

Irish Rare Bird Report 2020

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(On behalf of the Irish Rare Birds Committee)

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Introduction

In what was an exceptional year for vagrants two new species were added to the Irish list in 2020 with a Short-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna tenuirostris* (Waterford) in June followed by a Tennessee Warbler *Leioblypis peregrine* (Galway) in October. A further four species were recorded for just the second time. A Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* (Cork) in January was followed by a Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* (Wicklow) in July with Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* (Clare) and Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus* (Kerry) both recorded in November. Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus* (Galway) and Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* (Cork) both occurred for the third time while a stellar supporting cast included the fourth Bobolink *Dolichonyx*

oryzivorus (Donegal), the fourth Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis* (Galway), the fifth Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* (Cork) and Pacific Diver *Gavia pacifica* (Mayo) and the fifth and sixth records of Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* (Cork and Waterford). This report also lists the second Irish record of Baikal Teal *Sibirionetta formosa* (Wexford) from 2013.

Records of both Cabot's (Cayenne) Tern *Thalasseus acuflavidus eurygnathus* (Wexford) and Trindade Petrel *Pterodroma arminjoniana* (Cork) reported in 2020 remain under review by the Committee.

Plate 22. Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*, Greystones, Co. Wicklow, July 2020 (Tom Shevlin).

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, which is updated regularly. Most of the data in this report were taken directly from the 2020 Provisional List. The IRBC expresses its sincere gratitude to all those who provided information during 2020, either directly or indirectly. The Committee also extends its grateful thanks to Joe Hobbs for proof-reading this report and to Kieran Fahy for keeping track of the statistics. In addition, the Committee would like to thank Killian Mullarney for his input and assistance.

Rarity Description forms may be downloaded from the IRBC website: www.irbc.ie/records/forms/IRBC_form3.doc

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/desclist.php. For a full explanation of the background and purpose of the list, see *Irish Birds* 7: 413-418 or online at www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php.

2020 Systematic List

The sequence and scientific nomenclature used for the 2020 Report largely follows the IOC World List version 9.1 (Gill & Donsker 2019) replacing the previously referenced BOU British List (British Ornithologists' Union 2013). For an explanation of this change as well as other taxonomic decisions made by the IRBC please consult the Announcements page on our website at www.irbc.ie/announcements/announcements.php.

The three numbers in parentheses after each 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 excluding, the current year – where this total is enclosed in square brackets, totals are from 1st January 2010 only; (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. Please note that the finders' credits are placed in alphabetical order.

Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans*

(0; 40; 1)

Dublin One: Adult, Kilbogget Park, Cabinteely, 27th to 30th December, also seen at Blackrock College, 28th December, photographed (N. Keogh, N.T. Keogh).

The seventh for Dublin.

Cackling Goose *Branta hutchinsii* (0; 32; 1)

Mayo One: One of the nominate subspecies Richardson's Cackling Goose, Termoncarragh Lough, 22nd October to 31st December (D. Suddaby).

The seventh for Mayo. A record typical in terms of date and location, arriving as it did in autumn with Barnacle Geese *B. leucopsis*. The northwest counties of Donegal, Sligo and Mayo have, unsurprisingly, accounted for 22 of the 33 birds recorded to date.



Plate 23. Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans*, Kilbogget Park, Co. Dublin, 27th December 2020 (Stephen King).



Plate 24. Richardson's Cackling Goose *Branta hutchinsii*, Cross Lough, Co. Mayo, December 2020 (Micheál O'Briain).



Plate 25. Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*, Nobber, Co. Meath, March 2020 (Brian Carruthers).

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*
(0; 37; 1)

Meath One: One, Nobber, 7th to 22nd March, photographed (A. Butler *et al.*)

The first for Meath.

Russian White-fronted Goose
Anser albifrons albifrons (51; 125; 1)

Cork One: Juvenile, Toons Bridge, near Macroom, 1st November to 15th December (A. Duggan).

Baikal Teal *Sibirionetta formosa* (0; 2; 0)

2013 Wexford One: Adult male, Tacumshin Lake, 8th and 9th February (L. Feeney, P. Pykett).

The second Irish record and the second for Tacumshin Lake, following the first record there from 19th to 23rd February 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 286).

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors*
(3; 113; 4)

Mayo Three: First calendar-year, Annagh Marsh, Mullet Peninsula, 21st to 26th September (D. Suddaby), joined by a second unaged bird on the latter date (D. Suddaby); Female (unaged), Termoncarragh Lake, Mullet Peninsula, 5th October (D. Suddaby) later seen at Annagh Marsh on 22nd October.

Kerry One: Male (unaged), near Killorglin, 18th October (S. Bayley).

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*
(0; 153; 6)

Clare Zero: Adult male, Lough Atedaun, 3rd January (J.N. Murphy), presumed to be the same individual present near Kells, Clare on 20th and 21st December 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 73).



Plate 26. American Wigeon *Mareca americana*, East Coast Nature Reserve, Co. Wicklow, March 2020 (Brian McCloskey).

Donegal Zero: Adult male, Culdaff Estuary (T. Campbell), present since 10th November 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 73), was last reported on 4th March, presumed returning.

Galway Two: First-winter male, Lough Nalareagh, 25th January, photographed (P. Cullinan); Eclipse male, Rahasane Turlough, 27th September to 3rd October, photographed (D. Breen); Adult male, Kilcolgan River, 23rd December (P. Troake), presumed returning.

Mayo Two: Female (unaged), Termoncarragh Lake, Mullet Peninsula, 30th October to 6th December (D. Suddaby), joined by a first calendar-year male on the latter date (D. Suddaby).

Offaly One: Male, Shannon Harbour, 25th and 26th December (D. Breen).

Wicklow One: First-winter male, East Coast Nature Reserve, Newcastle, 22nd February to 19th March, also observed at Kilcoole on 23rd March, photographed (E. Dempsey).

Only the second for Offaly, following the male present at Shannon Harbour from 26th to 28th November 2008 (*Irish Birds* 9: 79). The fourth and fifth records for Mayo.

American Black Duck *Anas rubripes*
(0; 23; 1)

Mayo One: First calendar-year male, Cross Lough, Mullet Peninsula, 14th November to 30th December, photographed (D. Suddaby).

1999 Cork One: Male, Harper's Island Wetlands, 31st October (M. Carmody, J. Wilson).

The 1999 record becomes the fourth for Cork bringing the total for that county to eight while the Mayo record is the fourth for that county.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* (4; 66; 3)

Dublin One: Male, Grange Castle, 15th to 23rd March, photographed (I. Stevenson).

Wicklow Two: Female (unaged), Kilcoole, 20th March, photographed

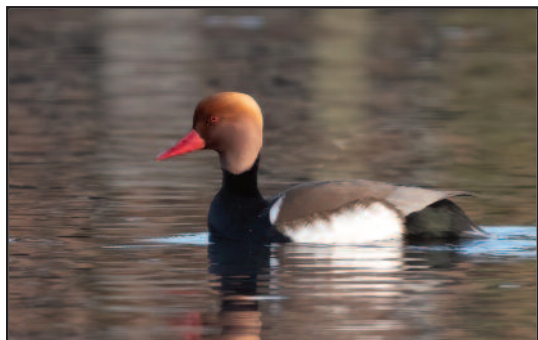


Plate 27. Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*, Arklow Ponds, Co. Wicklow, April 2020 (Martin Walsh).

(N. Keogh); Male, Arklow Ponds, 7th April, photographed (M. Walsh). The second for Dublin following a male at Knock Lake from 17th to 19th March 1984 (*Irish Birds* 3: 109) and the second and third for Wicklow following a female at Blessington Lakes from late August to 28th September 1986 (*Irish Birds* 3: 462).

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* (0; 43; 1)

Mayo Zero: The adult male present at Keel Lough, Achill from 2nd December 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43; 74) was last seen on 5th January.

Waterford One: First-calendar year male, Knockaderry Reservoir, 30th December (P. Archer, M. Cowming).

Only the second record for Waterford following one that spent time at both Ballyshunnoch and Knockaderry Reservoirs between 12th and 27th November 1999 (*Irish Birds* 6: 551). Formerly a great rarity the previous Waterford bird was, at the time, only the sixth Irish record. The number of Irish records has increased dramatically since the first at Corbet Lake, Down, from 13th February to 14th April 1988 (*Irish Birds* 4: 87). Five were recorded in the 1990s, 20 in the 2000s and 17 between 2010 and 2019.



Plate 28. King Eiders *Somateria spectabilis*, St. John's Point, Co. Donegal, March 2021 (Kim Pereira).

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis* (4; 32; 2)

Donegal Two: Two first calendar-year females, St. John's Beach, Dunkineely, 25th November to 13th April 2021, photographed (J. Shergold).

The sixth and seventh for Donegal, which has recorded the second highest total behind Mayo with nine. Five have now been found in November with the months of December, January, February and March having accounted for four, seven, two and nine new individuals respectively.

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata* (9; 267; 12)

Clare Zero: The adult male present at Coolsiva Pier since 21st November 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 74) was last recorded on 23rd March. **Cork** One: first calendar-year female, Garretstown, 6th December (N. Linehan, R.O' Driscoll).

Dublin One: Female/immature, Bremore Point, Balbriggan, 25th October (A.G. Kelly).

Kerry Four: Male (unaged), Brandon Bay, 6th March (E. Carty); Male (unaged), Cromane Harbour, 16th March (D. Farrar); Female/immature, Reenroe, 21st September (D. O'Connor); Female (unaged), Gowlane, Brandon Bay, 22nd December (M. O'Clery).

Louth One: Adult male, Clogher Head, 18th October, and, presumed same individual at Baltray, on 17th December (per G. Murray).

Meath Four: First calendar-year female, Mornington, 22nd to 25th November (per. E. Dempsey); Adult male and female, Mornington, 11th to 29th December, joined by a second male on 30th December, with all three birds present into 2021 (per. E. Dempsey).

Sligo One: Female/immature, Lough Gara, 21st November (S. Feeney).

Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola* (0; 3; 1)

Cork One: First-winter female, Aghada Pier, 20th December, photographed (G. Kelleher).

Cork with its third record continues a near monopoly of Irish occurrences. A first-year male at Lough Atedaun, Clare from January to March 2007 is the only record outside of Cork (*Irish Birds* 8: 587).



Plate 29. Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola*, Oysterhaven, Co. Cork, March 2021 (Dave McGrath).

Pacific Diver *Gavia pacifica* (0; 4; 1)

Cork Zero: The adult present at Crookhaven since 19th October 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 74), remained until 3rd March.

Mayo One: Adult summer, Blacksod Bay, Mullet Peninsula, 18th October (D. Suddaby).

The first for Mayo.

Wilson's Storm Petrel

Oceanites oceanicus (2; 600; 19)

Clare Six: One, Bridges of Ross, 28th June (J. N. Murphy); One, Bridges of Ross, 24th August (N. Keogh); Three, Bridges of Ross, 25th August (N. Keogh, M. Stewart); One, Bridges of Ross, 26th August, photographed (A.G. Kelly).

