

# BIRDS ON LUNDY 2018

by

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BIRDING YEAR

A total of 146 species were recorded during 2018.

### January

The year got off to a mild but very unsettled start, with severe gales and heavy rain, particularly during the passage of Storm Eleanor on 2nd/3rd. A more settled, but colder spell, with biting easterlies followed from 6th to 12th, but the rest of the month saw a return to an unsettled, generally mild, westerly pattern with fronts crossing the island at regular intervals.

One or two **Great Northern Divers** and up to eight **Red-throated Divers** were a feature of the Landing Bay and adjacent waters. Onshore, there were good numbers of wintering thrushes early in the month, including 21 **Song Thrushes**, 24 **Blackbirds** and 37 **Redwings** on 5th. On 22nd, a nocturnal search for birds feeding in the East Side fields yielded three **Woodcock**, eight **Snipe**, and a single **Jack Snipe**. A daytime count of the entire island perimeter on 30th produced totals of 279 **Fulmars** on ledges, five **Shags**, 27 **Oystercatchers**, 66 **Great Black-backed Gulls**, 720 **Herring Gulls**, 40 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**, 1,115 **Guillemots**, 60 **Razorbills** and 23 **Rock Pipits**. Unusual species during the month comprised an adult **Iceland Gull** in Tillage Field on 19th, a single **Black-throated Diver** off North West Point on 24th, single **Common Gulls** on 24th & 29th, a female **Reed Bunting** at Pondsbury on 26th, a female **Firecrest** in lower Millcombe 27th-29th, regular sightings of an overwintering **Coal Tit** (following its arrival in Oct 2017), a female **Goldeneye** on 30th, and two **Black Redstarts** at Benjamin's Chair on 31st. Other species/counts of interest (maxima in brackets) included: **Teal** (seven), **Water Rail** (two), **Kittiwake** (320), **Robin** (15), **Skylark** (five – including one flying in off the sea at North Light on 30th) and **Meadow Pipit** (four), as well as single **Merlin** (four dates, 20th-30th), **Stonechat** (29th), **Pied Wagtail** (26th) and **Linnet** (5th).

### February

The first week of February saw chilly but bright conditions, with northerly winds. The middle fortnight was often milder, with westerly and south-westerly winds, but from 26th a bitter easterly flow – the 'Beast from the East' – brought unusually low temperatures and heavy snowfall, which drifted in the easterly gales.

Prior to the sudden cold snap, early spring had been shaping up nicely in the bird world, with a pair of **Ravens** nest-building in Halfway Wall Bay on 1st, singing **Starlings** and territorial **House Sparrows** prominent around the Village on 2nd, and 10 singing **Skylarks** counted between South West Field and Halfway Wall on 17th. Notable records included further sightings of a single **Great Northern Diver** and multiple **Red-throated Divers** (max six on 12th, 16th & 17th), an adult **Iceland Gull** (perhaps the individual seen in Jan) around Rat/Mouse Islands on 16th/17th, a **Grey Wagtail** over South West Point on 21st, a **Jackdaw** in Barton Field on 22nd, three **Common Gulls** off North Light and a **Dunlin** at North End on 23rd, a ringtail **Hen Harrier** quartering near Pondsbury on 25th, and a **Black Redstart** at Benjamin's Chair on 27th.

The cold weather that ended the month triggered the arrival of avian refugees from the mainland. These included small numbers of **Lapwing** (max 26 on 26th) and **Golden Plover** (three on 28th), as well as a **Mistle Thrush** near the main track Heinkel wreck on 26th and at Benjamin's Chair on 28th.

### March

The exceptionally cold easterly airstream continued for the first three days of the March, bringing further snow, severe gales (gusts exceeding 70 mph on 2nd) and daytime temperatures that remained stubbornly below freezing. From 4th it turned much milder for a time until mid-month, with some sunny, spring-like days interspersed with duller, wetter days. However, on 17th & 18th a second, but short-lived blast of cold air – the 'Minibeast from the East' – saw further snowfall and frosts. Less cold, but still unsettled weather quickly returned for the remainder of the month, low pressure dominating the scene.

Describing conditions on 2nd, Lundy Warden Dean Jones reported that fresh snowfall had added to the already towering snow drifts along the roads and thick blanket covering the plateau, whilst the ground had frozen solid, making it extremely difficult for many birds to find food. He continued: "*I did manage to get out of the wind somewhat on South West Point for a few hours. Here I witnessed numerous birds, mostly thrushes, desperately trying to leave the island for a more hospitable place to hide away from the rest of the storm. A total of 17 **Song Thrushes**, 12 **Redwings**, 14 **Skylarks** and a lone female **Stonechat** were seen moving south along the sideland and out to sea past Great Shutter Rock. Most of these birds, once out past the point, were immediately met with the strong easterlies, leading them to make a hasty retreat back to the island. A few **Song Thrushes** were not so lucky and were flung right out to sea, eventually disappearing from view – desperate times!*"

There were further small movements of **Lapwings** and **Golden Plovers** (the latter involving 10 on 1st), a lone **Grey Heron** on 3rd, a significant influx of **Redwings** (max 257 scattered across the island on 4th), and large numbers of gulls arrived to feed along the East Side. On 3rd, these included about 800 **Herring Gulls**, 152 mostly adult **Common Gulls** and 11 **Black-headed Gulls**. A flock of 12 **Red-throated Divers** off the Landing Bay on 6th was the highest count ever made from the island, whilst a **Black-throated Diver** on 7th & 9th was in almost full breeding plumage.



The lull between the two cold spells brought some more seasonable sightings, including arrivals of **Skylarks**, **Meadow Pipits** (42 on 5th, rising to 150+ on 11th), and **Pied Wagtails** (eight on 6th), a significant passage of **Stonechats** (24 on 7th) and the first two **Manx Shearwaters** of the year, flying past Rat Island on 5th. By 15th, the first **Puffin**, **Goldcrest**, **Sand Martin**, **Swallow**, **Chiffchaff** and **Wheatear** of the spring had all put in appearances (see table); quite a contrast to the start of the month!

*A colour-ringed Wheatear in the snow on 18 March. © Dean Jones*

The second cold snap, just after mid-month, unfortunately meant that freshly arrived migrants encountered extremely challenging feeding conditions for a time, as vividly illustrated by a female colour-ringed **Wheatear**, from Lundy's breeding population, photographed in the snow at Benjamin's Chair on 18th. Hopefully, the rapid return of less cold, though often far from spring-like, weather from 19th will have limited the number of casualties.

Towards the end of the month, notable sightings included a **Hooded Crow** between the Village and Quarter Wall from 20th to 28th, a **Firecrest** near the head of St Helen's Combe on 23rd, the first **Willow Warbler** of the year on 24th, 106 **Puffins** at Jenny's Cove on 26th, a lone **Jackdaw** around the farm on 25th & 26th, a female **Merlin** on 26th & 29th, a male **Brambling** in Millcombe from 26th to 31st – in song on the last date, a flock of nine **Cormorants** flying north on 29th, and a very active **Coal Tit** in Millcombe on 31st (which remained until 3 Apr).

<b>First dates for spring migrants</b>			
5th March	Manx Shearwater	22nd April	Whinchat
9th March	Goldcrest	28th April	Garden Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher
12th March	Wheatear	29th April	Common Sandpiper
14th March	Puffin, Chiffchaff	30th April	Reed Warbler
15th March	Sand Martin, Swallow	3rd May	Wood Warbler
23rd March	Firecrest	20th May	Turtle Dove
24th March	Willow Warbler	21st May	Cuckoo
1st April	Blackcap, White Wagtail		
3rd April	House Martin		
4th April	Ring Ouzel		
7th April	Pied Flycatcher		
12th April	Grasshopper Warbler, Redstart		
13th April	Whitethroat		
20th April	Swift, Sedge Warbler, Nightingale, Tree Pipit		
21st April	Whimbrel		

<b>Last dates for winter visitors</b>			
		25th March	Red-throated Diver
		31st March	Woodcock, Brambling
		4th April	Redwing
		9th April	Fieldfare
		19th April	Great Northern Diver

## April

April started unsettled and chilly at times, and this regime persisted for most of the first half of the month. There was a short-lived warm and settled spell after mid-month, which saw the highest April temperatures for England since 1949, but from 21st it turned progressively cooler, more unsettled and often windy again.

Much of the month was characterised by sluggish, 'stop-go', migration over a protracted period, with many normally common species appearing in low numbers, and/or peaking rather late. For example, there were just four counts of 50 or more **Willow Warblers**, **Whitethroats** peaked at only four, the highest **Wheatear** count was 48 and hirundine numbers were stubbornly low until the last week of April, when there were 1,000 **Swallows** on 25th – itself a relatively modest maximum compared with other springs, though **Sand Martins** didn't exceed 25 (on 26th).

**Blackcaps** were something of an exception, with periodic influxes from 4th onwards, peaking at 80 on 13th, and arrivals continuing during the remainder of the month.

Lundy scarcities comprised a **Treecreeper** and a female **Great Spotted Woodpecker** in Millcombe on 6th (the woodpecker remaining to 13th), a **Snow Bunting** along the main track near the pig sty on 12th, **Bullfinches** on multiple dates from 12th to 28th, a **Nightingale** in Millcombe on 20th, and a **Little Egret** over the Landing Bay on 24th. Other notable sightings included **White Wagtails** on seven dates from 1st to 25th, a female **Reed Bunting** at Pigs' Paradise on 4th, single **Siskins** on 5th & 21st, **Black Redstarts** on 6th & 10th, two **Stock Doves** on 7th, a **Ringed Plover** at North End on 13th, two **Great Northern Divers** in the Landing Bay on 19th, **Firecrests** on 20th, 21st & 25th, single **Lesser Redpolls** on 23rd & 30th, and a female **Greenfinch** on 28th.

## May

The first day or two saw the continuation of unsettled, cool conditions, but building pressure brought warm, muggy weather and the island was blanketed in sea fog on some days. There was another cooler spell in mid-May, but the second half of the month was mostly fine and sunny, with easterly winds dominating.

