whether the demise of the observatory there in 1963 has resulted in fewer Nightingales being found due to a reduction in observer coverage.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* (0; 41; 1)

Cork One: One, Mizen Head, 3rd October (D.Ballard).

2005 Cork One: One, Cape Clear Island, 5th October (T.Murray).

With the addition of the sole record for 2005, Cape Clear Island, with 14, now accounts for one-third of the national total.

Blue-headed Wagtail

Motacilla flava flava (0; 62; 1)

Wexford One: Male, Tacumshin Lake, 19th July to 10th August, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*).

Surprisingly, this is only the third record for Tacumshin Lake, with the first as recently as 2006.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* (2; 103; 2)

Donegal One: One, Tory Island, 20th October (A.G.Kelly); Presumed same, Tory Island, 24th October (S.Feeney).

Louth One: One, Cooley Point, 2nd to 24th February, photographed (B.Martin *et al.*).

With only three Dublin records and one in Wicklow, this species is very rare on the east coast and the Louth record is the first for the county. While unusual, this February record is not unprecedented as one was found in Wexford in the same month in 1989.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* (0; 51; 1)

Cork One: One, Mizen Head, 12th October (O.Foley).

Numbers of this species have increased recently, although this

may be a function of the change in documentation requirements for Appendix 2 species since 2005 (see www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php). This is the eighth year in succession in which they have occurred, at an average of three per year. Previous to this, there were records in only ten of twenty years between 1986 and 2005, at an average of less than one per year.

Scandinavian Rock Pipit

Anthus petrosus littoralis (0; 54; 16)

Cork Five: One, Ballymacoda, 21st February (P.Connaughton); One, Knockadoon Head, 6th March (P.Connaughton); One, Sherkin Island, 16th to 18th March (J.Wylie); One, Castletown Bearhaven, 17th March, photographed (F.Moore); One, Eyeries, West Beara, 24th March, photographed (F.Moore).

Donegal One: One, Magheraroarty, 30th March (M.Boyle, A.McMillan).

Dublin Two: One, North Bull Island, 20th March, photographed (J.Hayes); One, Howth Head, 10th December, photographed (J.Hayes).

Kerry Four: One, Black Rock Strand, 7th to 25th March, photographed (E.Carty *et al.*); One, Castlegregory, 4th April (S.Enright); Two, Waterville, 12th April, photographed (R.Surgenor).

Wexford Three: One, Kilmore Quay, 13th to 20th March (K.Mullarney *et al.*); Two, Nethertown, 14th March (K.Mullarney).

Wicklow One: One, Greystones, 5th March, photographed (S.Lawlor).

The best year on record, easily eclipsing the total of ten in 2009, and including the first record for Wicklow. As usual, most records occurred during March and April when they are readily identifiable as they moult to summer plumage. The December record in Dublin is only the second record outside the period from February to May, following a Norwegian ringed bird that was controlled in Groomsport (Down) in October 1996.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* (2; 137; 6)

Cork One: One, Shanagarry, 16th January to 2nd March (P.Connaughton *et al.*).

Wexford Four: One, Tacumshin Lake, from 3rd November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 606) remained to 23rd February; One, Kilmore Quay, 4th February (T.Moore); One, Ring Marsh, 10th November (P.Kelly); One, Carne, 9th December (T.Moore); One, Tacumshin Lake, 29th December (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Wicklow One: One, Broad Lough, 9th to 23rd November (E.Dempsey *et al.*).

With 100 between them, the three counties above account for just over two-thirds of the total. Wexford, with 64 since the first there in 1985, is probably best considered as hosting a small regular winter population.

Buff-bellied Pipit

Anthus rubescens (0; 18; 1)

Galway One: One, Inishmore, Galway, 5th to 8th October (D.Breen *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 408, *Birdwatch* 258: 13.

1967 Wicklow Minus one: One, Newcastle, 19th October (*IBR* 15: 40) is no longer considered proven after review.



Plate 56. Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*, Inishmore, Co. Galway, October 2013 (Paul Kelly).