Cork Six: One, Ballycotton, 3rd July (D. O'Sullivan); Two, pelagic off Cape Clear Island, 15th August, photographed (S. Wing); One, Galley Head, 20th August (C. Cronin); One, pelagic, five nautical miles south of Clonakilty Bay, 30th August (C. O'Sullivan); One, pelagic, three nautical miles off Cape Clear Island, 18th September (C. Cronin).

Galway One: One, seen from the research vessel Celtic Explorer, four nautical miles southwest of the Skerd Rocks, 22nd June (P. Connaughton).

Kerry Five: One, Brandon Point, 5th July (S. Enright); One, Deelick Point, Brandon, 27th July (M. O'Clery); One, Coosgorm Rocks, Valentia Island, 21st August (M. O'Clery); One, Brandon Point, 22nd August (E. Carty); One, Brandon Point, 25th August (M. Hanafin).

Mayo One: One, Annagh Head, Mullet Peninsula, 5th September (D. Suddaby), and, presumed same individual, Aghernagallagh Head, Mullet Peninsula the same day (D. Charles).

Zino's/Fea's/Desertas Petrel

Pterodroma madeira/feae/deserta (0; 135; 4)

At sea Zero: One, 75 nautical miles south-southwest of Cape Clear Island, Cork, 14th June (P. Connaughton); One, 40 nautical miles south-southwest of Mizen Head, Cork, 29th August, photographed (P. Connaughton); One, 16 nautical miles south of Baltimore, Cork, 27th September (N. Dent).

Cork Two: One, Galley Head, 5th August (C. Barton); One, Galley Head, 20th August (A.G. Kelly).

Clare One: One, Bridges of Ross, 3rd September (T. Doyle).

Donegal One: One, Fanad Head, 4th September (C. Ingram).

The poorest year since 2010 when only a single bird was recorded. Galley Head and the Bridges of Ross have each now recorded totals of 31, cementing their reputations as the pre-eminent sites to see this species complex in Ireland. Cape Clear Island with 13 and Mizen Head with ten are the only other Irish sites to have recorded double figure totals. The peak period of passage at the Bridges of Ross is from 13th to 30th August when a total of 23 have occurred. Outside these dates the Bridges of Ross has recorded six in September with single records in late July and early August. The pattern of occurrence at Galley Head differs slightly but noticeably when the months they occur in are examined, with six in July, 15 in August (including nine during the aforementioned 13th to 30th August period), eight in September and two in October.

The Donegal record is the third for that county, following birds off Melmore Head on 29th August 2002 (*Irish Birds* 7: 390) and off Malin Head on 3rd August 2014 (*Irish Birds* 10: 239).

Short-tailed Shearwater

Ardenna tenuirostris (0; 0; 1)

Waterford One: At least second calendar-year male, Tramore Bay, 22nd June (A. Allen, A. Jacques), (Archer 2020). Found moribund and died in care during the night of 23rd/24th June.

The first Irish and second Western Palearctic records after one retrospectively identified off Bretagne, northern France on 9th September 2015 (Février *et al.* in press). Found in a moribund state on the beach at Tramore Bay during a gale the bird, clearly emaciated, was taken into care but despite the best efforts of its finders and a rehabilitation centre it died during the night of 23rd/24th June. Initially thought to be an oiled Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* and later a Balearic Shearwater *P. mauretanicus*, it was eventually identified as a Short-tailed Shearwater *A. tenuirostris* by, in chronological order, analysis of plumage and structure, ratios of bill components, biometrics, and DNA analysis (Archer *et al.* 2021). Short-tailed Shearwater breeds in Tasmania and on islands off southeast and south Australia from November onwards with chicks fledging during April and May. After breeding it undertakes a northerly migration throughout the Pacific Ocean with some birds reaching as far as the Bering Sea before returning to its breeding grounds by mid-September. Surprisingly only the fourth Waterford addition to the Irish list following Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* in 1877 (Ussher & Warren 1900) Yellow Warbler *Sethophaga aestiva* in 1995 (*Irish Birds* 5: 473) and Iberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus ibericus* in 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 306).

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (103; 401; 46)

Cork Seven: One present at Pilmore, Youghal since 3rd November 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 75) remained until 30th August; Two, Pilmore, Youghal, 10th November to 15th December, joined by a third bird on 15th November, with a single bird present on 27th December (D. O'Sullivan *et al.*); One, Harper's Island Wetlands, 13th September (M. Carmody); One, Ballineen, 10th November, photographed (R. Foley), later seen at Enniskeane, 11th to 13th November, when joined by a second bird on the latter date (M. O'Donovan); One, Seven Heads, 26th November, photographed (J. Deasy).

Dublin Three: One, North Bull Island, 12th August, photographed (J. Claridge); Juvenile, Balbriggan, 20th to 27th September, photographed (M. Moore); Juvenile, Swords Estuary, 26th to 29th September, photographed (M. Nolan).

Galway One, Rahasane Turlough, 16th to 24th August, photographed (D. O'Driscoll).

Kildare One: One, Hazelhatch, 4th November to 9th December (P. Kelly).

Mayo One: One, Termoncarragh Lake, 23rd December (D. Suddaby).

Tipperary One: One, Camas Bridge, Cashel, 9th to 16th September (T. Hyde, M. Kavanagh).

Waterford Five: One, Tramore Back Strand, 21st February (J. Roche); Four, Lismore, 18th and 19th November, photographed (D. Reese).

Wexford 27: One, Rosslare, 24th to 29th January (P. Somers); One, Slade Lane, Hook Head, 3rd to 5th September, photographed (G. Noonan); Tacumshin Lake: One, 21st September, photographed (D. Finnermore, P. Kelly); Three, 3rd November (T. Murray) with five present from 4th to 13th November (K. Grace) and one remaining to 25th November; Five, The Cull, 7th November (J.F. Dowdall); One, Our Lady's Island Lake, 7th November to 4th December, photographed (P. Kelly); Seven, South Slob, 8th November (F. Tennant), rising to 13 on 11th November, photographed.

Just the second for Kildare following one at Pollardstown Fen from 30th August to 9th September 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 290) and the third for Tipperary after birds near Thurles on 9th January 2008 (*Irish Birds* 9: 87) and at Cabragh Wetlands on 1st March 2014 (*Irish Birds* 10: 242). As mentioned in previous reports the degree of double-counting of some mobile individuals is unknown.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* (89; 195; 4)

Dublin One: One (unaged), Shenick Island, Skerries, 27th March (A.G. Kelly); Second calendar-year, North Bull Island, 19th May, photographed (P. Milne), earlier recorded at Broad Lough, Wicklow on 6th May, and again at North Bull Island from 7th to 9th June, 21st and 22nd June and from 11th to 21st August, also recorded at Sutton Creek on 23rd June and from 6th to 29th July and at Howth on 2nd August.

Kerry Zero: Adult, Cromane Harbour, from December 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 76) remained to 20th April, photographed (S. Enright) and again from 12th October to 27th December, photographed (K. Griffin), presumed returning; Immature, Cahersiveen, from November 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 76) remained until 28th February and present again on 9th December, photographed, presumed returning.

Wicklow One: Second calendar-year, Broad Lough, 6th May, photographed (D. Murphy) and again on 31st May, also recorded at Broad Lough/Kilcoole from 14th to 15th June, on 2nd July, 12th August, 16th to 19th August and 26th August, also recorded at various locations in Dublin between May and August.

Wexford Two: Third calendar-year, Rosslare Back Strand, from 9th November 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 76) remained to 12th January, photographed (P. Kelly) and again from 1st September to 2nd December, also recorded at Tacumshin Lake on 10th January, 6th September and from 20th to 24th September, the South Slob on 26th February and Our Lady's Island Lake on 20th September, presumed returning; First calendar-year, South Slob, 22nd November to 4th December (P. Kelly); Adult, Rosslare, 19th to 31st December, photographed (P. Kelly), also recorded at the South Slob, 27th December.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* (168+; 53; 2)

Mayo One: One, Mannin Lake, Ballyhaunis, 12th December, photographed (D. Herr, P. Waldron)

Wexford One: Male (unaged), Tacumshin Lake, 15th and 16th March (P. Kelly, E. MacLochlainn).

The Mayo record is the first for that county since a bird was shot there in December 1899 or January 1900 at an unknown location (Ussher & Warren 1900). The Wexford bird, which was not seen but was heard to call on a number of occasions, is the seventh for Tacumshin Lake since 2004.

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* (34; 22; 1)

Dublin One: At least second calendar-year female, Knock Lake, near Balbriggan, 17th May to 5th June, photographed (L. Lenehan).

The sixth record for Dublin and the first Irish record since one at Brownstown Head, Waterford on 26th April 2008 (*Irish Birds* 9: 82). Ussher & Warren (1900) quote at least four 19th century records in Dublin, however none of these can be assigned a precise date. Although this is the 57th to have been recorded in Ireland it has never been anything other than a difficult bird to connect with and the 20 day stay of this individual is quite unprecedented. Of the 22 birds recorded since 1950 eight have been either killed, found dead or found exhausted/dying and later died, ten have been one-day birds, three of the remaining four were present for a second day with the remaining bird enjoying a three day stay in Wexford in 1988 (*Irish Birds* 4: 84 & 9: 455). One of a number of southern heron species whose populations are moving northwards in response to climate change.



Plate 30. Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*, Knock Lake, Co. Dublin May 2020 (Victor Caschera).

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* (0; 526; 36)

Cork 19: One of two birds present at East Ferry since 21st December 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 78), remained until 9th February with one, presumed new bird, present on 3rd December, photographed (G. Kelleher); One, Carrigaline, 3rd January, photographed (D. Fitzpatrick); Five, Lough Cluhir, 1st to 16th February, photographed (D.G. McAdams), with two there 28th February, one, 2nd October to 15th

December (G. Williams), two, 16th December (G. Williams) and three, 22nd December, photographed (J. Mitchell, M. Mitchell), those present from October to December presumed returning; Three, Lisheen, 3rd February (T. Kearney); One, Kinsale Marsh, 9th February (R. O'Driscoll); Timoleague: One, 18th February, presumed returning; Six, 3rd to 6th March, presumed returning; Four, 19th October rising to 13 on 5th November with 12 present on 15th November, photographed (K. Woods, P. Wolstenholme), eight of these presumed returning; One, Baltimore, 11th to 27th December (S. Manning); Two, near Youghal, 20th to 24th December (P. Moore).

Dublin Two: One, Rolestown, 26th July (G. White); One, North Bull Island, 23rd October, photographed (D. O'Reilly).

Kildare Two, Straffan, 14th to 17th February, photographed (P. Kelly).

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

Meath One: One, Dunboyne, 26th October (P. Kelly).

Waterford Five: Cloghernagh: Three, 4th to 18th January, photographed (J. Roche) with one, 20th January to 23rd February, three, 3rd March, two remaining to 5th March and one to 13th December (J. Roche); One, Cleary's Cross Roads, 12th December (D. Clarke).