The 3rd brought a singing **Wood Warbler** to Millcombe, where a **Chaffinch** was putting the finishing touches to a nest and **Blackbirds** were busily feeding small chicks. Strong hirundine passage on 4th involved at least 1,200 **Swallows** and 200 **Sand Martins**. A female **Yellow Wagtail** with the ponies in Barton Field on 8th was the first of the year. Small numbers of **Whimbrel** continued to pass through until 20th, with a peak of seven on 3rd, whilst other waders logged during the month included low single numbers of **Golden Plover**, **Ringed Plover**, **Dunlin**, **Curlew** and **Snipe**, as well as four **Purple Sandpipers** at Brazen Ward on 14th, a **Greenshank** calling in flight over South End on 17th, a stunningly beautiful female **Dotterel** near South West Point from 19th to 21st and an exceptional seven **Sanderling** below North Light on 27th. A **Lesser Redpoll** was singing from the roof of Government House on 7th and a male **Hawfinch** was seen from 8th to 10th, and again (though potentially a different individual) from 17th until the end of the month. A **Short-toed Lark** was found on the track up to Old Light on 13th and a pair of **Siskins** were in Millcombe on 14th. The relatively late date of 18th saw by far the best **Swallow** passage of the spring, with a conservative minimum of 3,000 moving through. A singing **Firecrest** was in Millcombe from 18th to 20th. Also recorded on 20th were an adult **Iceland Gull** off the West Side, and a **Turtle Dove** in Millcombe. In spite of bright light from a waxing moon, the Old Light **Manx Shearwater** colony was surprisingly busy on the night of 20th/21st. There were many calling birds and 21 individuals were captured, including eight ringed in previous years, of which two had been ringed as chicks in the same colony in 2014. A late(ish) **Osprey** flew north along the East Side on 23rd, a **Woodchat Shrike** at Quarter Wall on 24th remained until 28th, and a stunning breeding-plumaged male **Common Rosefinch** was singing in Millcombe on 25th. **Teal** were confirmed to have bred for the fourth consecutive year when a female with three ducklings appeared on Pondsburry, also on 25th. The 27th brought two **Cuckoos** to the Millcombe area, a singing **Reed Warbler** (that remained in Millcombe into early June), a **Black Redstart** at The Battery, and the highest **Manx Shearwater** count of the year – 4,000 rafting off the East Side. May drew to a close with a **Hobby** at South End on 29th, a female **Bullfinch** from 29th until 2nd June, and a singing **Golden Oriole** in Millcombe on 31st, coinciding with an influx of 12 **Spotted Flycatchers**.

## June

June was mostly fairly warm and quite settled until the 12th, with variable amounts of cloud and some scattered showers at times. There was an unsettled westerly spell from 13th to 20th, and it was notably windy on 14th, but rainfall amounts were small. High pressure brought dry, very sunny and increasingly hot weather by day from 21st onwards, though it was relatively cool by night.

Up to a dozen **Spotted Flycatchers** were still present on 1st and 2nd, together with a late male **Pied Flycatcher**. Other migrants recorded on 1st included a **Turtle Dove**, single **Reed** and **Sedge Warblers**, four singing **Blackcaps** (two Millcombe, one St Helen's, one Hammers/Castle Copse), four **Chiffchaffs** (of which three singing – two Millcombe, one at the Rocket Pole), 17 **Swallows**, three **House Martins**, two **Siskins** and a **Lesser Redpoll**. A ringtail **Montagu's Harrier** flew out to sea off North Light on 2nd and a male **Yellow Wagtail** was feeding with ponies in St Helen's Field. Two adult **Rose-coloured Starlings** were at Quarter Wall and around the Village on 3rd, whilst northbound passage of **hirundines** and **Swifts** continued. Teams from RSPB and Natural England began all-island censuses of **Manx Shearwater** burrows and nesting large gulls – **Herring**, **Lesser Black-backed**, and **Great Black-backed**. On 4th a **Hobby** drifted north over Millcombe, a **Mistle Thrush** was feeding near Halfway Wall, and a **Chiffchaff** was singing in the unusual setting of Gannets' Combe. An early-June survey of breeding **Starlings** revealed 39 active nests, but as some broods had already fledged, the population was certainly in excess of 40 breeding pairs – the highest of recent times. Mass **Starling** fledging had occurred by 6th, a date that also brought sightings of a female **Cuckoo** staking out **Meadow Pipit** nests at Quarter Wall, a female **Teal** with a brood of six small ducklings on Pondsby, and a colour-ringed **Oystercatcher** (from Pembrokeshire) in Gannets' Combe. A **Little Egret** was at Barton Pond on 7th and 8th. The period 8th to 14th saw the fledging of **Duncock**, **Pied Wagtail** and **House Sparrow** chicks in Millcombe, whilst the plateau was busy with family parties of **Skylarks**, **Wheatears** and **Meadow Pipits**. Dean Jones blogged that "*The island's **Guillemots** and **Razorbills** have all been very busy too, repeatedly heading out to sea in order to provision their adorable newly hatched chicks with a bounty of sand-eels and sprat. Wednesday 13th saw the Conservation Team head out to Jenny's Cove for a dawn to dusk **Puffin** survey aimed at identifying all the burrows with pufflings in them by noting instances of feeding by parent birds. Unfortunately, the last shift had to be cancelled due to the earlier-than-expected arrival of rain and strong winds, but despite this minor setback the team was able to identify at least 95 burrows which had fish delivered to them.*" An adult **Rose-coloured Starling** (possibly a new arrival) was seen regularly from 9th to 29th. The first **Kittiwake** chicks were seen on 15th, a ringtail **Hen Harrier** was quartering near Quarter Wall on 16th, two **Common Scoters** were on the sea near Gannets' Rock on 20th, and a long-staying female **Marsh Harrier** appeared on 21st, remaining until late July. A **Grey Heron** on 25th, followed by three on 26th and lone **Curlews** on 28th & 29th signalled the turning of the year and the beginning of post-breeding dispersal and migration...

## July

The first half of July was mostly warm or hot, dry and sunny, especially so in the first week, with high pressure dominating. The second half was less settled but still with plenty of warm, dry and sunny weather, though there was a thundery breakdown towards the end of the month. Blogging about the last two weeks of June and the first week of July, Dean Jones reflected that, "*Sun-kissed would be the phrase I would use if I were to describe this period on Lundy. Only 10.6 ml of rain has fallen (all within four days) which has left the island rather parched. The*

*lack of rain is really starting to show across the island, resulting in it looking more like a mini-Serengeti than an island in the Bristol Channel".*

Small flocks of **Swifts** were much in evidence early in the month, with 29 screaming around the Church tower on 2nd and a similar number feeding over the East Side on 4th. The moulting female **Marsh Harrier** was last seen on 26th, ranging widely over the island during its month-long stay. Nocturnal surveys of potential **Storm Petrel** nesting habitat were conducted during the period 5th to 10th, revealing the presence of about 20 birds near North Light on the night of 6th/7th. A **Cuckoo** flew over Millcombe on 10th, with further sightings of a rufous-phase female from 20th to 26th. Successful breeding of **Blackcap** was confirmed on 17th, when an adult female was watched feeding a fledgling in the Secret Garden. **Grey Herons** were a particular feature of the second half of the month, with one to three birds noted on many dates. Further evidence of the gathering pace of migration was provided by the appearance of a **Whimbrel** over Rat Island on 18th, five **Common Sandpipers** in the Landing Bay on 20th, the first **Black-headed Gull** and **Common Gull** of the season on 22nd & 23rd respectively, two **Turnstones** seen from a kayak at South End on 24th, and an overnight fall of **Willow Warblers** on 25th, when 117 were counted in Millcombe alone.

## August

The month began with a week of mostly warm, dry and sunny weather but the rest of the month was mostly unsettled with strong westerly winds, that brought prolonged bouts of misty low cloud and thoroughly wetting drizzle. Although the third week was often rather warm and humid it turned cooler towards the end of the month. On 26th, Rich & Rebecca Taylor reported that during a particularly misty and very wet day they *"mostly played Spot the Sea and, at times, Spot Brambles – from Little St John's!"*

The last **Puffin** of the 2018 season was seen in flight off Jenny's Cove on 4th. A **Buzzard** was soaring over North Light steps on 5th. Following fledging of young, a count of 205 **Shags**, the highest of the year, was made on 9th. Recently fledged **Goldfinches**, presumably from a second brood, were in Millcombe on 10th. There were **Pied Flycatchers** on nine dates, beginning with a singleton in Millcombe on 8th and culminating in an unusually high count (for Lundy) of 20 on 31st. Other migrants included a **Firecrest** on 18th, five **Goldcrests** (the first of the autumn) on 20th and seven **Tree Pipits** on 21st, whilst Dean Jones vividly described the excitement of a migrant influx on 23rd: *"An evening of clear skies coupled with sporadic rainfall and a light NW breeze provided the island with a fantastic fall of migrants come daybreak. It's mornings like this that all birders yearn for, possibly even more so for island birders, marooned on their little rocks unable to jaunt down the road or over to the next county"*. Totals comprised 128 **Willow Warblers**, nine **Whitethroats**, three **Garden Warblers** and 14 **Spotted Flycatchers**. The last week of August saw ringers arriving to focus on nocturnal trapping of **Manx Shearwaters** and **Storm Petrels**. Highlights included the capture of two French-ringed **Storm Petrels** and the ringing of good numbers of shearwater chicks and adults. Notable records by day included single **Dunlin** and **Jack Snipe** on 26th, a **Great Skua** over Rat Island, and 24 **Spotted Flycatchers** on 28th, two **Whimbrels** and five **Sedge Warblers** on 29th, a movement of hirundines comprising 135 **Swallows**, 25 **Sand Martins** and 15 **House Martins** on 30th, a flock of seven *alba* **wagtails** including at least two **White Wagtails** on 30th, and a **Ringed Plover**, three **Swifts**, and a **Yellow Wagtail** on 31st.