1951 Wexford Zero: One, Great Saltee Island, 8th to 16th October (IBR 1: 27, Kennedy *et al.* 1954) is still considered proven after review. Details of the review of older records of this species are available at *Irish Birds* 10: 103–104. All Irish records refer to the North American subspecies *rubescens*. The eastern race, *japonicus*, which breeds in east Asia and winters in Japan and south-east Asia, is a scarce but regular passage migrant and winter visitor to the Middle East and could, theoretically, occur in north-west Europe. For those lucky enough to find a vagrant Buff-bellied Pipit in autumn or winter, a positive subspecific identification should be possible in the majority of cases. The base colour of the upperparts of *japonicus* is darker than *rubescens* and *japonicus* tends to show a much whiter supercillium and eye ring than *rubescens*. The wing-bars in *rubescens* are usually buff and diffusely demarcated, staying so throughout the winter – in *japonicus*, they quickly fade to whitish or even white, and are generally more clear-cut and well defined. On *japonicus* the streaks on the underparts are dark brown, or even blackish and are generally thicker, better defined and often even spot-like – on *rubescens*, these are generally mid brown to dark brown, short and often slightly blurred, or diffuse. Additionally, while not diagnostic, leg colour differences are a strong supporting feature. The

legs of *rubescens* are generally blackish, greyish or at least red-brown, although on occasion, they are paler – *japonicus* have pink or pale brown legs and may approach Meadow Pipit in colouration.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*
(Unknown; 199; 11)

Cork One: Female, Dursey Island, 30th March to 3rd April, photographed (D.Cooke, P.Rowe *et al.*).

Limerick Four: Two males and two females, Curraghchase Forest Park, 22nd January to 2nd April (J.N.Murphy *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 69: 28.

Wexford Six: Six, Ballinaboola, 13th to 14th March (D.Clarke).

Hawfinch is a very rare bird in Wexford and this record almost doubles the county total – three were ‘obtained’ in 1897 and one was found dead in June 1975 (one of only two June records for Ireland, the other being in St. Stephen’s Green, Dublin in 1945). During the more recent influxes, two were found in 1988 and one in 2005. In contrast, the total for Limerick moves to 118, all at Curraghchase Forest Park. The vast majority of this total is accounted for by the flock of 95 there in winter 1988/1989, the first time it was recorded there. This site accounts for more than half of the national total since 1950.

Common Rosefinch

Carpodacus erythrinus (0; 206; 14)

Cork Eight: Juvenile, Mizen Head, 4th September (J.N.Murphy *et al.*); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 15th September (O.Foley); Juvenile, Knockadoon Head, 24th September, photographed (S.Cronin); Juvenile, Cape Clear Island, 25th September (P.Phillips, S.Wing); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 4th October (D.Ballard, C.O'Sullivan); Juvenile, Cape Clear Island, Cork, 7th to 9th October, photographed (D.A.O'Connor); Juvenile, Dursey Island, 10th to 12th October (K.Grace, A.A.K.Lancaster); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 29th October (D.Ballard).

Donegal Four: Juvenile, Tory Island, 9th September, photographed (C.Ingram *et al.*); Up to two, Tory Island, 22nd to 25th September (D.Hunter); Juvenile, Arranmore Island, 3rd October (R.Vaughan).

Galway One: Juvenile, Inishbofin, 25th September, photographed (L.Gregory *et al.*).

Wexford One: One, Great Saltee Island, 19th June (A.Walsh).

The second best year of all time, although still less than half the record total (29) set in 2011. A fairly typical distribution of records, with the majority in Cork and smaller numbers elsewhere. Although predominantly an autumn vagrant, there is a clear spring peak in the first three weeks of June and the Wexford record fits neatly with the pattern.

Serin *Serinus serinus* (3; 7; 1)

Cork One: One, Mizen Head, 4th October, photographed (D.Ballard, C.O'Sullivan *et al.*).

Despite a recent increase, this is still an incredibly rare species here. There have been four since 2000, although this is the first since 2005. Prior to that, there was a record in 1988, three records in the 1970s, and one each in 1947, 1907 and 1893. All six autumn records have been in Cork, with four in October and two more in the first half of November. There have been three records in May – one each in Cork, Louth and Dublin. The remaining two are mid-winter records – caught in Dublin in January 1893 and February 1907.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* (0; 120; 1)

Cork One: One, Dursey Island, 2nd October (D.A.Scott).