Wexford Five: One present at the South Slob since 25th October 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 78) remained until 6th April, joined by a second bird on 18th January (J.F. Dowdall) and from 27th January to 22nd March, this latter bird also recorded at Tacumshin Lake on 19th January; Three, Our Lady's Island Lake, 19th to 21st September (E. Dempsey, P. Kelly, J. McDonald) two of which were at Tacumshin Lake on 20th September with three there 22nd September, four on 23rd September and one from 27th September to 13th November.

Wicklow One: One, Newcastle, 15th October (A.P. Kelly).

The third record for Meath, fourth and fifth records for Dublin and the sixth record for Kildare. All five Dublin records have been one-day birds as have four of the six recorded from Kildare and two of the three birds recorded from Meath.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* (1; 29; 1)

Dublin One: Second-calendar year, Knock Lake, near Balbriggan, 17th May to 5th June, photographed (J.F. Dowdall).

The second county record following one at the same location on 28th April 2013 (*Irish Birds* 10: 242) and the sixth year in succession this species has been recorded, appearing in all years since 2012 with the exception of 2014. Discovered while searching for the reported Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* at the same site it presented many birders with a much-welcomed opportunity to catch up with another species which does not readily lend itself to observation. Purple Herons reaching Ireland tend not to linger and most have been present for just a single day, although there have been exceptions, notably one that remained for 31 days at Bunmahon, Waterford from 27th March to 27th April 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 584) and two others that remained for 20 and 18 days at Garretstown, Cork from 21st and 23rd April respectively to 9th May 1987 (*Irish Birds* 3: 614). Predominantly occurs as an overshooting spring migrant, 21 (68%) of the overall total have now been found between 20th April and 9th June with the Counties of Wexford, Waterford and Cork



Plate 31. Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*, Knock Lake, Co. Dublin, May 2020 (Victor Caschera).

accounting for 24 (77%) of all birds recorded. Only four - two in Cork (1970, 2015) and two in Clare (1996, 2006) - have been recorded in autumn.

Great Egret *Ardea alba* (0; 157; 32)

Carlow Two: One, Carlow Town, 27th September (B. Power); One, Slaney Valley, Kildavin, 1st December, photographed (B. Power).

Clare Two: One, Doonbeg, 21st September to 21st October, photographed (R. Glynn); One, Lahinch, 21st November to 2nd December (J. Copner), and, presumed same individual at Liscannor on 1st December.

Cork 11: One, The Gearagh, present intermittently since 2018 (*Irish Birds* 42: 78 & 43: 79) was present again from 7th February, joined by a second presumed lingering/returning bird from 30th August with both present until 29th December, four there 18th October to 15th November (A. Duggan), with three remaining up to 24th December; One, Skibbereen, 20th January (J. Wyllie); One, Lissagriffin, 7th February (D. Ballard) and another, 30th September (D. Ballard); One, Enniskeane, 8th March (S. Bayley); One, Ballycotton, 25th July (A. Robinson); One, Schull, 9th September (A. Dale). River Ilen Estuary: One, 2nd to 27th October (M. McLaughlin *et al.*); Three on 9th October (S. Manning) and 25th November to 22nd December, with two remaining to 27th December.

Dublin Two: One, Rogerstown Estuary, 21st and 22nd September, photographed (J. Rod); One, Baldoyle Estuary, 18th October (D. O'Connor).

Galway Two: Up to three, presumed returning and possibly resident birds, Lower Lough Corrib between Angliham and Muckrush throughout the year with three, one of which considered a new bird, 23rd February and 12th December (D. Breen, N. Ellis); One, Glenamaddy Lough, 18th October (J. Bliss).

Kerry One: One, Derrynane, Iveragh Peninsula, 25th April (J. O'Shea).

Kildare One: One, Athy, 7th November, photographed (C. Reid).

Laos Zero: One, Durrow, 6th March (J. de Britto), presumed same individual previously recorded at River Gulley, Laos on 24th November 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 79).

Mayo One: One, Toomore, Foxford, 15th to 17th November, photographed (R. Bates).

Offaly One: One, Birr, 27th November (A. Robinson).

Waterford Three: One, Abbeyside, Dungarvan, 12th April (F. O'Connell); One, Annestown Bog, 30th November (M. Dennehy); One, The Cunnigar, Dungarvan, 13th December (F. O'Connell).

Westmeath One: One, Athlone Callow, 17th and 18th October, photographed (O. Murphy).

Wexford Three: One, The Pill, Rosslare, 31st January (K. Grace); One, Our Lady's Island Lake, 29th May (A.A. & P. Kelly); One, Kilmore Quay, 30th November (B. Power).

Wicklow Two: One, East Coast Nature Reserve, Newcastle, 25th October (N. Hatch), also recorded at Newcastle and Kilcoole, 26th October; One, Tomnafinnogue Wood, Shillelagh, 17th November to 21st December, photographed (J. Murphy).

A total of 32 new birds surpasses the previous record of 27 set in 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 79). As in 2019 birds were widely distributed across 14 counties, though mainly present south of a line between Dublin and Galway. Included here are the first for Westmeath, second and third for Carlow, third for Offaly and the fourth for Kildare.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* (0; 1; 1)

At sea Zero: At least third calendar-year, 73 nautical miles southwest of Cape Clear Island, Cork, 12th and 13th July, photographed (B. Estévez, J.C. Fernández, C. Pereira).

Wicklow One: Sub-adult male, Greystones, Wicklow, 13th and 14th July, photographed (S.L. Guilfoyle, N. Hatch). Taken into care on latter date. Died during the night of 16th/17th July.

The second Category A record for Ireland following the bird off the Skellig Islands, Kerry that came aboard the fishing vessel *Lours des Mers* on 13th August 2016, remaining there until the following morning (*Irish Birds* 10: 551). The 'At sea' bird was photographed on board a fishing vessel and is considered a different individual to the Wicklow bird. While statistically not the rarest bird to be found in Ireland in 2020 the Wicklow Brown Booby was, undoubtedly, the highlight of the birding year for many birders while the circumstances of its discovery were quite extraordinary. Found sitting on a busy beach apparently nonplussed by its surroundings, it drew a large and appreciative crowd but despite short flights and diving for food on occasions it became apparent early on that all was not well with the unfortunate bird and it was taken into care on the evening of 14th July. Suffering from exhaustion and malnutrition (it was found to be 500 grams underweight) it died during the night of 16th/17th July.

Double-crested Cormorant

Phalacrocorax auritus (0; 1; 1)

At sea Zero: Juvenile, came on board the survey vessel *Vizconde de Eza*, 132 nautical miles west of Valentia Island, Kerry, 29th and 30th September, photographed (S. Garcia-Barcelona, A. Gutiérrez).

Kerry One: Juvenile, Ballylongford, 25th November to 30th May 2021, photographed (S. Enright).



Plate 32. Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*, Greystones, Co. Wicklow, July 2020 (Victor Caschera).



Another long-awaited second record for Ireland following the first at Nimmo's Pier, Galway from 18th November 1995 to 6th January 1996 (*Irish Birds* 5: 450, Kelly 1996). This becomes the third for Europe after the Galway individual and one at Billingham, Cleveland, UK from 11th January to 26th April 1989. Up to the end of 2019 a minimum of 27 individuals had been recorded on the Azores (Tipper *et al.* 2020) making its extreme rarity here somewhat surprising and making it tempting to suggest that it is perhaps being overlooked as a vagrant.

Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonianus* (0; 8; 1)

Cork One: Juvenile, Nohoval, 2nd to 12th October (D. McGrath).

A welcome addition to the Cork list as it joins Wexford in becoming only the second county to have recorded all five *Circus* species on the Irish list. Indeed, of the 18 members of the Order Accipitriformes and seven members of the Order Falconiformes in categories A and B of the Irish list only Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* and Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* have not been recorded in Cork. The first Irish record of Northern Harrier at Tacumshin Lake, Wexford from 28th October 2010 to 24th May 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 292), has been followed by eight others with seven of the nine having been found in October and the remaining two in November.

Plate 33. Left, Double-crested Cormorant

Phalacrocorax auritus, at Sea, September 2020 (Salva Garcia).



Plate 34. Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonianus*, Barry's Head, Co. Cork, October 2020 (Dave McGrath).

Common Crane *Grus grus* (29; 179; 6)

Dublin Four: Two adults and a juvenile, Rogerstown Estuary, 5th September, photographed (L. Feeney); One, in flight over Lucan, 5th December (J. Geraty, L. Geraty).

Mayo One: One, Mullet Peninsula, 8th May, photographed (M. McAndrew).

Wexford One: At least second calendar-year, South Slob, 15th to 19th May, photographed (D. Keeling, F. Tennant).

The seventh for Mayo. The Rogerstown record is intriguing. A family party at such an early date clearly raises questions as to their origin leading some to speculate that they may have been Irish birds?

Eurasian Stone-curlew

Burhinus oedichnemus (15; 13; 1)

Wicklow One: At least second calendar-year, Webb's Field, Kilcoole, 10th to 15th August (N. Keogh).

The second for Wicklow following one at Vartry Reservoir from 28th July to 7th August 1999 (*Irish Birds* 6: 553) and only the second to be found in August following one at Loughaunbeg, Inveran, Galway on 18th August 2011 (*Irish Birds* 10: 244). While not as long-staying as its 1999 predecessor its six day stay nonetheless gave a new generation of birders an excellent opportunity to catch up with this often elusive species. While birds have been found in all months except November statistics show that the best month to find this species is May with seven records followed by March with three.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* (36; 136; 1)

Wexford One: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 21st September to 10th October, photographed (P. Pykett).

Only the third, surprisingly, to have been found in September. Less surprising is that a total of 26 have been found at

Tacumshin Lake, more than at any other Irish site. It is also the only site in Ireland to record breeding when two pairs bred there successfully in 1938 (Kennedy *et al.* 1954).

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* (0; 17; 1)

Clare One: Second-calendar year, Doonbeg, 29th June to 15th July, photographed (G. Pearson).

The first for Clare, the second to be found in first-summer plumage and the second to be found in June following one on the Inishkea Islands, Mayo on 6th June 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 589). Its 17 day stay is bettered only by the 22 day stay of the juvenile at Bannow Island, Wexford from 18th October to 8th November 2017 (*Irish Birds* 11: 65). Of 18 birds recorded, 14 have been found during the months of June, July and August.



Plate 36. Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*, Doonbeg, Co. Clare, June 2020 (J.N. Murphy).



Plate 35. Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedichnemus*, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow, August 2020 (Dick Coombes).



Plate 37. Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, September 2020 (Dick Coombes).

American Golden Plover

Pluvialis dominica (1; 359; 11)

Cork Two: Adult summer, Garryvoe, 13th April (D. O'Sullivan); Adult, Mizen Head, 29th August (D. Ballard).