## Breeding species in 2018

The following species were all confirmed as breeding successfully:

Mallard	Puffin	Robin
Teal	Woodpigeon	Stonechat
Fulmar	Peregrine	Wheatear
Manx Shearwater	Carrion Crow	House Sparrow
Shag	Raven	Dunnock
Oystercatcher	Skylark	Pied Wagtail
Kittiwake	Swallow	Meadow Pipit
Great Black-backed Gull	Chiffchaff	Rock Pipit
Herring Gull	Blackcap	Linnet
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Wren	Goldfinch
Guillemot	Starling	
Razorbill	Blackbird	

In addition, the following species may have bred:

Storm Petrel (apparently occupied burrows were found at North Light, but outcome of nesting attempts unknown)

Water Rail (song heard and territorial behaviour observed in late Mar, but no nest or young seen)

Kestrel (a female was seen regularly in spring and a male and a juvenile were together on the West Side on 13 Jul)

Whitethroat (a territory-holding male was present in Jun/Jul)

Chaffinch (a nest was built by an apparently unpaired bird in Millcombe and no young were seen)

## September

The month began settled and rather warm, but there was a long spell of unsettled weather, with predominantly westerly winds, starting in the second week and lasting until 23rd. It was particularly wet and windy, with lashing rain and relentless gales, between 18th and 21st. The final week saw more settled, with cool, autumnal nights.

Night-time **Manx Shearwater** and **Storm Petrel** ringing continued to good effect during the first fortnight. There were 16 Pied Flycatchers on 1st, the last two **Swifts** of the year passed through on 2nd, whilst 12 **Spotted Flycatchers** and four **Whinchats** were present on 3rd. The 4th saw an arrival of 13 **Willow Warblers**, 33 **Blackcaps** and 10 **Whitethroats**, and there were further influxes of 30, 100 and 150 **Blackcaps** on 10th, 13th & 22nd respectively, accompanied on the last date by 45 **Chiffchaffs**. **Goldcrests** also became more prominent from the middle of the month, with counts of 25 on 14th & 21st and 35 on 24th. September generally sees hirundine passage at its peak and maximum counts of **Swallows** included 500 on 13th, 1,398 on 24th, 1,500 on 26th and 4,000 on 27th. **House Martins** were notably thin on the ground, however, with the exception of 117 on 24th and 200 on 27th. The month concluded with 1,000 **Meadow Pipits** on 28th, 60 **Chiffchaffs**, a further 70 **Blackcaps** and 330 **Linnetts** on 29th, and another influx of 40 **Goldcrests** on 30th There was a sprinkling of less common migrants throughout the month, among them **Great Northern Diver** (first of the autumn on 24th), **Grey Heron**,

**Sparrowhawk, Ringed Plover, Curlew, Dunlin, Jack Snipe** (one on 29th), **Greenshank** (one on 22nd), **Black-headed Gull, Short-eared Owl** (one on 26th), **Firecrest, Wood Warbler** (one on 5th), **Garden Warbler, Grasshopper Warbler, Sedge Warbler** (last of year on 7th), **Reed Warbler, Ring Ouzel** (singles on 21st & 24th), **Mistle Thrush** (one on 29th), **Redstart, Yellow Wagtail, White Wagtail, Tree Pipit, Greenfinch, Reed Bunting** and **Snow Bunting** (one on 28th). True rarities included an **Ortolan Bunting** at Benjamin's Chair on 2nd, a **Golden Oriole** in Millcombe on 4th & 5th (only the second autumn record for the island), a juvenile **Rose-coloured Starling** in Quarters chicken run on 6th, two **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** in the Brick Field/Airfield area from 9th to 12th, a **Pectoral Sandpiper**, initially in the Quarter Wall area and then at Quarters Pond, from 12th to 15th, a juvenile **Sanderling** at North End on 21st, a **Wryneck** along the Lower East Side Path on 22nd, a juvenile **Red-backed Shrike** in Millcombe on 26th & 27th, and a juvenile **Great Spotted Woodpecker** in Millcombe on 30th.

## October

The month began with a week of mainly fine weather. Southerly winds brought unseasonably warm weather in the second week, and it was very wet and windy around 12th. After a quieter spell of weather with plenty of sunshine at times, it turned much colder from the 26th onwards with northerly and north-easterly winds, which brought with it an influx of thrushes and finches. The highest counts of the month for commoner migrants included: **Skylark** 50 on 24th, **Goldcrest** 56 on 17th, **Swallow** 130 on 3rd, **House Martin** 42 on 3rd, **Chiffchaff** 49 on 17th, **Blackcap** 110 on 16th, **Starling** 410 on 19th, **Blackbird** 200 on 30th, **Fieldfare** 40 on 29th & 30th, **Redwing** 290 on 29th, **Song Thrush** 16 on 19th, **Robin** 21 on 4th, **Stonechat** 21 on 17th, **alba wagtail** 33 on 1st, **Meadow Pipit** 700 on 3rd, and **Chaffinch** 1,410 moving south on 29th.

With its reputation for rarities, October is the month when birdwatchers across the British Isles are most likely to invoke the adages "*anything could turn up*" and "*expect the unexpected*". October 2018 certainly didn't disappoint on Lundy, with vagrants arriving from east and west. These included three nationally very rare species, all of which appeared in Millcombe over a three-week period: a **Green Warbler** (the first for Lundy and Devon) on 7th, a **Red-eyed Vireo** from 19th to 22nd, and an **American Robin** on 26th. The supporting cast included the juvenile **Great Spotted Woodpecker** until 7th, followed by a female, which arrived on 16th and remained for the rest of the 2018 and into 2019, a flock of four **Little Egrets** flying past the Landing Bay on 4th, at least 15 **Yellow-browed Warblers** between 4th and 26th, an **Osprey** over the Landing Bay on 4th, a **Melodious Warbler** on the Terrace on 5th, a **Common Rosefinch** in Millcombe on 20th, a **Pallas's Warbler** trapped in Millcombe on 25th (only the sixth for Lundy), and a flock of eight **Greenland White-fronted Geese** on the Airfield and elsewhere on 27th.

Also of note were a female **Common Scoter** in the Landing Bay on 2nd/3rd, 230 **Goldfinches** on 3rd, three **Firecrests** on 4th & 19th, a **Short-eared Owl** near Threequarter Wall on 8th, two **Mediterranean Gulls** in the Landing Bay on 9th, the first **Redwing** of the autumn on 10th, a **Turtle Dove** in with the pigs on 11th, 50 **Siskins** on 14th, the first **Brambling** of autumn, as well as two **Black-headed Gulls** and three **Common Gulls** on 15th, the first **Fieldfare** and a ringtail **Hen Harrier** 18th, a **Redshank** on 19th, a **Stock Dove** and a **Snow Bunting** on 20th, another **Hen Harrier** sighting and two **Mistle Thrushes** on 21st, a **Short-eared Owl** on 22nd & 23rd, a flock of 16 unidentified (Cattle or Little) **egrets** off North Light on 24th, a **Jackdaw** and four **Mediterranean Gulls** on 25th, 14 **Lesser Redpolls**, 30 **Common Gulls** and six unidentified **grey geese** off the East Side on 26th, three **Grey Herons** and two **Lapwings** on 27th, and 17 **Bramblings** on 29th.



### Last dates for summer migrants

26th July	Cuckoo
4th August	Puffin
2nd September	Swift
4th September	Common Sandpiper
7th September	Sedge Warbler
26th September	Pied Flycatcher, Yellow Wagtail
1st October	Reed Warbler
4th October	Whitethroat
8th October	Spotted Flycatcher
12th October	Sand Martin
14th October	Tree Pipit
18th October	Grasshopper Warbler, Whinchat
19th October	Willow Warbler
26th October	House Martin, Garden Warbler
27th October	Swallow
11th November	Wheatear

13th November	Ring Ouzel
26th November	Blackcap
28th November	Manx Shearwater

### First dates for autumn migrants/winter visitors

24th September	Great Northern Diver
25th September	Merlin
26th September	Siskin
28th September	Snow Bunting
1st October	Lesser Redpoll, Reed Bunting
10th October	Redwing
15th October	Black Redstart, Brambling
18th October	Fieldfare
24th October	Woodcock
2nd November	Lapland Bunting
13th November	Red-throated Diver

## November

The month opened on a fairly chilly note, but the first half of November was otherwise changeable and mild with mainly southerly winds and rain at times. It turned more settled from the 15th, as a large Scandinavian anticyclone extended its influence across the UK, though strong and bitterly cold easterly winds dominated from 17th to 25th, before mild, wet and windy Atlantic conditions set in from 27th.

Most unexpected was the island's fifth **Little Owl**, near the head of St John's Valley at dusk on 10th. The female **Great Spotted Woodpecker** was present throughout, mainly in Millcombe, whilst other unusual species included single **Snow Buntings** on 1st, 13th & 26th, a **Lapland Bunting** over Quarter Wall on 2nd, a **Hen Harrier** over Lametry Bay on 3rd and another near Tibbetts on 26th, a **Firecrest** along the Terrace on 12th, single **Mistle Thrushes** in Millcombe on 13th & 26th, two **Red-throated Divers** off Rat Island on 13th, an adult **Mediterranean Gull** and a **Great Skua** off the East Side on 13th (with two Great Skuas there on 14th), three **Lapwings** in Bull's Paradise on 19th, an adult **Dark-bellied Brent Goose** near Quarters on 20th, two **Common Gulls** off the Landing Bay on 21st, and a **Black-headed Gull** in the same area on 27th.

There were further influxes of thrushes and finches, including 500 **Chaffinches** on 10th, 50 **Redwings** on 16th and small numbers of **Bramblings** until the last two on 26th. An accompanying cast was provided by a scattering of typical late-autumn migrants and winter visitors, including **Teal**, **Great Northern Diver**, **Sparrowhawk**, **Water Rail**, **Golden Plover**, **Woodcock**, **Merlin**, **Skylark**, **Chiffchaff**, **Goldcrest**, **Starling**, **Black Redstart**, **Stonechat**,

**Pied Wagtail** and **Reed Bunting**, as well as the last **Manx Shearwater** and **Blackcap** of the year (see table).

## December

The first third of the month continued the mild, wet and windy theme of late November. It turned briefly more settled and colder mid-month, but mild, wet weather soon returned. From Christmas Eve onwards it was somewhat quieter with high pressure more dominant, but a mild westerly flow ensured generally overcast conditions.

The prevailing weather made for difficult birding at a time of year when daylight is anyway at a premium, and this was reflected in a relative dearth of records. **Guillemots** and **Fulmars** were busy reoccupying the breeding ledges, whilst there were a few sightings of **Sparrowhawk**, **Water Rail**, **Woodcock**, **Snipe**, **Kestrel**, **Merlin**, **Goldcrest**, **Chaffinch**, **Goldfinch** and **Linnet**. After going AWOL for a time in November, the female **Great Spotted Woodpecker** was relocated in St Helen's Copse on 10th and remained into 2019. Also notable for December were two **Lapwings** on 31st, **Common Gulls** off the East Side on 12th & 31st, two **Black-headed Gulls** there on 30th, and single **Chiffchaff** (several dates) and **Firecrest** (12th) in Millcombe.