Despite an increase in the number of records since 2000, the best decade on record is still the 1960s, when there were 28. Numbers in the west have remained reasonably constant – with the exception of the 1980s (when there were only nine), ten-year totals have been between 17 and 20. This contrasts sharply with numbers in the east of the country – there were seven in the 1950s and eight in the 1960s (mostly at Great



Plate 57. Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata*, Inishbofin, Co. Galway, September 2013 (John N. Murphy).

Saltee Island, Wexford) but there have only been five since 1970. Once again (see comments for Nightingale), the demise of the observatory on Great Saltee Island seems to be implicated, although there has also been a moderate long-term decline in numbers in Britain (White & Kehoe 2014b).

Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata* (0; 9; 1)

Galway One: First-winter, Inishbofin, 25th September (A.Webb *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 370, *Birdwatch* 257: 64, *Dutch Birding* 35: 398.

This is the first record for September and the second for Galway, following one on Inishmore in October 2000. As might be expected, the majority have been in the west – there are records from Cork, Galway and Mayo. Only two of the total have been away from the west coast – on Hook Head (Wexford) in October 1985 and Brownstown Head (Waterford) in October 1993.

Yellow-rumped Warbler

Setophaga coronata (0; 15; 1)

Galway One: One, Inishmore, 29th October, photographed (M.Boyle *et al.*).

Galway is fast building a reputation for Nearctic land-birds with 12 individuals of 7 species occurring since 2007. In particular, Inishmore has made serious inroads on the virtual monopoly that Cape Clear Island (Cork) had for this species. Until 2012, Cape Clear (with ten) was the only location to have had more than one – there have now been four on Inishmore. The remaining two records were at Loop Head (Clare) in 1986 and Great Blasket Island (Kerry) in 2001.

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* (0; 0; 1)

Cork One: First-winter male, Dursey Island, 18th to 21st September (D.A.Scott *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 379, *Birdwatch* 257: 59 (Anon 2013, Scott 2013).

The first Irish record and only the second for the Western Palearctic, following one on Rame Head, Cornwall in October 1985. This individual was very elusive for the first three days of its stay, resulting in very brief, inconclusive views. While the identification was suspected from a brief view on the 19th, it was only clinched on the 20th, when it finally gave good views. Wilson's Warbler is an early migrant, with most leaving northern breeding areas in mid-August (Cramp & Perrins 1994). This was one of the reasons that the analysis of Robbins (1980) suggested that Wilson's Warbler was one of the less likely trans-Atlantic vagrant land-birds to occur in Europe. Fortunately birds are not aware of statistical imperatives and Wilson's Warbler is added to the Irish list to join other species that Robbins' analysis also deemed long-shots such as White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*, Mourning Dove *Zenaidura macroura* and Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea*.

Appendix 1: Category D records

Category D1 records

Species that would otherwise appear in Categories A or B, except that there is a reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a natural state.

Falcated Duck *Anas falcata* (0; 0; 0)

2012 Mayo Zero: Adult male, Cross Lough, Mullet Peninsula, 2nd to 13th April, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

Unfortunately, the spectre of captive origin always hangs over extralimital records of wildfowl. Unlike Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* (see *Irish Birds* 9: 286), there is no strong evidence that Falcated Duck has ever occurred naturally in the Western Palearctic. Had there been such evidence, this individual, arriving and departing with migrating Wigeon *Anas penelope*, would have been a very strong candidate for addition to Category A. If any evidence of natural occurrence (such as stable isotope analysis or ringing recovery) is forthcoming then this record will be reviewed.

Appendix 2: 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 3: 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 and 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 considered 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.

2013 records not proven

Continental Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

First-winter, Cuskinny, Cork, 30th March.

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

Juvenile, Inch Island Lake, Lough Swilly, Donegal, 4th September.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*

One, Bloody Foreland, Donegal, 31st August.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinmans*

Third-winter, Killybegs, Donegal, 5th April.

Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*

One, Carnowen, Donegal, 17th January.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

One, Skibbereen, Cork, 28th February to 7th March.

Supplemental 2012 records not proven

Atlantic Gull *Larus michabellus atlantis*

Adult, Black Rock Strand, Kerry, 19th September.

Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*

First-winter, Killala, Mayo, 19th January.

Supplemental 2011 records not proven

Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*

Second-winter, Liscannor, Clare, 1st February.

Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus*

One, Power Head, Cork, 14th November.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

Two, Mizen Head, Cork, 19th to 25th October.

Scandinavian Rock Pipit *Arctopus petrosus littoralis*

One, Old Head of Kinsale, Cork, 7th May.

Supplemental 2010 records not proven

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

First calendar-year, Ballygawley Lake, Sligo, 3rd to 7th November.

South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki*

One, two kilometres south of Baltimore, Cork, 18th September.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*

Juvenile, Blennerville, Kerry, 4th to 5th September.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

One, Cloonfadda, Clare, 3rd December.

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*

One, Enniscrone, Sligo, 18th to 19th December.

Supplemental 2009 records not proven

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

Female, Ballindoon, Lough Arrow, Sligo, 11th February.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

One, Ennis, Clare, 10th March.

Supplemental 2008 record not proven

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

One, Three Castles Head, Cork, 17th October.

Supplemental 1967 review record not proven

Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*

One, Newcastle, Wicklow, 19th October.

Appendix 4: 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 2013 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.

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata*

Female, Clare, 18th February.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

One, Gorey, Wexford, 21st December.

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus*

One, Pettigo Plateau, Donegal, 10th February.

Adult female, Ballycastle, Mayo, 18th July.

Supplemental anonymous records for 2005

Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*

One, Bridges of Ross, Clare, 29th August.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

One, near Tramore Back Strand, Waterford, unknown date.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

One, Bridges of Ross, Clare, 23rd September.

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus*

One, Arranmore Island, Donegal, early June.

One, Inishkeeragh Islands, Donegal, mid July.

Appendix 5: Corrigenda to previous reports

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* – The record of one at Lurgangreen, Louth, 9th January to 25th February 1996 (*Irish Birds* 6: 68) should read as follows: “**Louth** One, Braganstown, 9th January (K.W.S.Kane) and, presumed same, Lurgangreen, 28th January to 25th February (D.Hodgers *et al.*)”.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* – Plate 267 in the 2012 Irish Rare Bird Report (*Irish Birds* 9: 591) refers to the individual seen at the same location in 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 465) and the date in the caption should read 27th September 2011.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* – A record from Cape Clear in October 1970 (*IBR* 18: 50) had been counted as a single bird. However, the record on 16th and 17th October was referred to only as possibly the same as the record on 12th October. In keeping with practice, the phrase ‘probably the same’ is counted as the same individual, whereas ‘possibly the same’ is counted as referring to multiple individuals. In addition, a correction to the 1982 record (*Irish Birds* 3: 332) increasing the number of individuals involved from two to three was overlooked. Totals in the current report have been increased by two to reflect these corrections.

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus* – Recent totals for this species (e.g. *Irish Birds* 9: 603) erroneously included a June 1996 record from the Marathon Gas Platform (*Irish Birds* 6: 86), which is 49 kilometres (26 nautical miles) from land. Records that occur more than 30 kilometres 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.

Appendix 6: Corrigenda to the IRBC review of Canada Goose records (*Irish Birds* 9: 613–622)

Plate 291 (*Irish Birds* 9: 613) – Credit for the artwork in this plate was inadvertently omitted and should have been credited to Michael O’Keeffe.

Correction to Appendix 3 of the article (*Irish Birds* 9: 622) – the 1996 Louth record should read as follows:

“**1996 Louth** One, Braganstown, 9th January and, presumed same, Lurgangreen, 28th January to 25th February, photographed (*Irish Birds* 6: 68). This individual appears to be of the subspecies *minima* (Plate 293). If so, this would constitute the only confirmed record of *minima* for Ireland. Given the eastern location of this sighting in Ireland (perhaps further supporting European origin) the IRBC has taken the view that this bird was almost certainly of captive or feral origin.”

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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.