Galway Two: Juvenile, Truska, Ballyconneely, 22nd September, photographed (D. Breen); Adult, Rahasane Turlough, 23rd September to 3rd October (T. Murtagh, M. Sylvia).

Kerry Three: Second calendar-year, Ballylongford, 3rd to 12th February, photographed (D. Farrar); One, Ferriter's Cove, 18th September (M. O'Clery); Juvenile, Carrahane Strand, 18th September (E. Carty).

Mayo Two: One, Termoncarragh Lake, Mullet Peninsula, 8th May (D. Suddaby), also seen at Annagh Marsh on 11th May (D. Suddaby); Adult, Annagh Beach, Mullet Peninsula, 14th August, photographed (P. Lonergan).

Wexford Two: Second calendar-year, Our Lady's Island Lake, 2nd June, photographed (D. Daly, L. Daly); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 6th and 7th November (P. Kelly).

A poor year by modern standards with the total of 11 being the second-lowest annual total since 2006 (*Irish Birds* 8: 399) eclipsing the low of ten found in 2014 (*Irish Birds* 10: 244) by a single bird. The February record from Kerry is the first to have been found in that month placing this species in the company of Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* and Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* as the only Nearctic waders to have been found in all months. Most American Golden Plovers have been found in October (148) followed

by September (137) with 2020 being something of an anomaly in being the first year none have been discovered in October since 2000.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubris*

(0; 215; 21)

Cork Four: One, The Gearagh, 28th April (A. Duggan); One, Harper's Island Wetlands, Cork Harbour, 9th to 11th May, photographed (B. Lynch); One, Ballycotton, 30th June, photographed (R.T. Mills); Juvenile, Rosscarbery, 20th July (J. & M. Mitchell).

Louth Two: Juvenile, Seabank, 19th July, photographed (A.G. Kelly); Juvenile (new bird), Seabank, 27th to 29th July, photographed (G. O'Neill).

Tipperary One: Juvenile, Pat Reddan's Lake, 23rd July (P. Brennan).

Waterford One: Juvenile, Tramore Back Strand, 26th August, photographed (J. Roche).

Wexford 13: Tacumshin Lake: At least second calendar-year female, 26th to 28th April (K. Grace); At least second calendar-year male, 28th May (K. Grace); Adult, 20th June (P. Kelly); Juvenile, 10th July (A. McMillan) and, presumed same individual, 14th to 16th July when joined by a second juvenile (K. Grace); Four juveniles, 17th to 21st July (P. Kelly) with two remaining, 22nd July and one, 1st and 6th August; Adult female, 19th and 20th July, photographed (P. Kelly); One, 15th August (P. Kelly, P. Lynch);. Two juveniles, Our Lady's Island Lake, 6th July (A. McMillan) with a juvenile there, 27th July (K. Grace) and 9th August; Juvenile, Ring Marsh, 2nd August (P. Kelly).



Plate 38. Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubris*, Our Lady's Island Lake, August 2020 (Paul Kelly).

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* (146; 207; 3)

Cork One: Juvenile, Bullaun, Cape Clear Island, 19th September, photographed (B. Robson).

Kerry One: Juvenile, Inishvickillane, 20th and 21st October (M. O'Clery).

Waterford One: One, Comeragh Mountains, 12th October (E. Dempsey).

The first for Cork was obtained somewhere near Cork City toward the end of September 1844 (Thompson 1849-1851) with the second taking an additional 122 years to arrive, doing so 54 years to the day before this 2020 record and at the same location. This is the 16th record for Cape Clear Island, all of which have been of single birds, and the first there since 2005 (*Irish Birds* 8: 379). It remains a rare bird in Waterford, which has had a mere eight records involving 11 birds. Six of those 11 were recorded prior to 1866 and the others only as recently as 2014 (*Irish Birds* 10: 404), 2015 (*Irish Birds* 10: 404) and 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 554). Even then, as with the majority of Dotterel recorded in autumn in Ireland, none extended their stay beyond the day of their discovery. While this is the seventh to have been recorded in the Comeragh Mountains it is the first there since 1866 (Ussher & Warren 1900).

Upland Sandpiper *Bartramia longicauda* (3; 9; 1)

Galway One: Juvenile, Inishbofin, 30th September to 10th October (A. McGeehan).

The second for Galway after a wait of 165 years. The first Irish record was discovered amongst a consignment of wildfowl sent from Ballinasloe, Galway to Joseph Dunne, a Dublin game-dealer, in autumn 1855 (Ussher & Warren 1900). Following the much-twitched individual in Mayo from 10th to 27th October 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 470) this bird, inevitably, drew somewhat less of a crowd, but still proved popular while its 11 day stay is the second longest on record trailing only the aforementioned Mayo bird.



Plate 39. Upland Sandpiper *Bartramia longicauda*, Inishbofin, Co. Galway October 2020 (Ger Murray).

Temminck's Stint *Calidris teminckii* (1; 44; 1)

Wexford One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 14th September, photographed (P. Kelly).

The tenth for Wexford pushing it one ahead of Kerry, which has recorded nine. The location, timing and duration of stay are typical for this species. There have been 14 in September - more than in any other month - with nine of those found between 11th and 19th September. Of the 15 birds that have occurred since 2000 seven have been one-day birds, five have stayed for a second day and the remaining birds for five, seven and 16 days respectively.

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* (0; 181; 5)

Cork One: Juvenile, trapped and ringed at Harbour View, Kilbrittain, during the night of 8th/9th September, and, presumed same individual, 15th September, photographed (J. O'Neill).

Donegal One: Juvenile, Trabeg, Fanad, 9th September (R. Sheppard).

Kerry Two: Juvenile, Blackrock, 17th September (J. N. Murphy); Juvenile, Ferriter's Cove, Dingle Peninsula, 18th September (I. Crosher, J. Crosher).

Wexford One: Juvenile, Nethertown, 20th September, and, presumed same individual, Churchtown, 21st September (A. McMillan).

The Cork bird was a surprise extraction from a mist-net during a wader ringing session while the Donegal record is the sixth for that county.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* (0; 15; 1)

Cork One: Juvenile, trapped and ringed, Harbour View, Kilbrittain, 7th October (S. Bayley, J. O'Neill).

The sixth Cork record and the first there since 1993 (*Irish Birds* 6: 296). The second Nearctic wader to be extracted from a mist-net at this location during the autumn of 2020 following on from the Baird's Sandpiper *C. bairdii* caught and ringed there during the night of 8th/9th September.



Plate 40. Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*, Harbour View Beach, Co. Cork, October 2020 (James O'Neill).

White-rumped Sandpiper

Calidris fuscicollis (0; 405; 4)

Donegal One: Adult, Blanket Nook, 6th to 8th September (G. Mitchell).

Kerry One: One, Carrahane, 18th September (E. Carty).

Wexford One: First calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 3rd November (K. Grace).

Wicklow One: Adult, Webb's Field, Kilcoole, 11th July, photographed (D. Fox).

A poor showing after the record total of 37 set in 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 83-84), though by no means the worst year of recent times which have seen totals of three in 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 558) and two in 2014 (*Irish Birds* 10: 246). This species has averaged just under 12 individuals per year over the last 20 years. In eight of those years when the number of individuals recorded reach double figures this annual average increases to over 22 while the average over the 12 years when the number of individuals is in single figures this average drops to just under five per year.

Semipalmated Sandpiper

Calidris pusilla (0; 250; 8)

Clare One: One, Islandavanna, 3rd November (J.N. Murphy).

Cork Three: Juvenile, The Gearagh, 9th September (A. Duggan); Juvenile, Rosscarbery, 13th to 18th September (A. Jeffrey, P. Moore, D. O'Sullivan); Juvenile, Ballycotton, 17th September, photographed (D. O'Sullivan, L. O'Sullivan).

Galway One: Juvenile, Loughaunbeg, Inveran, 5th and 6th September, photographed (C. Forkan).

Kerry Two: Juvenile, Blennerville, 9th September, photographed (D.A. O'Connor); Juvenile, north Kerry (exact location undisclosed), photographed (name withheld), 16th to 22nd October.

Wexford One: Second calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 8th April to 8th May (K. Mullarney).

Only the sixth individual for Galway and the first mainland Galway record since the first record there in 1999 (*Irish Birds* 6: 553). Two-thirds of all birds recorded have been discovered in September with the counties of Kerry (74), Wexford (63) and Cork (57) responsible for three-quarters of the overall total. Two have previously been found in June (2011 & 2019) and three in May (1981, 2004 & 2007) but the Wexford bird, initially thought to be a Western Sandpiper *C. mauri*, is the first to be found in April. A total of 46 have been found at Tacumshin Lake alone while the Clare record is only the second to have been found in November following one at Ballycotton, Cork from 6th to 21st November 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 296).

Long-billed Dowitcher

Limnodromus scolopaceus (2; 150; 4)

Wexford Three: The first-winter bird year first recorded on the South Slob on 31st December 2019 was present up to 5th January; First-winter, Tacumshin Lake, 25th January to 23rd March, photographed

(P. Kelly); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 25th September to 6th October (P. Kelly), joined by a second juvenile on 26th September (C. ten Bohmer, R.H. Coombes, F. Huggard, P. Kelly).

Wicklow One: The first-winter present at Kilcoole since 30th November 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 84) was last recorded on 25th March; Juvenile, Kilcoole, 27th and 28th September (R.H. Coombes).

Another batch of typical records from this almost annual Nearctic wader which has now been recorded in every year since 1992 and in all but three years (1986, 1989 & 1991) since 1979.



Plate 41. Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow, March 2020 (Dick Coombes).

Red-necked Phalarope

Phalaropus lobatus (4; 57; 2)

Donegal One: Female, Blanket Nook, 7th June, photographed (D. Brennan).

Wexford One: Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 25th and 26th September, photographed (P. Kelly).

Whilst maintaining a small and localised breeding population, this species remains rare on passage. As previously published, the statistics for Red-necked Phalarope are for migrants only and exclude breeding records (*Irish Birds* 10: 246).

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*

(1; 53; 1)

Dublin One: First calendar-year, Bremore, Balbriggan, 1st to 6th December, photographed (G. Zoladz).

The second for Dublin and only the second bird to be found in December.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* (0; 187; 8)

Cork Three: At least second calendar-year, Harper's Island Wetlands, Cork Harbour, 9th May, photographed (A. Farrell); Juvenile, Lissagriffin Lake, 17th to 20th September, photographed (D. Ballard); One, Baltimore, 23rd September (D. O'Sullivan).

Dublin One: Juvenile, Rogerstown Estuary, 18th to 20th October, photographed (B. Carruthers *et al.*).



Plate 42. Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, September 2020 (Stephen King).



Plate 43. Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, September 2020 (Dick Coombes).



Plate 44. Collared Pratincole *Glaresola pratincola*, Lisselan, Co. Waterford, May 2020 (Johnny Roche).