### Keeping in touch with Lundy bird news and information

The website [www.birdsoflundy.org.uk](http://www.birdsoflundy.org.uk) linked to the 2007 publication *The Birds of Lundy* includes updates to the species accounts up to the end of 2018. Further updates will be added as new observations continue build on the knowledge gained from more than 70 years of intensive study by the LFS.

Complementing this long-term archive is an online blog [www.lundybirds.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.lundybirds.blogspot.co.uk) through which visiting birdwatchers and ringers may contribute news of the latest sightings. This relies completely on voluntary contributions. If you would like to become a 'co-author' of the blog, meaning that you can post your own updates, please send an email to [gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk](mailto:gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk).

## Nomenclature and sequence

These follow The British List (summarised 9th edition, updated version posted on the BOU website February 2019) maintained by the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU). Where different from the species name in common usage (e.g. Robin), the international English name applied by the BOU (in this case European Robin) is given in square brackets after the scientific name. The numbers of birds given in the tables, where included, are taken from the LFS Logbook and give the monthly maxima and, in most cases, the number of days on which the species was reported. It should be noted that some of these counts may not be truly representative of the numbers of birds present and are perhaps more reflective of periods (particularly spring and autumn) when observer coverage is higher.

## Assessment of records of rare birds

Records of species and sub-species that are vagrants to Britain (e.g. Green Warbler, American Robin) are assessed by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Records of species classified as 'nationally scarce migrants' or which are otherwise rare in Devon (e.g. Golden

Oriole, Ortolan Bunting) are considered by the Devon Birds Records Committee (DBRC). In addition, records of 'Lundy rarities', species that are regularly encountered on the mainland but rare on the island (e.g. Mediterranean Gull, Treecreeper), are assessed by the Lundy Bird Recorders.

In all cases, records of species that are rare – whether at national, county or island level – must be accepted by the relevant committee or recorder as being adequately documented. This helps to ensure that the ornithological records kept by different bodies, including the LFS, form a coherent whole, and that high standards of assessment are shared and applied. The unpredictable nature of birdwatching means that even the most experienced and knowledgeable observers are sometimes unable to clinch the identity of a suspected rarity; perhaps it was not seen for long enough, was too far away, or the weather was too bad for crucial plumage details to be picked out. In other cases the distinguishing features are so subtle that photographs and/or examination of the bird in the hand may be required. The assessment of a rarity record as 'not proven' should be seen in this context; it does not necessarily mean that those assessing the record think the observer was mistaken.

Observers are asked to ensure that supporting notes for all records of rare species are entered in the LFS Logbook (which contains guidelines on what information to provide) as soon as possible after the sighting has been made. Please take care to ensure that your name(s) and contact details are included – and legible! Photographs and video-clips are especially welcome and these can be emailed to the Lundy Bird Recorders at [gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk](mailto:gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk).

Observers' names are included below for all accepted 2016 records of species that are national rarities, nationally scarce migrants and/or Lundy vagrants, as well as for some other reports of particular interest.

### **Birds seen during boat crossings**

Sightings during boat crossings are generally only included in the main list when it is clear that the birds in question were close to the island. There is a separate listing at the end of the report for other crossing records of interest. Observers are strongly encouraged to submit records for the coastal waters of the North Devon mainland, including the Taw & Torridge Estuary, to the Devon Bird Recorder ([recorder@devonbirds.org](mailto:recorder@devonbirds.org)).

### **Acknowledgements**

As always we are grateful to the island residents and visitors, whether or not they class themselves as birdwatchers, who contribute sightings to the LFS Logbook and to the databases maintained by Devon Birds and the British Trust for Ornithology; the annual bird report is a distillation of thousands of hours of observation by many dozens of individuals. However, we have once more to single out the outstanding contribution made by Dean Woodfin Jones, the resident Lundy Warden, together with his colleagues from the wardening and ranger teams, both staff and volunteers.

Special thanks go to Devon Birds for working closely with us on the assessment of rarity records, especially Karen Sims, Devon Birds database manager, who provided a file of all 2017 Lundy records, including those submitted via *BirdTrack*, to help ensure consistency between the respective bird reports published by Devon Birds and the LFS. Others who have helped us in various ways include Jo Alexander, Chris & Carol Baillie, Helen Booker, Sam Bosanquet, Ross Bower, Richard Campey, Clive Couzens, Mark Darlaston, Paul Dean, Chris & Mandy Dee, James Diamond, Rob Duncan, Ken Ebsworthy, Tim Frayling, Joshua Harris, Chas Holt,

Paul Holt, Andy Jayne, Mike Langman, Philip & Helen Lybery, Steve McAusland, Ryan Miller, David & Elisabeth Price, Martyn Roper, Alan & Sandra Rowland, Kevin Rylands, Tony Sawbridge, Grant Sherman, Luke Sutton, Richard & Rebecca Taylor, Tony & Ann Taylor, Martin Thorne, Chris Townend, Jon Turner, Nik Ward, Tim Worfolk and Justin Zantboer.

## THE BIRDS OF 2018

### Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

[Brant Goose]

*Lundy vagrant. Eighteen previous records; the last in Nov 2017.*

An adult of the nominate Dark-bellied race *B. b. bernicla* was seen near Quarters on 20 Nov (Dean Jones) – the 19th LFS record.

### White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

[Greater White-fronted Goose]

*Lundy vagrant. Twenty-one previous records; the last in Oct 2017.*

Eight birds of the Greenland-breeding subspecies *Anser albifrons flavirostris* were present on 27 Oct. First seen grazing on the Airfield at about 09.00, they were in flight over the Village at 13.30, then landing briefly in Tent Field before heading north again (Dean Jones *et al.*). The 22nd LFS record. See below for intriguing sightings of unidentified grey geese on 26 & 27 Oct. Record accepted by DBRC.

### Unidentified grey geese *Anser* sp.

A distant flock of six grey geese, thought probably to be either Pink-footed or White-fronted, flew north off the East Side on 26 Oct (Andy Jayne). A flock of 15 grey geese flew north at about 08.30 on 27 Oct (Paul Holt).

### Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

*Resident breeding flock of feral origin, though numbers appear to have declined in recent years; unknown numbers of wild birds occur from time to time.*

The highest pre-breeding count was 13 (10f, 3m) on both 28 Jan and 1 Feb. Breeding was confirmed with the appearance of the first brood of ducklings (eight) on 26 Apr. Further new broods were seen on various dates into the early summer, including groups of six and seven small ducklings on 4 Jul.

#### Maximum monthly counts of fully grown birds

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
13	13	9	9	8	4	9	5	8	9	7	11

### Teal *Anas crecca*

[Eurasian Teal]

*Uncommon migrant and winter visitor in small numbers. First breeding record in 2015; bred again in 2016 & 2017.*

Small numbers were recorded throughout the year. The highest count of the pre-breeding period was eight (6f, 2m) on 26 Feb. Breeding was confirmed for the fourth consecutive year when a female with three ducklings were seen on Pondsbury on 25 May (Tony Taylor). A female and seven ducklings, thought to be a second family party, were there on 6 Jun (Tim Davis & Tim Jones), whilst on 24 Jul a female was attending three well-grown young at Pondsbury, alongside either another adult or a fully-grown immature bird from an earlier brood (Tim Davis). Later in the year, the maximum was six on 4 Nov.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
7	8	7	7	2+3y	1+7y	2+3y	5	2	4	6	3
5	7	7	10	4	2	3	4	7	11	10	5

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

*Uncommon passage migrant.*

Two were on the sea just north of Gannets' Rock on 20 Jun (Kevin Waterfall). A first-year female in the Landing Bay on 2 & 3 Oct was seen to fly away strongly to the east-south-east on the morning of 3rd (Tim Davis & Tim Jones *et al.*).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

[Red-throated Loon]

*Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.*

The first winter and early spring period brought an unprecedented series of sightings, with records on at least 31 dates from 10 Jan (one) to 25 Mar (one), including maxima of eight on 11 Jan, six on 12, 16 & 17 Feb, twelve on 6 Mar and ten on 8 Mar. Four were still present on 16 Mar. Most were in the Landing Bay and around Rat Island, but others were seen from North End – max five on 23 Feb, South West Point – max four on 24 Feb, The Battery – two on 25 Feb, and off the East Side between the Terrace and Brazen Ward – singles on 21 & 25 Mar (Dean Jones, Martin Thorne *et al.*). Two were off Mouse Island, with a Great Northern Diver, on 13 Nov (Martin Thorne).

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

[Arctic Loon]

*Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.*

There were two records during the late winter and early spring: one feeding and preening just off North West Point on 24 Jan (Dean Jones); and one in the Landing Bay, in almost full breeding plumage, on 7 & 9 Mar (Dean Jones). These are the 15th to 16th LFS records. Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.



*A Great Northern Diver Gavia immer, Landing Bay, 10 October.*

© Philip Lymbery

**Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer***

[Common Loon]

*Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers, mainly October to March.*

During the late winter and early spring there were records on 24 dates from 6 Jan to 26 Mar. All of these concerned single birds, with the exception of two together in the Landing Bay on 29 Jan. Later in the spring two were in the Landing Bay on 19 Apr (Martin Thorne). In autumn and early winter there were records on 30 dates from 24 Sep to 31 Dec. Most again concerned single birds but there were two on 29 Sep and different individuals were seen on consecutive days in mid-Nov (15th/16th). An adult still largely in breeding plumage was present in the Landing Bay almost daily from 24 Sep to 8 Oct (Chris Dee *et al.*). During the early morning of 27 Sep it flew high across the island, from west to east and dropped down into the Landing Bay. It had presumably been roosting and/or feeding off the West Side.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	1	1	2	–	–	–	–	2	1	1	1
12	8	4	1	–	–	–	–	7	8	9	6

**Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus***

[European Storm Petrel]

*Uncommon passage migrant; recorded on the island at night in small numbers during the breeding season. First confirmation of breeding in 2014.*

At least 20 sightings were made at North End on the night of 6/7 Jul. A call playback and response survey in this area yielded an estimate of 9 to 16 apparently occupied burrows (Helen Booker, Dean Jones *et al.*). Nine trapped at North End on the night of 27/28 Aug included six 'new' birds, one retrap that had been ringed on Lundy in 2017, one that had been ringed elsewhere in Britain, and one wearing a French ring – for details see *Ringing Report* p.86 (Rebecca & Richard Taylor). Birds were seen at night at Brazen Ward during Aug and early Sep (Josh Harris). In Sep, six were ringed at North Light on 2nd (Tony Taylor *et al.*), one flew past the Landing Bay on 3rd (Denise Wawman), two were seen in flight at Pilot's Quay during night-time shearwater ringing on 9th (Nik Ward *et al.*) and one was off North End during blustery conditions on 19th (Dean Jones).

**Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis***

[Northern Fulmar]

*Common breeder; recorded in all months, mainly from January to September.*

A total of 279 birds on ledges were counted during a walk of the entire island perimeter on 30 Jan. These were mostly on the north face of Gannets' Rock, at Long Roost and at Jenny's Cove, as well as the gullies between The Battery and Dead Cow Point (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). Many pairs were incubating eggs by 18 May, when Carrion Crows were observed preying on an egg at Gannets' Bay (Dean Jones). In spite of good occupancy of Gannets' Rock at the start of the year, the number of breeding attempts and overall productivity for this site were surprisingly low; just 13 chicks fledged from 33 apparently occupied nests, representing productivity of just over 0.39 (Dean Jones).

**Maximum count for each month\***

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
279	60	185	167	70	65	48	56	5	1	20	52

\*There was no breeding census in 2018 and the breeding season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not representative of the breeding population as a whole.

**Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus***

*Common breeder and passage migrant; usually seen from March to September; occasional records in October/November.*

The first of the year were two off Rat Island on 5 Mar, just as the 'Beast from the East' began to wane. Writing in the LFS Logbook on 26 Mar, Tony Taylor reported: "Lots of evidence of activity in main colony on W Side: newly excavated burrows, droppings at burrow entrances, new nest material in one of the nestboxes and three piles of shearwater feathers from predated birds." Ringers visiting the main colony north of Old Light on the night of 20/21 May reported birds calling in the air and from underground. Twenty-one were trapped, including eight ringed in previous years, two as chicks in 2014. The nestboxes in the same colony were checked on 23 May when it was found that one of 2017's successful pair was incubating an egg in the same box. The presence of the second adult from the 2017 pair was confirmed on 30 May. Overall during the year, a record 361 shearwater chicks were ringed, as well as 180 full-grown birds. One hundred previously ringed adult shearwaters were recaptured, providing a wealth of valuable information on their life histories.

As indicated in the 2017 Lundy Bird Report, Jun 2018 saw a team of surveyors from Natural England and RSPB returning to the island to complete the census of shearwater burrows begun last year. The team's painstaking efforts were rewarded when subsequent data analysis yielded an estimated breeding population of 5,504 pairs, representing an increase of some 55% since the 2013 survey and showing ongoing expansion of the Lundy colony to a new record level.

A sample ten-minute count at 17.35 on 25 May totalled 185 flying past Rat Island (Tony Taylor). An estimated 4,000 or more, gathered off the East Side at dusk on 27 May, were viewed from the Ugly: "The sea was black with tightly packed rafts, several hundred metres across" (Martin Thorne). Sample counts of offshore feeding movements during the summer included 421 passing north off St Mark's Stone in 30 mins on 2 Jul and 514 flying past Rat Island in just under an hour on 10 Aug (Dean Jones). The last of the year were three off the Landing Bay on 28 Nov (Dean Jones).

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	2	250	4,000	200	421	514	6	1	3	-

**Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus***

*Scarce autumn visitor and passage migrant.*

One off North End on 26 Jul (Dean Jones) was the earliest ever recorded from the island. One, also off North End, was just west of the Hen & Chickens on 19 Sep (Dean Jones).

**Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea***

*Uncommon visitor; recorded throughout the year but most regular during late summer and early autumn.*

One flew along the East Side during severe weather on 3 Mar. One on 25 Jun was followed by three the next day. On 14 Jul, two were at rest on top of Rat Island for 90 minutes before taking off and immediately being mobbed by gulls; both birds were in South West Field the next day. Three were seen on 16 & 17 Jul and there were regular sightings of one to three birds at Pondsby, Rocket Pole Pond, Quarry Pond and in flight over various parts of the island, until 27 Jul. Later in the summer and autumn singles occurred on three dates from 20-23 Aug, 1 & 28 Sep, and on four dates from 21-25 Oct, followed by three on 27th.

A Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, Barton Field, 26 July.

© Dean Jones



**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	–	–	3	3	1	1	3	–	–
–	–	1	–	–	2	13	3	2	5	–	–

**Little Egret *Egretta garzetta***

*Scarce but increasing passage migrant.*

One flew south across the Landing Bay on 24 Apr (Helen & Philip Lymbery). One first seen on Barton Pond and flying over the High Street on 7 Jun (Mark Kelly *et al.*) was still present the following day. Four flew past the Landing Bay from the north-east, rounded Rat Island and continued south-west on 4 Oct (Carol & Chris Baillie). Although Little Egrets have been recorded virtually annually since 2007 (only 2012 being blank), this is the highest ever count for the island, the previous maximum being three on 16 May 2002.

**Unidentified egret sp.**

An unprecedented (for Lundy) flock of 16 egrets flew north-east off North Light on 24 Oct (Andy Jayne). Unfortunately, the birds were flying away from the island and it was not possible to pick out key identification details with certainty in order to differentiate between Little and Cattle Egret. From Andy's description, however, there appears to be a strong likelihood that these were Cattle Egrets, which would have been a 'first' for Lundy!

**Gannet *Morus bassanus***

[Northern Gannet]

*Common offshore from spring to autumn; less frequent in winter; formerly bred (until early 1900s).*

Recorded throughout the year, with both numbers and frequency peaking in autumn. The highest spring count was 40 on 23 May, whilst the autumn maxima were 280 on 19 Sep and 100 on 26 Oct. There were no other three-digit counts during the year.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6	7	12	14	40	50	12	81	280	100	79	8
11	6	15	22	24	17	10	20	28	28	23	5



**Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis***

[European Shag]

*Common breeder; uncommon from October to February.*

A walk of the entire island perimeter on 30 Jan, involving scanning of both the shoreline and offshore waters, revealed just five birds (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). This gives an indication of the extent to which the breeding population vacates Lundy during the winter. Nests in the north-west of the island contained either small chicks or eggs on 23 May (Dean Jones). Twelve apparently occupied nests were located along the south and west coasts, between the Castle and Needle Rock, during the large gull survey on 3 Jun (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). Breeding birds appeared to have fared well with most nests producing at least one chick; 19 chicks fledged from 15 monitored nest sites, representing productivity of just over 1.26 chicks per nest (Dean Jones). The first fledglings to be seen on the water were off Long Roost on 9 Jul (Dean Jones). The highest post-fledging total was 205, counted from *Obsession II* on 9 Aug.

**Maximum count for each month\***

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	15	20	37	38	68	167	205	59	37	8	5

\*There was no breeding census in 2018 and the breeding season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not necessarily representative of the breeding population as a whole.

**Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo***

[Great Cormorant]

*Regular spring and autumn migrant, typically in flocks overflying the island; formerly bred (until 1959); occasional in winter.*

The only records during the first winter period were of one in almost full breeding plumage flying north off Tibbetts Point on 30 Jan, two off North Light on 23 Feb and two flying east past Rat Island on 4 Mar. Spring passage appeared to peak in late Mar and early Apr, with migrating flocks of nine on 29th, 10 on 31st and nine on 1st. Two – an ad and an immature – were sitting on Seal Rock on the unusual date of 2 Jun; an adult in breeding plumage was on Seal Rock and two different immature birds were in flight off the West Side on 4 Jun (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). An adult and two immatures flew south-west over Castle Hill and out towards the Cornish coast on 30 Jul (Tim Davis).

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	2	10	12	2	3	3	2	5	3	4	–
1	1	4	7	4	4	1	2	11	3	5	–

**Osprey *Pandion haliaetus***

[Western Osprey]

*Scarce, but now annual passage migrant.*

One, seen from Old House South on 23 May, flew north along the East Side, mobbed by Ravens as it went. It was later over Threequarter Wall, still being mobbed by Ravens (Rob Andrew, Dean Jones *et al.*). The only autumn record concerned one over the Landing Bay during the early evening of 4 Oct (Darrin Dowding & Ken Ebsworthy).

**Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus***

[Eurasian Sparrowhawk]

*Common spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; bred at least once in the past (1922); occasional in winter.*

What seems highly likely to have been a single, long-staying, non-breeding female was noted on at least 15 scattered dates from 4 Mar to 2 Jul. Two birds were reported on 25 May. The highest autumn-passage count was three on 30 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	2	1
–	–	2	4	4	5	1	4	24	26	18	3

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus* [Western Marsh Harrier]  
*Rare passage migrant, mainly in spring.*

A long-staying female was present from 21 Jun to 26 Jul, during which time it ranged widely over the island (Jill French *et al.*).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*  
*Uncommon spring and autumn migrant and rare winter visitor.*

There were records of ringtails in five months of the year: a ringtail was quartering the Pondsby area and Airfield on 25 Feb (Martin Thorne); one was “perched on a mound halfway along Threequarter Wall” on 25 Mar (Darrin Dowding); a female was quartering north of Quarter Wall on 16 Jun (Pete Lambden); a ringtail was reported from various locations in the southern half of the island on nine dates from 18 Oct to 4 Nov (Andy Bell & Mandy Dee, Andy Jayne *et al.*); and a ringtail was quartering near Tibbetts on 26 Nov (Dean Jones).

**Montagu’s Harrier** *Circus pygargus*  
*Nationally scarce migrant*

A ringtail soared briefly over North End before flying NNE out to sea over North Light (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). Record accepted by DBRC.

**Rough-legged Buzzard** *Buteo lagopus*  
*Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.*

One was seen over the West Side, north of Tibbetts, on 1 Nov (Ross & Helen Bower). This record remains under consideration by DBRC.