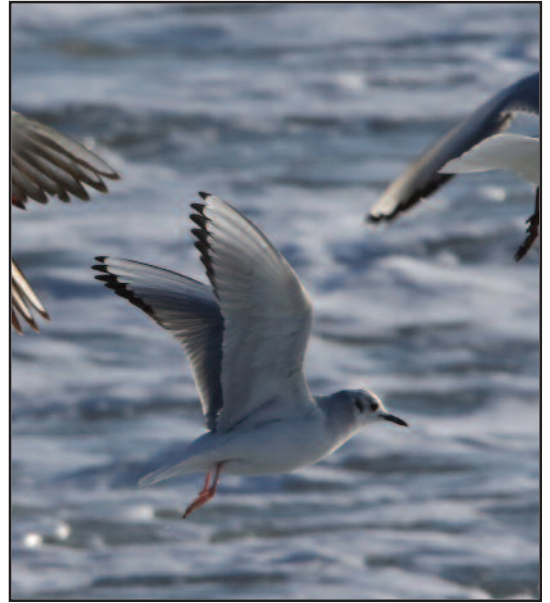


Plate 45. Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*, Kilmore Quay, Co. Wexford, March 2020 (Dick Coombes).

Galway One: Juvenile, Rahasane Turlough, 6th to 11th October, photographed (D. Breen).

Waterford One: First calendar-year, Killongford Pools, Dungarvan, 24th October to 30th December, photographed (J.A. Power).

Wexford Two: Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 28th and 29th August, photographed (A. McMillan); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 23rd September to 3rd October and from 16th to 21st October, photographed (E. Dempsey, J. McDonald), also recorded at Our Lady's Island Lake on 9th October.

Cork and Wexford, with 62 and 41 birds recorded respectively, have accounted for just over half of the cumulative Irish total for this species.

Collared Pratincole *Glaresola pratincola* (0; 4; 2)

Cork One: At least second calendar-year, The Gearagh, 18th to 20th April (A. Duggan, R. Duggan).

Waterford One: At least second calendar-year, Lisselan, 27th May (J. Roche).

The first for Cork and Waterford. Two in one year has occurred once before when birds were recorded in Mayo and Galway in 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 591), however this is the first time the species has been recorded in successive years following the bird at Blanket Nook, Donegal, on 22nd and 23rd July 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 88).

Bonaparte's Gull

Chroicocephalus philadelphia (1; 94; 6)

Carlow One: First-winter, Kildavin, 31st October (B. Power).

Clare Zero: The adult present at Clahane and Liscannor from 10th August 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 88) was last recorded on 11th January.

Cork Two: Adult winter, Garretstown, 4th to 17th September, photographed (R. O'Driscoll); Adult winter, Long Strand, Galley Head, 11th September (C. Barton).

Louth One: Second calendar-year, Annagassan, 4th to 23rd July, photographed (T. Cooney).

Wexford Two: Adult winter, Kilmore Quay, 8th February to 23rd March, photographed (K. Grace); Adult winter, Rosslare Bay, 25th December (A.A. & P. Kelly).

The first for Louth and the third for Carlow, which, along with Armagh, remains the only inland county to have recorded this species. The total of six new birds has been equalled twice before in 2003 (*Irish Birds* 7: 560) and 2006 (*Irish Birds* 8: 403) and exceeded only twice before by the total of nine recorded in both 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 596) and 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 88). Wexford and Cork have now both amassed totals of 19 birds while Kerry, with 16, remains the only other county to have reached double figures.

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla* (0; 47; 1)

Dublin One: First-summer, North Bull Island, 14th to 26th July, photographed (T. Adcock, N. Fitzgerald).

The fourth for Dublin overall and the second during summer after a first-year bird frequented the Poolbeg and Dublin Bay

from 10th June to 17th July 1984 (*Irish Birds* 3: 114 & 4:444). While this species has been found in every month of the year, 48% of those found have been discovered during the period November to January with the months of May, June, July and August combined accounting for a further 29%.

Kumlien's Gull *Larus glaucooides kumlieni*
(0; 357; 4)

Kerry Three: Adult, Blennerville, 13th February to 27th March, photographed (D.A. O'Connor); Adult, Dingle, 15th March, photographed (J. Jones); Near-adult, Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre, 15th March, photographed (J. Jones).

Mayo One: Second-winter, Mullet Peninsula, 19th January (D. Suddaby).



Plate 46. Kumlien's Gull *Larus glaucooides kumlieni*, Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre, Co. Kerry, March 2020 (David O'Connor).



Plate 47. Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, July 2020 (Paul Kelly).

American Herring Gull

Larus smithsonianus (0; 102; 2)

Cork One: First-winter, Castletownbere, 6th to 28th February, photographed (F. Moore).

Sligo One: First-winter, Carton, Sligo Harbour, 27th February to 15th March, photographed (S. Feeney).

The third for Sligo following single birds in 1992 (*Irish Birds* 5: 94) and 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 562). Cork, with 37 now recorded, easily surpasses Kerry and Donegal with 15 and 12 records respectively.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

(0; 23; 2)

Cork One: At least third calendar-year, Ballycotton, 21st June to 5th July, photographed (A. Robinson), also recorded at The Gearagh, 21st to 25th August (J. Lynch) and at various locations in Wexford during July and August (see below).

Galway One: One, Muckrush, Lough Corrib, 7th June, photographed (P. Cullinan).

Wexford Zero: At least third calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 21st July to 31st August (P. Archer), also recorded at Our Lady's Island Lake on 29th and 30th July and 31st August and at various locations in Cork during June, July and August (see above).

The third for Galway and the sixth for Cork. The bird present at various locations throughout Cork and Wexford between June and August is considered to be the same individual based on a number of features discernible in high quality photographs of the bird. The 72 day stay of this individual surpasses the previous record of 42 days of one at Blennerville, Kerry from 17th October to 27th November 2015 (*Irish Birds* 10: 408). Of 25 records to date, 16 have been found between June (9) and July (7), with the remaining records spread between April (3), May (1), August (2), September (1) and October (2).

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* (0; 11; 1)

Kerry One: At least third calendar-year, Inny Estuary, Ballinskelligs, 3rd and 4th August, photographed (P. McDaid).

The third for Kerry and the first since one at Tacumshin Lake, Wexford on 23rd August 2013 (*Irish Birds* 10: 85). Unlike many of its predecessors it stayed overnight but departed early the next morning eluding all but the earliest arrivals on site. Remarkably, the same individual was photographed in Pembrokeshire, Wales later that same day. A real mid to late summer rarity with nine of the 12 birds recorded having been found between 12th July and 23rd August.

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri* (0; 39; 0)

Galway Zero: Adult, Kinvara Bay, 10th February to 14th April and throughout November and December, also recorded at Inishroo on 14th June and Nimmo's Pier on 6th December, presumed returning.



Plate 48. Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*, Inny Strand, Co. Kerry. August 2020 (Pat McDaid).

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura* (0; 3; 1)

Kerry One: One, The Mills, Valentia Island, 27th to 30th October, photographed (D. Lynch, P. McDaid).

The fourth for Ireland and the first for Kerry.

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* (55; 35; 2)

Clare Zero: One, Abbey Hill, The Burren, 4th February, photographed (C. Morrin), presumed returning/lingering bird.

Cork One: Female/immature, Cobh, 7th November, photographed (A. Fleming), and, presumed same, Aghada from 21st to 30th November.

Galway One: Female/immature, Tully Mountain, Rinvyle, 21st November, photographed (T. Redfern).

Only the third for Cork which, after the first there in 1827 (Thompson 1849-1851), has now recorded birds in two successive years following the female on Bere Island on 5th September 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 91).

Little Swift *Apus affinis* (0; 2; 1)

Cork One: One, Glengariff, 10th November, photographed (S. Carter).

The third Irish record and the second for Cork following the first at Cummer, Cape Clear Island, Cork on 12th June 1967 (IBR 15: 36) and second on Great Saltee Island, Wexford on 16th May 2002 (*Irish Birds* 10: 251).

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* (0; 4; 1)

Cork One: First-year male, Dunboy, Castletownbere, 9th November to 30th December, photographed (P. Lyne), (Lyne 2021).

The first for Cork and the fifth Irish record. An accommodating, often vocal and long-staying bird that was warmly welcomed by many after the brief sojourn of the previous often elusive bird at Lough Fee and Kylemore, Galway on 5th and 6th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 596). Discovered during a period of Covid-19 Level 5 lockdown, it provided much needed relief to many by remaining into December and past the easing of Covid-19 travel restrictions.



Plate 49. Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*, Dunboy Castle, Castletownbere, Co. Cork, November 2020 (Patrick Lyne).

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* (21; 46; 3)

Cork Two: Two, Sherkin Island, 9th May (A. Legg, D. Legg).

Wexford One: One, Oldtown, Tomhaggard, 29th May (K. Grace).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* (9; 348; 9)

Cork Five: One, Galley Head, 3rd September (P. Moore); One, Garnish, 9th to 11th September, photographed (P. Leonard); One, Cape Clear Island, 15th to 17th September (G. Oliver); One, Mizen Head, 16th September (D. Ballard); One, above West Bog, Cape Clear Island, 26th September, photographed (P. Moore).

Kerry Two: One, Coumeenoole, Sleah Head, 17th September (J. Crosher); One, Valentia Island, 20th October (S. Enright).

Waterford One: One, Helvick Head, 10th September (F. O'Connell)

Wexford One: One, Fortune's Lane, Hook Head, 19th September (K. Grace).

The eighth and ninth for Kerry. Most records of this species, by a considerable margin, have come from Cork which has accounted for 239 (67%) of the total number of birds recorded with Wexford, with 68 (19%), coming a distant second.

Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* (1; 0; 1)

Clare One: First-calendar year male, Kilkee, 9th November, photographed (J. N. Murphy).

The second Irish record, the first for Clare and undoubtedly one of the most unexpected ornithological events for many years. The first Irish record was of an adult male found on 8th November 1890 at Glenamuck, Kiltiernan, Dublin (Ussher & Warren 1900, More 1891). It remained in the general area until 17th February 1891 when it, sadly, was shot while feeding on earthworms in a ploughed field at Woodford near Shankill, some four miles from its original location. The second record, coming 130 years and one day later, offered no such extended opportunity for observation. Discovered by the finder while on a break from work and extensively photographed it was present for less than 30 minutes and was not seen thereafter. In all plumages, bar that of adult male, this species can present some difficulty in being positively identified if not seen well. Whether this has led to some individuals slipping under the radar is unknown but to date there have been only 21 accepted records of this species in the UK making it a genuinely rare bird outside its normal range. It would be fair to speculate that the claws of many Irish non-adult male Kestrels will be receiving attention previously not afforded to them for a number of years to come.



Plate 50. Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni*, Kilkee, Co. Clare, November 2020 (John N. Murphy).

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*

(1; 40; 1)

Wexford One: Female (unaged), Tacumshin Lake, 31st May to 2nd June (K. Grace).

The 13th for Wexford, all of which, bar one, have been found between the 19th and 31st of May. Tacumshin Lake and its surrounding area alone has accounted for ten of the Wexford total, making it by a large margin the premier site for this species in Ireland. No other county, let alone site, has equalled this Tacumshin number. Galway with a total of eight and Cork

one further behind with a total of seven rank second and third in county totals for this smart little falcon.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo* (14; 429; 16)

Cork Two: At least second calendar-year, Nohoval 16th August, photographed (D. McGrath); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 21st October (P. Moore).

Donegal One: One, Drumkeen, 14th July (C. Ingram).

Dublin Two: Second calendar-year, Shanganagh Park, Shankill, 9th May, photographed (F. MacGingly, P. Smith); Second calendar-year, Rogerstown Estuary, 22nd July, photographed (B. Carruthers).

Waterford Three: One, Ballyscanlon/Carriganvry, 29th May (A. Jacques); Two juveniles, Helvick Head, 26th September, photographed (D. Weldon).

Wexford Seven: One, Tacumshane Village, 30th April, photographed (N. Williams); Second calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 13th to 16th May (K. Grace); Second calendar-year, South Slob, 16th and 17th May (A.A. & P. Kelly); Second calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 31st May to 1st June (K. Grace); Second calendar-year, Ring Marsh, 24th July (B. Haslam); Juvenile, Raven Wood, 15th August (K. Mullarney); At least second calendar-year, Kilmichael Point, 21st September (P. Doyle).

Wicklow One, Kilquade, 9th May (J. Ivory).

Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus* (89; 44; 1)

Mayo One: White-phase, Termoncarragh Lake, Mullet Peninsula, 6th December (D. Suddaby).

There can be few experiences in birding that surpass seeing a Gyr Falcon. The 34th for Mayo which now passes Donegal, with 33 records, as the premier county for Gyr Falcon in Ireland. Closer inspection of the statistics, however, reveals that only five have been recorded in Mayo since 1950 while nine have occurred in Donegal during the same period. The Mullet Peninsula alone has accounted for 14 with this being the second for Termoncarragh Lake, the previous bird having suffered the same fate as many of its era when shot there in September 1877 (Ussher & Warren 1900). Of the 29 Mayo birds recorded prior to 1950 a total of 20 were shot, one was captured but then escaped and one was killed with a stone! December, with 17, remains the third most likely month to find a Gyr Falcon in Ireland followed closely by April with 18 with March clearly in first place with 28.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus* (0; 1; 1)

Cork One: First-winter, Upper Rathduff, Mallow, 7th and 8th January, photographed (M.J. O'Mahony), (O'Mahony 2020).

The long-awaited second for Ireland after the first at Ballyferriter, Kerry from 22nd November to 10th December 1999 (Crosher 2000, *Irish Birds* 7: 104) and sobering evidence, were it ever needed, that extreme rarities can and do turn up 'off grid'. Occurring well inland and in January the bird was notable on many fronts and a just reward for a sharp and dedicated patch-watcher. Unlike its predecessor its stay was brief and it proved too elusive for most who travelled to see it.



Plate 51. Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*, Upper Rathduff, Co. Cork January 2020 (M.J. O'Mahony).

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* (7; 194; 6)

Cork One: First-calendar-year, West Bog, Cape Clear Island, 19th to 26th September, photographed (L. Benson).

Waterford One: Male, Coxtown, Dunmore East, 23rd May, photographed (K. Westman).

Wexford Four: Adult male, Tacumshin Lake, 21st May (K. Grace);

Female, Hook Head, 16th August (K. Grace); First calendar-year, Kilmichael Point, 5th to 9th September, photographed (G. Ó Sé); Juvenile, Great Saltee Island, 14th to 17th September, photographed (C. Forkan).

Only the fifth for Waterford while the bird in Cork and the four in Wexford increase the totals for those counties to 125 and 47 respectively. The location and timing of these birds is as would be expected. Cape Clear Island has now accounted for 62 of the aforementioned Cork total of 125 making it easily the best site in the country for this species and accounting for a fraction under 30% of the national total. Wexford's tally of four birds has occurred there only once before back in 1983 (*Irish Birds* 2: 574).

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* (2; 114; 3)

Cork Two: One, Olly Gully, Cape Clear Island, 7th May, photographed (S. Wing); Second calendar-year female, Crosshaven, 12th and 13th June, photographed (D. Fitzpatrick).

Donegal One: Female, Dunfanaghy, 13th to 15th July, photographed (W. Farrelly).

The first for Donegal and only the fourth to be found in July. Cork with 51 and Wexford with 49 have accounted for 84% of all known Irish occurrences of this species.

Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus* (0; 2; 1)

Galway One: First calendar-year, Gort na gCapall, Inishmore, 9th to 18th October, photographed (M. Sylvania), (Sylvia 2020).

The third Irish record following birds at Galley Head, Cork on 6th to 17th October 1985 (Dowdall 1993, *Irish Birds* 3: 327 &



Plate 52. Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus*, Inishmore, Co. Galway October 2020 (Mike Sylvania).

42: 94) and Loop Head, Clare on 13th and 14th October 2008 (*Irish Birds* 9: 97, McAdams 2008) and a familiar face for its American finder on only his second visit to Inishmore. This is the 16th record for the Western Palearctic, 12 have been on the Azores, with the single other European record on Tresco, Isles of Scilly from 10th to 13th October 1987.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* (0; 80; 1)

Kerry One: First calendar-year, Feothanach, Corca Dhuibhne, 10th and 11th October (K. Kelly).

The sixth record for Kerry, all of which have come from the Dingle Peninsula, and a return to leaner times after the record total of ten in 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 93). While numerically the most frequently encountered Nearctic passerine in Ireland by a considerable margin (Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens* comes in a distant second with 23 and Myrtle Warbler *Sethophaga coronata* in third place with 19) it is by no means annual in its occurrences. In the last 30 years there have been ten blank years while single birds only were recorded in a further four separate years.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* (62; 162; 2)

Cork Two: Female/immature, Ballinacarriga, Garnish, 5th May (P. Durell); Female/second calendar-year male, Barley Cove, 6th May, photographed (E. Burchill).

Bearded Reedling *Panurus biarmicus*

Waterford Four: Two males and two females, Lisellan, 15th October, photographed (D. Weldon).

These are birds recorded outside their breeding range.

Short-toed Lark

Calandrella brachydactyla (1; 84; 1)

Wexford One: One, Tacumshin, 9th May (K. Grace).

Cork (38) and Wexford's (32) combined total of 70 represents 81% of the overall total. The species has been recorded during both spring and autumn passage with 31 in October and 22 in May. For those looking to improve their chances of finding their own, Cape Clear Island in October with nine records followed closely by Great Saltee Island in May with eight are your best bets.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

(0; 60; 2)

Cork One: One, North Harbour, Cape Clear Island, 9th April (S. Wing).

Dublin One: One, Broadmeadows Estuary, 10th and 11th May (V. Caschera).

The third for Dublin following one near Dublin Airport on 18th April 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 602) and one at Dun Laoghaire on 30th April 2013 (*Irish Birds* 10: 253). The Cork bird was found hawking insects along the cliffs to the rear of the Cape Clear Island Bird Observatory. Cork, with 31, now accounts



Plate 53. Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*, Swords, Co. Dublin, May 2020 (Paul Kelly).

for exactly half of the total number of individuals recorded in Ireland to date. April and May, each with 18 birds recorded, are easily the months with most records.

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

(0; 22; 2)

Galway One: One, Kilmurvey, Inishmore, 15th October, photographed (C. Forkan).

Waterford One: One, trapped and ringed, Brownstown Head, 15th October (M. Foley).



Plate 54. Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*, Brownstown Head, Co. Waterford, October 2020 (Paul Archer).

The second for Galway and the third for Waterford. Those hoping to find this species would do well to note that 12 of the overall total of 24 have been found during the ten day period from 15th to 24th October with five of those discovered on 15th October.

Siberian Chiffchaff

Phylloscopus collybita tristis (2; 205; 45)

Carlow Two: One, Cloydagh, 18th January (S. Bolger); One, Bagenalstown, 27th December (C. ten Bohmer).

Clare One: One, Shannon Airport Lagoon, 29th November (J.N. Murphy).

Cork 16: One, Glebe, Middleton, 6th January (B. Power); One, Tramore River, Cork City, 21st January (H. Hussey), joined by a second bird on 22nd January with both remaining until 8th March (H. Hussey); One, Kennedy Quay, Cork City, 22nd January (B. Power); One, Marina, Cork City, 28th February (B. Power); One, Lower Glanmire Road, 1st March (B. Power); One, Sherkin Island, 12th October (J. Wylie); One, Mizen Head, 17th to 21st October (P. Moore); Two, Cape Clear Island, 20th October (S. Wing); One, Ladysbridge, Cork, 15th November (A. Jeffery); One, trapped and ringed, Enniskeane, 19th November (S. Bayley); One, near Atlantic Pond, Cork City, 6th December (H. Hussey); Two, Owenahincha, 6th December (S. Bayley); One, The Gearagh, 17th to 24th December (I. Stevenson).

Dublin One: One, Shankill, 8th December (C. Cardiff).

Galway One: One, Inishbofin, 20th October (A. McGeehan).

Kerry Six: The two birds present at Ross Castle, Killarney from 12th December 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 95) were joined by an additional four birds on 9th January with all six remaining to 23rd January (S. Enright); One, Inishvickillane, 20th October (M. O'Clery); One, Ross Castle, Killarney, 23rd November, photographed (name withheld).



Plate 55. Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*, Tacumshin, Co. Wexford, November 2020 (Kieran Grace).

Mayo One: One, Mullet Peninsula, 6th December (D. Suddaby).

Waterford Six: The two birds present at Dungarvan from 17th and 20th December 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 95) remained until 12th January when they were joined by a third bird with one bird remaining until 26th January, photographed (E. Dempsey); One, Dunhill, 18th January, photographed (M. Cowming, D. Weldon); One, Bunmahon, 18th and 19th March, photographed (D. Weldon); One, Dungarvan, 28th November to 26th December, photographed (F. O'Connell), joined by a second bird on the latter date, photographed (T. Murphy); One, Ballinlough, 30th December, photographed (D. Weldon).

Wexford Ten: One, Tacumshin Lake, 4th to 12th January (P. Kelly) with two birds present on the latter date, with one remaining until 15th March, photographed (P. Kelly); One, Tacumshin Lake, 13th November (K. Grace); One, Hook Head, 15th November (P. Keating); One, Duncannon, 5th December (P. Kelly); One, Rosslare Europort, 14th December (K. Grace); One, South Slob, 20th to 28th December, sound-recorded (P. Kelly, G. O'Sullivan); One, Cahore Marsh, 29th December, photographed (C. Cardiff); Two, Tacumshin Lake, 30th December, photographed (P. Kelly).

Wicklow One: One, East Coast Nature Reserve, Kilcoole, 24th December (C. Cardiff).

An excellent showing, bettered only by the record total of 55 in 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 568 & 11: 74). The Carlow and Clare records are the first for both counties.