**Buzzard** *Buteo buteo* [Common Buzzard]  
*Uncommon visitor; formerly a breeding resident (last nesting attempt in 1965).*

One was soaring over North Light steps on 5 Aug (Jane, Martin & Eleanor Harris).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

*Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers; bred annually 2007 to 2013 and in 2015: no proof of breeding in 2014, 2016 or 2017.*

Notable records early in the year included: one in flight outside Brambles on 26 Jan; three different birds were in Millcombe on 1 Feb; two flushed near Quarter Wall Pond on 12 Feb; and four in Millcombe on 7 Mar. Once again there was no confirmation of breeding. However, two in ‘Smelly Gully’ (lower Millcombe) on 27 & 28 Mar appeared to be paired “staying very close together in the stream and when sheltering under brambles” (Tony Taylor), one was singing in St Helen’s Field at dusk on 28 Mar (Tony Taylor), and one was calling from Quarters Pond on 7 Jul. One to three birds were recorded almost daily from 7 Aug to the end of Oct, with a maximum of four on 31 Aug and 2 Sep, and small numbers continued to be noted irregularly to the end of the year.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	4	4	5	1	–	1	4	4	3	3	3
9	5	16	22	2	–	8	22	26	24	11	2

**Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus***

[Eurasian Oystercatcher]

*Common breeder and passage migrant; recorded throughout the year but scarcer in late autumn and winter.*

A count of 27 was made during a walk of the entire island perimeter on 30 Jan (Tim Davis & Tim Jones), whilst the highest spring total was 33 on 13 Apr. There was no estimate of the size of the breeding population.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
27	17	19	33	22	25	27	20	15	18	7	19

**Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus***

[Northern Lapwing]

*Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Formerly recorded in much larger numbers and bred regularly until 2000.*

Following a single bird on 3 Feb, there was a small hard-weather influx at the end of that month and into early Mar, including 26 on 26 Feb (“a flock over the helipad settled in the lower Aerogenerator Field” – Pete Lambden), 20 on 27th (18 over Pondsbyrny and two near the water tanks – Zoë Barton & Dean Jones), nine on 28th, five on 1 Mar (including two on rocks off Shutter Point) and ones and twos on three other dates to 8th. During the immediate post-breeding period, there were three over the High Street on 29 Jun (Kevin Welsh) and one in Middle Park on 3 Jul. In autumn and early winter there were records on eight scattered dates from 29 Sep to 31 Dec, with a maximum of three on 29 Sep, 28 Oct and 19 Nov.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	26	5	–	–	3	1	–	3	3	3	2
–	4	4	–	–	1	1	–	1	4	2	1

**Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria***

[European Golden Plover]

*Regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; irregular winter visitor.*

There was a small but noticeable hard-weather influx associated with the ‘Beast from the East’, consisting of records on five dates between 28 Feb (three) and 6 Mar (three), and a maximum of 10 on 1st at South West Point. During spring passage single birds occurred on a further five scattered dates from 23 Mar to 23 May. In autumn and early winter, recorded on 24 dates from 12 Sep (one) to 24 Nov (one), with a maximum of 40 over the Airfield on 16 Nov.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	3	10	1	1	–	–	–	2	4	40	–
–	1	4	2	2	–	–	–	5	15	4	–

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

[Common Ringed Plover]

*Uncommon spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; occasional winter records.*

There were three spring-passage records: one at North End on 13 Apr; three at North End, plus one calling in flight, on 17 May; and one calling in flight as it passed north off the East Side on 24 May. In autumn, there were singles on four dates from 31 Aug to 9 Sep.

**Dotterel** *Charadrius morinellus*

[Eurasian Dotterel]

*Uncommon but virtually annual spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; Devon rarity.*

A very smart female was at South West Point from 19 to 21 May (Kim Brett, Barbara Harrington *et al.*). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.



A Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*,  
South West Point, 19 May.

© Dean Jones

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

*Increasingly uncommon spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.*

During spring passage recorded on 19 dates from 21 Apr (one) to 20 May (one), with maxima of seven on 3 May and eight on 5th. The first of autumn passage were two calling in flight over Rat Island on 18 Jul, followed by two on 29 Aug, three on 30th and singles on 5 & 25 Sep.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

[Eurasian Curlew]

*Increasingly uncommon spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; occasional winter visitor; formerly bred (up to 1973).*

One was in Lighthouse Field on 4 Mar. Other singles were reported on 24 May (flying north off the East Side), 20 Jun (off the West Side), 28 & 29 Jun (over the Village and in Middle Park) and 12 Jul, whilst three were calling in flight over upper Millcombe and the Village on 26 Jul, with one seen later circling high over the Lading Bay. Later on during autumn passage there was singles on 31 Aug and 1 & 26 Sep.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	2	1	1	4	1	1	–	–	–
–	–	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	–	–	–

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

[Ruddy Turnstone]

*Increasingly uncommon spring and autumn migrant and rare winter visitor.*

The only record was of two, along the shore of South End, seen from a kayak on 24 Jul (Dean Jones).

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

[Red Knot]

*Rare spring migrant and uncommon autumn migrant.*

The remains of a predated bird were found by the gate between South West Field and Tent Field on 30 Aug (Tony Taylor & Denise Wawman).



*A Sanderling Calidris alba, North End, 21 September. © Dean Jones*

*A Dunlin Calidris alpina, 4 March. © Martin Thorne*

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

*Rare migrant, mainly in autumn; has occurred in winter.*

Seven were on rocks below North Light on 27 May (Martin Thorne). This is the highest number ever recorded in spring and the second highest count ever for the island (eight were seen on 29 Aug 1977). A juvenile was at North End on 21 Sep (Dean Jones).

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

*Regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; apparent decline in recent years; very rare in winter.*

Cold weather was doubtless responsible for the appearance of singles on 23 Feb (on the track near the gantry above North Light) and at Millcombe Pond on 2 & 3 Mar. Spring passage brought records of ones and twos on 11 dates between 8 May (two) and 9 Jun (one on Kistvaen Pond). In autumn there were singles on 10 dates from 10 Aug to 19 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	1	1	–	2	1	–	1	1	1	–	–
–	1	2	–	10	1	–	6	3	1	–	–

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

*Rare passage migrant; occasional winter visitor.*

Four birds, one of which was in full breeding plumage, allowed prolonged close-up views at Brazen Ward on 14 May (Dean Jones). This is a notable record for what has never been a

commonly reported species on Lundy, but sightings have been particularly few and far between in recent years, this being only the fifth occurrence of the last decade.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper** *Calidris subruficollis*

*Nationally scarce migrant. Fifteen previous records, most recently in September 2017.*

Two juveniles frequented the main track end of the Airfield and Brick Field during the period 9-12 Sep. Although news of their presence was first widely reported on 11th, when they were seen by Gareth Bradbury, an entry in the LFS logbook showed that they had first been seen on 9th by Celia & Tony Sawbridge. Both birds were still in the same area on 12th (David & Elisabeth Price, Peter Slader & Nik Ward), but could not be found on 13th, following a fine, clear night with light north-west winds. The 16th LFS record. Record accepted by DBRC.



*A Pectoral Sandpiper Calidris melanotos, Quarters Pond, 13 September.*  
© Dean Jones

**Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*

*Nationally scarce migrant. About 23 previous records, most recently in September 2013.*

A juvenile frequenting Quarter Wall and Brick Field Ponds on 12 Sep and during the morning of 13th (David & Elisabeth Price, Peter Slader, Nik Ward *et al.*) was relocated at Quarters Pond during the afternoon of 13th (Andrew Jewels *et al.*) and was again at Quarters Pond on 15th (Tony Sawbridge). Record accepted by DBRC.

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

[Eurasian Woodcock]

*Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers, mainly October to March.*

During the late winter and early spring, recorded on seven dates between 22 Jan (three) and 31 Mar (one). The three on 22 Jan were located by torchlight at night in Brick & Tillage Fields (Dean Jones). One was found freshly dead, probably the result of a Peregrine kill, in St John's Valley on 28 Mar (Tony Taylor). During the autumn and early winter there were records on 14 dates from 24 Oct (one) to 12 Dec (one), with a maximum of three on 30 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
3	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	1	1
2	2	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	9	1

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

*Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, mainly late September to March.*

One was located by torchlight next to Quarter Wall Pond on 22 Jan (Dean Jones). Singles were flushed from the north-east corner of Pondsbury on 26 Aug (Rebecca & Richard Taylor) and 29 Sep (Tim Davis & Tim Jones, Martin Thorne). One was flushed just east of Pondsbury on 13 Nov Tony Taylor).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

[Common Snipe]

*Common passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Counts of 22 were made on both 28 Jan (including nine in South West Field and seven at Pondsbury) and 27 Feb (flushed by the LFS Working Party searching for rhododendron seedlings between Quarter Wall and Pondsbury), but only small numbers (max four) were seen following the severe weather in early Mar. A moribund bird was found outside the Barn on 2 Mar. The last of the spring was one on 6 May, whilst the first returning migrant was also a single bird, on 27 Aug. The autumn peak was 10 on 19 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
22	22	4	4	1	–	–	1	5	10	4	5
5	10	9	6	1	–	–	2	8	19	11	5

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

*Regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers; very rare in winter.*

One in the Landing Bay on 29 Apr (Martyn Roper) was the only spring record. Early-autumn passage brought records on six dates in Jul (6th to 28th), mostly ones and twos, but five were roosting together in the Landing Bay at high tide on 20th (Dean Jones). The only later sightings were singles on 24 Aug and 3 & 4 Sep.

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

[Common Redshank]

*Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.*

At least two heard calling in flight (but not seen) over the Pondsbury area on 19 Oct (Andy Jayne).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

[Common Greenshank]

*Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.*

One was calling in flight over South End on 17 May (Dean Jones). One was also heard calling around the south of the island on 22 Sep (Chris Dee *et al.*)

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

[Black-legged Kittiwake]

*Common but declining breeding species; large flocks may occur offshore outside the breeding season.*

Notable counts in the early months of the year included 320 on 29 Jan (mainly off the East Side) and 411 on 21 Mar. Of 120 feeding off North Light on 28 Jan, only two were first-winter birds (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). A red-legged individual was seen on an old nest in Jenny's Cove on 26 Apr (Dean Jones). Birds were busy nest-building at the Aztec Bay colony on 18 May, the first eggs were seen on 23 May and the first chicks on 15 Jun (Dean Jones, Kirsty Neller). A chick still in the nest was predated by a female Peregrine just north of Threequarter Wall on 13 Jul (Josh Harris). Of 100 in Jenny's Cove on 30 Jul, only five were seen to be juveniles. Productivity continued to fall within the Threequarter Wall Buttress colony, which had its worst

year on record since 2007. However, when coupled with the Aztec Bay site, productivity was actually higher than in 2017 at 0.46 chicks per breeding attempt (49 chicks fledged from 106 active nests), versus 0.38 in 2017 (Dean Jones).