Greenish Warbler

Phylloscopus trochiloides (0; 43; 2)

Cork One: One, Mizen Head, 13th September (P. Moore, D. O'Sullivan).

Wexford One: One, Great Saltee Island, 6th September (J.F. Dowdall, K. Grace, E. MacLochlainn, T. Shevlin).

1981 Wexford Zero: One, Hook Head, 12th September (J.K. Lovatt, M. O'Donnell *et al.*).

The seventh for Great Saltee Island and the fifth for Mizen Head with both fitting neatly the expected patterns for location and timing. Cape Clear Island, with a total of 16, is the only site to have recorded more. A prize find among early autumn migrants, 28 of the overall total of 45 have been discovered during the period 25th August to 25th September. The marked increase in occurrences in recent decades may be linked to the ongoing westward expansion of the species breeding range with birds now occurring as far west as Poland and, more sporadically, eastern Germany.

Two were recorded in the 1950s and 1960s, none in the 1970s, five in the 1980s, nine in the 1990s, increasing to 15 in the 00s, with 10 in the last decade. The 1981 Wexford bird was accepted as a proven record at the time and, subsequently, after review (Mullarney 1984), as Ireland's fifth Greenish Warbler. Although the record has been included in the species' statistics thereafter, it has never been published in an Irish Bird Report. The Committee regrets this oversight and is happy to publish the record here with thanks to Joe Hobbs for directing our attention to this omission.

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* (0; 14; 1)

Wexford One: One, Churchtown, 27th September to 1st October, photographed (P. Keating).

The first for Wexford. All records prior to this involved birds found at various locations along the west coast between Toe Head in west Cork and Tory Island in Donegal. Cork has recorded eight, Galway and Donegal have two each with Clare, Mayo and now Wexford with a single record apiece.



Plate 56. Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*, Churchtown, Co. Wexford, September 2020 (Stephen King).

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

(0; 8; 1)

Donegal One: At least second calendar-year male, Tory Island, 8th to 10th June, photographed (A. Meenan).

The ninth Irish record and the first away from Cork and Wexford. Five of the total have now been found in June with two in September and single birds in August and October.

Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta*

(2; 218; 1)

Cork One: One, Dursey Island, 18th September (D.A. Scott).

Cork with 137 and Wexford with 58 have accounted for 88% of all records. The neighbouring counties of Waterford and Kerry have, surprisingly, had only nine and three birds respectively.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina* (2; 224; 1)

Cork One: One, Sheeps Cove, Ring, Clonakilty, 1st September (P. Connaughton).

A brief glance at the statistics shows a pattern similar to, but even more striking than that for Melodious Warbler *H. polyglotta* with Cork (174) and Wexford (36) accounting for 93% of all individuals recorded and with Waterford and Kerry boasting only six and two individuals respectively.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria* (6; 218; 4)

Cork One: First calendar-year, Mizen Head, 8th October (D. Ballard).

Donegal One: First calendar-year, Tory Island, 7th October (C. Ingram).

Galway Two: First calendar-year, Inishbofin, 9th to 12th October (A. McGeehan, S. Millar); First calendar-year (new bird), Inishbofin, 14th October (A. McGeehan, S. Millar).

Four records that show many of the established patterns of timing and distribution exhibited by this species. Of the overall total, 130 have been found in October while 85 of 124 found in Cork and 13 of the 15 found in Galway since 2010 have arrived in that month. Those living in hope of encountering one in summer plumage should note that only two – a first-summer male or adult female in Cork on 11th October 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 480) and an adult female in Wexford on 21st September 2003 (*Irish Birds* 7: 567) - from the overall total of 228 have been aged other than a first-year.

Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* (2; 55; 1)

Cork One: One, Mizen Head, 4th October (D. Ballard).

2009 Wexford Minus one: First-summer male, Great Saltee Island, 18th April (A.G. Kelly *et al.*).

The bird on Great Saltee Island was previously published in the 2009 Irish Rare Bird Report (*Irish Birds* 9: 274), along with a photograph taken by Tom Shevlin. Subsequent examination of the description and of photographs taken have determined the bird should be attributed to the eastern subspecies *albistriata*. Statistics for both forms have been adjusted. See also Eastern Subalpine Warbler. .

Eastern Subalpine Warbler

Sylvia cantillans albistriata (0; 4; 0)

2009 Wexford One: First-summer male, Great Saltee Island, 18th April (A.G. Kelly *et al.*).

This bird was originally published as a nominate Subalpine Warbler, however it has subsequently been identified as belonging to the eastern subspecies *albistriata*, thus making it the second Irish record of that form after a male in song at Tarmon, Mullet Peninsula on 3rd May 2007 (*Irish Birds* 10: 253). In addition, two others have been ascribed to the eastern subspecies, a male at Great Saltee Island in 2017 (*Irish Birds* 41: 76) and a second calendar-year female at Tory Island, Donegal in 2018 (*Irish Birds* 42: 88). See also Subalpine Warbler.

Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus* (41; 139; 17)

Clare One: Adult, Hag's Head, 1st and 2nd June, photographed (L. Kavanagh).

Cork Four: Adult, north of Cork City, 29th May (per P. Moore); Adult, Owenahincha, 8th June (S. Bayley); Adult, Ballycotton, 29th June to 12th July, photographed (J. Hayes, G. Kelleher); One, Greencloyne, Youghal, 6th July, photographed (D. Heaphy).



Plate 57. Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus*, Arklow, Co. Wicklow, July 2020 (Eric Dempsey).

Donegal Three: Adult, Marameelan, Dungloe, 19th June, photographed (M. Hall); Adult, Tory Island, 23rd June to 7th July, photographed (A. Meenan); Adult, Rossnowlagh, 11th to 19th August (S. Forster).

Dublin One: Adult, Raheny, 6th June, photographed (P. Emmett).

Galway Three: Adult, Inishmore, 11th June, photographed (A. Ní Fhlaithearta); Adult, Inishmore, 15th June, photographed (H. Mueller); Adult, Kiltullagh, 20th September (M. Ryan).

Kerry One: Adult, Murreagh, Waterville, 6th to 9th July (M. & P. Halpin)

Sligo One: Adult, Cooloooney, 25th June, photographed (D. James).

Waterford One: At least second calendar-year, Lisellan, 14th June (J. Roche).

Wexford One: Adult, Wexford Town, 10th June, photographed (M. Taffe).

Wicklow One: Adult, Arklow, 8th to 11th July, photographed (C. O'Connor).

Only the third for Sligo after one at Enniscrone on 8th and 9th July 2001 (*Irish Birds* 7: 570) and one at Cartron from 9th to 11th July 2018 (*Irish Birds* 42: 88).

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* (0; 8; 1)

Cork One: One, Scott's Garden, Durse Island, 1st October, photographed (D.A. Scott).

The ninth Irish record and, with the exception of the first that was found dead at Blackrock Lighthouse, Mayo, on 25th May 1956 (*Irish Bird Report* 4: 17), the earliest arrival by three days with all others found between 1st and 17th October. Very much a Cork speciality seven of the nine Irish records have occurred there. Indeed a remarkable 22 of the 26 individuals

of the genus *Catharus* positively identified to species level in Ireland to date have been found in Cork.

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* (0; 2; 1)

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

The third Irish record and, rather surprisingly, the first *Catharus* thrush species for Mizen Head and the first for November. The migratory habits of Hermit Thrush differ from other members of the genus *Catharus* in a number of ways, which may help in explaining its rarity as a vagrant to Europe. They are short-distance migrants with most wintering in the southern United States and Mexico and tend to be reluctant to cover large distances over open water and are also the latest of the *Catharus* thrushes to migrate south, passing down the eastern United States from late September to late October. Despite undergoing a significant population increase in North America in recent decades it remains a very rare bird in Europe, although the fact that seven of the 13 British records have occurred since 2010 cannot go unnoticed.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* (0; 45; 3)

Cork Two: One, Durse Island, 26th September (K. Grace); Female (unaged), west of the Gearagh, 21st October (A. Duggan).

Galway One: First calendar-year female, Inishbofin, 2nd October, photographed (S. Millar).

The second Galway record after one in Galway City on 1st and 2nd October 1976 (*Irish Birds* 1: 90). The two Cork records bring the total for that county to 24 – exactly half the total

number of known Irish records. Three or more in a single year has only occurred twice before, first when four were recorded in 1976 (*Irish Birds* 1: 90) and three in 1985 (*Irish Birds* 3: 321). The record stay is 50 days by a bird at Clonea, Waterford from 20th November 2011 to 8th January 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 483 & 9: 603), in addition, seven of the overall total of 48 have stayed for three days or longer. A total of 31 (65%) have been one-day birds with the remaining 10 (21%) being two-day birds.

'Eastern' (Siberian/Stejneger's) Stonechat *Saxicola maurus/stejnegeri* (0; 10; 1)

Wexford One: Male (unaged), either Siberian or Stejneger's Stonechat, Great Saltee Island, 4th November, photographed (B. Power).

Individuals of both these Asian stonechats are considered by some to be indistinguishable in the field, and require recourse to DNA analysis to identify to species level. This has prompted the Committee to lump potential records of each as 'Eastern' Stonechat. The range of Siberian Stonechat extends from the eastern edge of European Russia east to Lake Baikal and south to Afghanistan and northwest Mongolia while that of Stejneger's Stonechat being further east, encompassing eastern Siberia, Japan, Korea, north-eastern China and eastern Mongolia.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla tschutschensis (0; 3; 1)

Galway One: First-winter, Inishbofin, 3rd October to 13th October, photographed (P. Cullinan).

Wexford Zero: First-winter, South Slob, from 31st December 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 97) remained until 4th January.

The fourth Irish record and the first for Galway, which now sees Inishbofin having recorded all full species of the genus *Motacilla* on the Irish list. This bird was picked up on call as



Plate 58. Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*, Inisbofin, Co. Galway, October 2020 (Dermot Breen).

it flew over the finder and initially, and understandably, misidentified as a Western Yellow Wagtail *M. flava*. Later on, the bird was pinned down and its true identity revealed, and a fourth Irish record secured. While the flight call of Eastern Yellow Wagtail is considered diagnostic it can be quite difficult at times to separate it from the flight calls of some southern races of Western Yellow Wagtail *M. flava* under field conditions, hence the requirement of a sound recording by all European rarities committees in the absence of a DNA sample, both of which were obtained here. A second first-winter bird present alongside the Inishbofin bird on 6th and 7th October showed many of the characteristics of *tschutschensis*, but in the absence of the aforementioned sound recording or DNA sample it was not possible to reach a determination on the exact identity of this bird. Until further progress is made with the field identification of this species, only those records that are supported by one or other of these methods can be accepted by the Committee as Eastern Yellow Wagtail. The second Inishbofin bird was extensively photographed and the record will be re-examined should advances in determining the field identification of this species emerge in the future.

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* (0; 35; 1)

Wexford One: First-winter, Tacumshin Lake, 9th to 13th October (P. Kelly).

Of the 36 birds recorded to date, 12 have occurred in Wexford with ten of those having been discovered at Tacumshin Lake. September is clearly the month to see this species in Ireland with 25 of the total now having been found in that month with August and October lagging far behind with three and five records respectively. The date of the Tacumshin bird is notable in that only the first record from Ballycotton on 15th October 1968 (*Irish Birds* 2: 403 & 6: 564) was found on a later date. Since the turn of the century the number of records has increased dramatically brought about no doubt by the continuing westward expansion of its breeding range. All but four of the total have occurred since 2002 with birds recorded in 16 of the 19 years since then.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* (2; 136; 1)

Limerick One: One, location withheld, 19th and 20th November, photographed (D. Farrar).

The first for Limerick but the poorest year since 2014 when only a single bird was also recorded.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

(0; 60; 1)

Wexford One: One, Tacumshin, 29th and 30th September (P. Kelly, A. McMillan).

The 17th for Wexford, six of which have occurred at Tacumshin Lake. October, with 34 individuals recorded, is by



Plate 59. Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, October 2020 (Stephen King).

a considerable margin the best month to see this species in Ireland. September, with 13 records, remains the only other month with occurrences in double figures.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* (1; 203; 4)

Donegal Zero: The bird first recorded at Glassagh Bay, Fanad Head, on 30th November 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 97) remained in the area until 26th January.

Meath One: One, Mornington, 14th November (E. Dempsey).

Wexford Three: One of the three birds present at Tacumshin Lake from 26th October 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 97) was still present up to 26th January (P. Kelly); Two, Tacumshin Lake, 21st November to 30th December (P. Kelly); One, South Slob, 4th December (K. Grace). Included here is the first record for Meath.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* (Unknown; 309; 10)

Cork One: One, Buncoille, Monkstown, 8th June photographed (S. Fleury).

Kerry One: Male, Camp, 26th April, photographed (M. & U. Williams).

Limerick Three: The two birds first recorded at Curraghchase Forest Park on 28th December 2019 (*Irish Birds* 43: 98) were joined by a third bird on 14th January (C. Glasgow) with all three present up to 21st March and with a maximum of five on 16th February, photographed (P. Kelly); Two, Curraghchase Forest Park, 17th December, photographed (H. Servignat).

Mayo Two: One, Lahardaun, 15th April, photographed (per S. Coleman); One, Binghamstown, Mullet Peninsula, 8th May (D. Suddaby).

Waterford One: Male, Tramore, 8th and 10th May, photographed (S. Neville), also recorded at Bunmahon, 9th May, and Dungarvan, 12th and 13th May.

Wexford One: One, Kilmuckridge, 24th April, photographed (J. Fitzpatrick).

Wicklow One: Male, Arklow, 21st April, photographed (D. Burke). The fifth for both Kerry and Waterford while the Cork bird is only the fifth to have been found in June. The same bird, identifiable as a result of feather damage clearly visible on the nape in photographs taken at all three locations, was involved in the Waterford sightings.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* (0; 259; 5)

Clare One: One, Kilbaha, 29th September (P. O'Keefe).

Donegal One: Female/second calendar-year male, Tory Island, 16th June, photographed (A. Meenan).

Cork One: Juvenile, Firkeel, 30th September to 6th October (K. Grace).

Kerry One: One, Skellig Michael, 20th September (M. O'Clery).

Wexford One: One, Great Saltee Island, 30th August (J.F. Dowdall *et al.*).

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

Clare One: One, Ennis, 26th December (B. Howell).

Donegal Four: One, Letterkenny, 28th January, photographed (E. Diver); One, Tory Island, 10th April, photographed (A. Meenan); One, Tory Island, 17th October, photographed (D. Brennan); One, Tory Island, 24th October, photographed (A. Meenan).

The Ennis bird is the first for Clare. None of these could be identified as either of the subspecies, i.e. Mealy *A. f. flammea* or Greenland Redpoll *A. f. rostrata*.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

(0; 134; 3)

Cavan One: Male, Maudabawn, 1st and 2nd July (J. Blakey)

Donegal One: Female, Tory Island, 10th June, photographed (A. Meenan).

Louth One: Male, Donor's Green, Drogheda, 8th May (G. Murray).

The first for Cavan and the second for Louth after one at Clogher Head on 12th and 13th September 1974 (IBR 22: 21). The Donegal and Cavan birds are the first to be recorded in June and July respectively while the Louth bird is the 13th to be recorded in May.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* (3; 59; 6)

Cork One: One, Galley Head, 15th October (C. Cronin).

Donegal One: One, Tory Island, 8th October (A. Meenan).

Galway Three: One, Kilronan, Inishmore, 16th to 18th October, photographed (M. Sylvia); One, Kilmurvey, Inishmore, 18th October (M. Sylvia); One, Inishbofin, 22nd October, photographed (A. McGeehan).

Waterford One: One, found moribund, Ram Head, Ardmore, 8th November (S. Morrissey),

The first records for Waterford and Galway. Six in a year has only been surpassed once, in 2016, by the record total of eight

(*Irish Birds* 10: 576). A total of 47 have been recorded in October with the ten year period 2010 to 2019 accounting for a higher total (23) than those recorded during the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s (20) combined. Essentially an Asian species which has spread into northeast Europe with this increase in records no doubt linked to this westward expansion.

Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* (0; 3; 1)

Donegal One: First-calendar year, Ballymichael, Shannagh, Fanad Head, 20th to 24th September, photographed (W. Farrelly), (Farrelly 2020).

The fourth Irish record and only the third Nearctic landbird for Donegal following a Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus* on 6th October 1989 (*Irish Birds* 5: 96) and a Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* on 15th May 2017 (*Irish Birds* 11: 80) both of which were recorded on Tory Island. This bird proved, unsurprisingly, to be extremely popular during its five day stay laying to rest for numerous birders the ghosts of the Cape Clear Island bird on 10th October 2003 (*Irish Birds* 7: 573), which left many bitterly disappointed by disappearing soon after its discovery. The North American population of Bobolink has undergone significant declines since the mid-1960s. Whether this has any effect on the frequency and numbers of Bobolinks reaching our shores is unknown.



Plate 60. Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*, Inishmore, Co. Galway, October 2020 (Mike Sylvia).



Plate 61. Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*, Fanad Head, Co. Donegal, September 2020 (Dick Coombes).

Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrine*
(0; 0; 1)

Galway One: One, Inishbofin, 6th to 8th October, photographed (S. Millar).

The first Irish record and the eleventh for the Western Palearctic joining an impressive list of top-drawer rarities to have been discovered on this small Galway island and further enhancing its reputation as a location for extreme vagrants. Seen by only a handful of birders due to the imposition of Covid-19 travel restrictions on the day of its discovery and following hot on the heels of one in Shetland from 29th September to 4th October it was the undoubted highlight of the autumn for those lucky enough to be present on Inishbofin. Breeding principally as it does in the boreal forest zone of Canada and wintering in Central and northernmost South America the name Tennessee Warbler might rightly be considered a misnomer. The species does not breed, and never has bred, in Tennessee and received its name from a migrant specimen collected by Alexander Wilson on the banks of Tennessee's Cumberland River in 1811. Of the six species of Nearctic landbird which have been found on Inishbofin, all of which have occurred since 2005, three (Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*, Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*



Plate 62. Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrine*, Inishbofin, Co. Galway, October 2020 (Steve Millar).



Plate 63. Blackpoll Warbler *Dendroica striata*, Three Castles Head, Co. Cork, October 2020 (Brian McCloskey).

and Tennessee Warbler) have been first Irish records and one other (Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus*) a second Irish record.

Blackpoll Warbler *Dendroica striata* (0; 12; 1)

Cork One: First-calendar year, Three Castle Head, 8th to 11th October, photographed (D. Ballard).

The 13th record for Ireland and the sixth record for Cork, Galway and Mayo, with three and two records respectively, are the only other counties with more than a single record with Waterford and Wexford each having had one. The eighth species of Nearctic land bird to be recorded on Mizen Head.

Appendix 1: Category D records

Category D1 records

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

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

(75; 0; 0)

Cork Two: Two, Shanagary, 10th June (D. O'Sullivan).

Donegal One: One, Blanket Nook, Lough Swilly (R. Vaughan).

Louth Six: Six, Lurgangreen, 8th to 21st June, photographed (E. Larissey).

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*

Louth One: Adult male, Soldier's Point, 29th March, photographed (G. O'Neill).

Appendix 2: Contributors

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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/desclst.php and www.irbc.ie/records/desclst1.php) which, after circulation to the Irish Rare Birds Committee 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.

2020 records not proven

Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii*
Kerry Head, Kerry, 22nd August.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*
Three, Lisheen, Cork, 3rd February.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*
One, Ballyrickard, Tralee, 5th April.

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*
Loughaubeg, Inveran, Galway, 7th September.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*
Rinnmgoylan Pier, Limerick, 18th November.

American Herring Gull *Larus smithsonianus*
Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre, Kerry, 15th and 16th January.

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus*
Leahill Bog, Adrigole, Cork, 14th January.
Clerihan, Tipperary, 15th January.
Dunmanway, Cork, 19th January.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*
Two, Tacumshin, Wexford, 29th September.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*
Delgany, Wicklow, 3rd April.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*
Inishbofin, Galway, 6th and 7th October.

Arctic Redpoll *Carduelis bornemannii*
Kilkee, Clare, 28th October.

Supplementary 2019 records not proven

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*
Cregg River, Corrandulla, Galway, 14th December.

Appendix 4: List of anonymous records not accepted.

The following reports concern rarities that were entered in the Provisional List of Rare Bird Sightings during 2020 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 report.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Carrigaline, Cork, 1st June.

Appendix 5: Corrigenda to previous reports.

Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* – In the Irish Rare Bird Report 2019 the numbers in parenthesis should read “(0; 39; 1)” not “(0; 40; 1)” as stated.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* - In the Irish Rare Bird Report 2019 the text should read “Three, 2km south of Oilgate, 4th January (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly)” not “One, 2km south of Oilgate, 4th January (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly)”. The published annual total for 2019 remains unchanged, the error being restricted to the number printed in the record account.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* - In the Irish Rare Bird Report 2019 the text should read “and only records which are unequivocally” not “equivocally” as stated.

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Calidris falcinellus* – In the Irish Rare Bird Report 2019 the text should read “7th June” not “7th and 8th June” as stated.

Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus* - In the Irish Rare Bird Report 2019 the text should read “13th October to 11th November” not “13th to 11th November” as stated.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* - In the Irish Rare Bird Report 2019, for Mayo the text should read “11th to 13th October” not “1th to 13th October” as stated.

Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava* – In the Irish Bird Report 2019 the text should read “Female” and not “Two males and a female” as stated. The published annual total for 2019 thus changes to one instead of three while the numbers in parenthesis should read “(0; 79; 1)” not “(0; 79; 3)” as stated.

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Abbreviations used

BOU: British Ornithologists' Union.

IOC: International Ornithological Community.