**Maximum count for each month\***

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
320	47	411	50	450	228	193	27	92	200	181	380

\*There was no breeding census in 2018 and the breeding season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not necessarily representative of the breeding population as a whole.

**Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus***

*Uncommon visitor throughout the year, mainly July to September; occasional cold-weather influxes.*

A small but notable influx coincided with the arrival of large numbers of Herring and Common Gulls during the early-Mar cold snap. There were three on 2nd (all adults, two off South West Point and one in the Landing Bay); 11 on 3rd (nine adults, two first-winter, all feeding in the Landing Bay with large numbers of other gulls); and two on 4th (one adult, one first-winter, both in the Landing Bay). The first returning passage birds were an adult off Rat Island on 22 Jul and three off North End on 25th (Dean Jones). Later in the autumn, all off Millcombe/Landing Bay, were two first-winter birds on 2 Sep (Tony Taylor *et al.*), a single adult on 23 Sep (Dean Jones), ones and twos on five dates 15-28 Oct, and adult on 27 Nov (Dean Jones).

**Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus***

*Uncommon but increasing non-breeding visitor, mainly July to November.*

Five records involving up to 11 birds: two first-winter birds in the Landing Bay seen from the decks of MS *Oldenburg* upon arrival on 9 Oct (Dean Jones, Jon Turner); two adults – one flying south-west past Rat Island and one flying north up the East Side – on 23 Oct (Andy Jayne); four (three adults and a first-year bird) off Millcombe on 25 Oct (Justin Zantboer *et al.*); two adults feeding off the Ugly on 28 Oct (Dean Jones); and an adult with Kittiwakes off the Landing Bay on 13 Nov (Tony Taylor).

**Common Gull *Larus canus***

[Mew Gull]

*Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; mainly September to April.*

Singles on 24 & 29 Jan, 17 & 21 Feb were followed by three first-winter birds at North Light on 23 Feb (Martin Thorne). A major influx in early Mar coincided with the severe weather ushered in by the 'Beast from the East'. There were 15 on 2 Mar, including 12 off South West Point; an unprecedented 152 on 3rd, mostly adults, feeding off the East Side with large numbers of other gulls; but only three on 4th (Dean Jones). Towards the end of the spring-passage period a first-summer bird was off North Light on 27 May. Post-breeding migrants included single juveniles on 23 & 25 Jul, over Rat Island and off North End, respectively (Dean Jones) and a first-winter bird in the Landing Bay on 30 Sep (Tim Jones). There was a further notable influx towards the end of Oct, with daily observations 23rd to 28th, including 20 on 25th, 30 on 26th and 19 on 27th (many observers). These were followed by one on 15 Nov, two on 21 Nov, one on 12 Dec and three on 31 Dec, all in the Landing Bay (Dean Jones).

**Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus***

*Breeds; present in all months, but fewer in winter.*

Sixty-six were counted during a circuit of the island perimeter on 30 Jan (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). The first chicks of the year were noted at Great Shutter Rock on 19 May (Dean Jones).



The all-island breeding survey of large gulls produced a total of 51 apparently occupied nests (David Price, Peter Slader *et al.*), compared with 50 at the time of the previous census in 2013. Unlike Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls (see below), numbers of Great Black-backs appear to have been remarkably stable, with no major change during the past 15 years and, if anything, an increase over numbers recorded during the 1990s.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
66	15	33	40	63	22	30	24	51	44	11	11

**Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides***

*Lundy vagrant.*

An adult bird among 72 Herring Gulls in Tillage Field on 19 Jan (Dean Jones) was likely the same bird present on Mouse Island on 16 & 17 Feb (Dean Jones & Martin Thorne). The ninth LFS record and the first since 2014. During the late spring, one was seen off the West Side on 20 May (Devon Birds day trip), swiftly adding the 10th LFS record. Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

**Herring Gull *Larus argentatus***

[European Herring Gull]

*Common but declining breeding species; present all year, and though generally fewer in winter, there may be significant influxes during storms and cold snaps.*

A count of 720 was made during a walk of the whole island perimeter on 30 Jan (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). An estimated 800 were present on 3 Mar, part of a significant influx of gulls that coincided with the arrival of the 'Beast from the East' (Dean Jones). The first chicks of the year were seen at North East Point on 29 May and estimated to be approximately a week old (Dean Jones). The all-island breeding survey of large gulls produced a total of 241 apparently occupied nests (David Price, Peter Slader *et al.*), compared with 428 at the time of the previous census in 2013. Numbers of breeding Herring Gulls have fallen by more than two-thirds since the current series of surveys began in 2000.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
720	197	800	400	479	159	321	59	15	18	105	300

**Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus***

*Common but declining breeding species; common passage migrant; generally uncommon in winter.*

Forty were counted during a walk of the whole island perimeter on 30 Jan (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). The first chicks of the year were seen at Jenny's Cove on 23 May, estimated to be approximately three days old (Dean Jones), whilst the first fledglings on the wing were seen near the Church on 30 Jun (Dean Jones, Mark Kelly). The all-island breeding survey of large gulls produced a total of 133 apparently occupied nests (David Price, Peter Slader *et al.*), compared with 242 at the time of the previous census in 2013. Numbers of breeding Lesser Black-backs have fallen by nearly 70% since the current series of surveys began in 2000.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
40	20	73	59	237	50	105	72	7	7	10	–

**Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis***

*Uncommon passage migrant, late March to early October.*

Two adults were with Kittiwakes and two adult Common Terns off the East Side on 23 Sep (Dean Jones).

**Common Tern *Sterna hirundo***

*Uncommon passage migrant April to October.*

Two adults were with Kittiwakes and two Sandwich Terns off the East Side on 23 Sep (Dean Jones).

**Great Skua *Stercorarius skua***

*Rare spring migrant and uncommon autumn migrant; has occurred in winter.*

One circled over Rat Island then headed north-east on 28 Aug (Tony Taylor *et al.*). One on 25 Oct was followed by five during a seawatch from the Ugly on 26 Oct (Andy Jayne) and one off the East Side the following day (Dean Jones). One was in the same general area on 13 & 14 Nov, with two present on 15th (Tony Taylor *et al.*).

**Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus***

[Parasitic Jaeger]

*Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in autumn.*

A dark-phase juvenile flew past MS *Oldenburg* about 10 minutes out from Lundy on the crossing from Ilfracombe on 25 Aug (Rebecca & Richard Taylor, Martin Thorne). One was reported on 14 Oct.

**Guillemot *Uria aalge***

[Common Guillemot, Common Murre]

*Common and increasing breeder, though still in smaller numbers than formerly; uncommon from August to October, then sporadic visitor, in highly variable numbers, to breeding ledges during late autumn and winter.*

The total of 1,115 on 30 Jan comprised 961 ashore on ledges between Jenny's Cove and St Mark's Stone (Grant Sherman), a further 134 on ledges at North End, mostly at Long Roost (Tim Davis & Tim Jones), and 20 feeding off the north and east coasts. Grant Sherman counted 1,541 on his survey ledges between Jenny's Cove and St Mark's Stone on 17 Feb. An estimated 2,000 auks (Guillemots and Razorbills combined) were along the West Side, rafting and on ledges, on 4 Mar during the cold snap (Mandy Dee). Two predated eggs were found at North End on 13 Apr (K. Mackinnon *et al.*). About 50 chicks, thought to be three to four days old, were counted in the productivity plot on 10 Jun. Productivity was fairly good (though down slightly on 2017) at 0.65 – a total of 125 chicks fledged from 192 active nest sites (Dean Jones). Birds were on breeding ledges at St Mark's Stone, St Philip's Stone and Jenny's Cove during the early morning of 13 Nov (Grant Sherman).

**Maximum count for each month\***

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1,115	1,541	1,500	2,500	1,500	nc	490	–	11	70	810	450**

\*There was no breeding census in 2018 and the breeding season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not representative of the breeding population as a whole. nc = present but no count made.

\*\*Auk spp (i.e. Guillemot & Razorbill combined)

**Razorbill *Alca torda***

*Common and increasing breeder, though still in smaller numbers than formerly; uncommon between August and February.*

Of 60 feeding off North Light on 28 Jan, all were in non-breeding plumage, in contrast to the 20 Guillemots feeding in the same area, all except one of which were in breeding plumage (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). An estimated 600 were along the West Side between Jenny's Cove and St Mark's Stone on 17 Feb; some on ledges, but most on the sea (Grant Sherman). Adults were feeding chicks in Jenny's Cove on 13 Jun (Dean Jones).

**Maximum count for each month\***

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
60	600	1,150	1,000	500	25	300	–	5	200	20	450**

\*There was no breeding census in 2018 and the breeding season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not representative of the breeding population as a whole.

\*\*Auk spp (i.e. Guillemot & Razorbill combined)

**Puffin *Fratercula arctica***

[Atlantic Puffin]

*Common and gradually increasing breeding species; formerly bred in considerably larger numbers; very rare between mid-August and early March.*

The first of the year were 10 birds at Jenny's Cove on 14 Mar (Dean Jones). There was a notably high Mar count of 106 at Jenny's on 26th. Four were at Long Roost and others swimming off North End on 26 Apr (Sue Wells). A Puffin on the slope at Jenny's Cove was predated by a female Peregrine on 29 Apr (Rob Andrew, Kathryn Mackinnon). Thirty were off North Light on 27 May (Martin Thorne). The presence of pufflings was first noted on 29 May, when adults were watched carrying fish to burrows in Jenny's Cove (Kathryn MacKinnon). More than 60 pufflings were estimated to be present during a dawn-to-dusk survey of the productivity slope in Jenny's Cove on 13 Jun (Dean Jones *et al.*). The study plot at Jenny's Cove yielded an overall productivity figure of just under 0.55 chicks per active burrow, based on estimates of 129 chicks from 235 active burrows – the highest number of breeding attempts for this site since productivity studies began in 2013 (Dean Jones). The last of the year were 74 in Jenny's Cove on 31 Jul (Tim Davis) and a single bird in flight off Jenny's Cove on 4 Aug (Chloë Lofthouse & Karen Hobson).

**Maximum count for each month\***

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	106	112	160	164	250	1	–	–	–	–

\*There was no breeding census in 2018 and the breeding season counts entered in the LFS logbook and included in the table are not representative of the breeding population as a whole.

**Feral Pigeon *Columba livia***

*Common visitor in small numbers, mainly from spring until autumn, the great majority of those reaching Lundy being lost and/or tired racing pigeons.*

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	6	6	8	8	1	12	–	–	–
–	–	–	7	14	12	6	1	7	–	–	–

**Stock Dove *Columba oenas***

*Uncommon but regular spring and autumn migrant.*

In spring there were singles on 22 Mar (Millcombe) and 6 Apr (flying past Quarry Cottages), followed by two on 7 Apr (feeding in Barton Field) – all recorded by Dean Jones. In autumn, one first seen in the Millcombe area on 20 Oct (Andy Jayne), was reported on seven further dates to 31 Oct.

**Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus***

[Common Wood Pigeon]

*Probably breeds in most years; spring and autumn migrant in small numbers, with occasional larger influxes; sporadic in winter.*

The first of the year was a single bird flying in off the sea near Benjamin's Chair on 21 Feb (Dean Jones). Perhaps the same individual on 23 Feb was followed by three on 4 Mar and six in Millcombe on 7 Mar, after which sightings were almost daily throughout the spring and summer, with maxima of 12 on 14 Mar and 10 on 17 & 22 Apr and 25 May. Two were singing in Millcombe on 31 Mar and 2 Jun, and successful breeding was confirmed when a fledgling was seen there on 20 Jun (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones), followed by a juvenile on 25 Aug (Rebecca & Richard Taylor).

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	1	12	10	10	6	5	10	7	3	3	–
–	2	21	28	30	20	15	17	23	14	5	–

**Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur***

[European Turtle Dove]

*Increasingly scarce migrant, now occasional in very small numbers in spring but rare in autumn.*

In spring there were records of single birds on at least eight dates (which could conceivably all relate to the same individual) between 20 May and 3 Jun: one feeding on the main track just north of Quarter Wall on 25 May (Ken & Joan Saul); one in the Lodge enclosure on 27 May (Tony Taylor); one at The Battery on 28 & 30 May (Tony Taylor); and in Millcombe and St John's Valley from 1 to 3 Jun – heard singing on 2nd (Tim Davis, Ivan Lakin *et al.*). The only autumn record was one by the Tillage/Brick Field pigsty on the late date of 11 Oct, during a period of strong southerly winds (Dean Jones).

**Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto***

[Eurasian Collared Dove]

*Regular migrant, usually in small numbers, especially in spring; summer resident in some years; has bred; has overwintered.*

Passage migrants during the spring and early summer were noted on 39 dates between 31 Mar (one) and 2 Jul, with frequency peaking from mid-May to mid-Jun and numbers reaching maxima of eight on 20 May and seven on 25 May and 2 & 3 Jun. The remains of a recently plucked Peregrine kill were found on the sidelands east of the Devil's Limekiln on 23 May (Tony Taylor). In autumn there were singles on 23 & 29 Sep.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	2	8	7	1	–	1	–	–	–
–	–	1	7	19	11	1	–	2	–	–	–

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

[Common Cuckoo]

*Uncommon and declining spring and autumn migrant; probably bred regularly in the past; breeding confirmed just twice since 1999 (in 2007 and 2012).*

A male calling in Millcombe on 21 May was chased off by territorial Blackbirds (Dean Jones, Tony Taylor). A male calling in St Helen's Copse on 27 May flew into Millcombe (Rob Andrew). On 6 Jun a female sitting on Quarter Wall and staking out Meadow Pipit nests in the rushes in the north-west corner of Brick Field was seen to fly down to the ground and possibly lay an egg, and what was thought probably to be a second female was at Threequarter Wall (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). One heard calling at the top of Millcombe on 1 Jul (John Hutchinson). One flew over Millcombe on 10 Jul. A rufous-phase female was around the quarries on 20 Jul, at Gannets' Combe on 21st, in Millcombe on 22nd and on the Terrace on 26th (Tim Davis, Dean Jones, Warren Shipman).

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

*Lundy vagrant. Four previous records.*

One was seen briefly at dusk, perched on a wall near the crossroads at the head of St John's Valley on 10 Nov (Richard Campey). It dropped onto the ground for a couple of seconds, before flying down the valley towards Brambles and was not seen again. This is only the fifth record for Lundy after singles in Jun 1933, Nov 1944, Jun 1955 and Jun 1984.

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

*Uncommon spring and autumn migrant and rare winter visitor.*

There were no records for the first winter period or during spring passage. In autumn, there were singles close to Pondsbury on 26 Sep (Carol & Chris Baillie) and north of Threequarter Wall on 8 Oct (Matt Ridley). One was roosting in the dead rhododendron brash just north of St Helen's Copse on 23 Oct (Andy Jayne) and one was flushed from grassland near the Earthquake on 29 Oct. A probable Short-eared Owl was quartering South West Field at dusk on 22 Oct (Andy Jayne) and either a Short-eared or Long-eared Owl was flushed from scrub along the Terrace on 30 Oct (Trevor & Karen Dobie).



*A flock of Common Swift Apus apus around the tower of the St Helen's Centre, 2 July.*  
© Dean Jones

**Swift *Apus apus***

[Common Swift]

*Common spring and autumn migrant and non-breeding summer visitor.*

The first record was of two low over the island plateau on 20 Apr (Dean Jones). On 10 Jun twelve were “seemingly prospecting for nest sites on the Church. Seen numerous times flying in close to parts of the tower and fluttering as if looking for a nice spot to land in the slats of the north face” (Dean Jones). Twenty-nine were wheeling around the Church tower on 2 Jul (Dean Jones). There was a small flurry of passage birds at the very end of Aug and start of Sep: one on 30th, four on 31st, six on 1st and two on 2nd – the last of the year.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	3	28	15	29	4	6	–	–	–
–	–	–	2	21	17	8	2	2	–	–	–

**Wryneck *Jynx torquilla***

[Eurasian Wryneck]

*Nationally scarce migrant.*

One was perched on gorse next to the Lower East Side Path just north of St Helen’s Copse on 22 Sep (Chris Dee, Justin Walker). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.



*A Great Spotted Woodpecker Dendrocopos major, Millcombe, 13 November.*  
© Richard Campey

*A Kestrel Falco tinnunculus, Quarters, 15 October.*  
© Dean Jones

**Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major***

*Rare passage migrant and post-breeding visitor.*

A female in Millcombe 6-13 Apr (Zoë Barton, Dean Jones *et al.*) was also seen in the tree outside the Laundry on 7th. A juvenile was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 30 Sep (Chris Dee *et al.*). It ranged widely along the East Side, as far north as VC Quarry, until it was last seen, back in Millcombe, on 7 Oct (many observers). A female found in Millcombe on 16 Oct (Richard Campey & Malcolm Davies) remained on the island until the end of the year and into 2019 (many observers). On 2 Nov it was seen visiting a nestbox in Millcombe on

several occasions during the morning, “going inside and working to make the entrance bigger” (Stéphane Jenser). The great majority of other sightings were also in Millcombe, but on 13 Nov and 10 & 19 Dec the woodpecker was in St Helen’s Copse, whilst on 23 Nov she visited the bird feeders outside 1 Paradise Row.

**Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***

[Common Kestrel]

*Common visitor in small numbers, mainly in spring and autumn; has bred (most recently in 2005).*

The first of the year were singles on 6 & 31 Mar. Though seen regularly during the late spring and early summer, all those birds for which a sex was recorded were female (including two on 7 Jun) and there was no evidence to suggest the presence of a pair. It was intriguing, then, that an adult male and a juvenile were seen together at St Mark’s Stone on 13 Jul (Dean Jones).

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	1	2	2	2	3	4	6	6	5	1
–	–	2	3	11	11	13	19	27	29	21	2

**Merlin *Falco columbarius***

*Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers; very rare in summer.*

During the first winter period and spring passage, noted on 23 dates from 20 Jan to 4 May. All of these records were of single birds, with the exception of two females near Threequarter Wall on 15 Mar (Dean Jones). An LFS Logbook entry for 27 Jan recounts the following encounter: “Below Millcombe, we watched an epic duel between a Merlin and a Skylark that lasted seven minutes. Amazed, watching them flying at speed through the trees on either side of the road. Again and again the Skylark managed to evade the Merlin, often by zooming vertically upwards. Twice the Merlin seemed to give up but decided to give it one more go. Eventually we heard the lark no more. We hoped for the best but feared the worst...” (P. Walker). In autumn and early winter, recorded on 45 dates from 25 Sep (a single female) to 14 Dec (one), with a peak of three on 23 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	2	1	1	–	–	–	2	3	2	1
4	3	6	9	1	–	–	–	6	24	13	2

**Hobby *Falco subbuteo***

[Eurasian Hobby]

*Uncommon passage migrant in both spring and autumn.*

One flew east below the slopes of Castle Hill on 29 May (Rebecca & Richard Taylor). One drifted north over Millcombe on 4 Jun (Tim Jones).

**Peregrine *Falco peregrinus***

[Peregrine Falcon]

*Breeds; recorded in all months in recent years.*

Monthly maxima: Jan – four (3 ads, 1 imm on 30th); Feb – two (on 26th); Mar – sex (on 31st, when two near the Castle, one near Jenny’s Cove, and three at North End close to John O’Groats); Apr – seven (on 9th); May – four (on 6th, 18th & 28th); Jun – five (on 6th); Jul – four (on 2nd); Aug – four (on 30th); Sep – five (on 28th); Oct – six (on 4th & 24th); Nov – four

(on 1st); Dec – three (on 12th). The remains of an adult Kittiwake were found on a plucking ledge near North Light on 14 Jan (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones), whilst an adult Peregrine was plucking a freshly taken adult Kittiwake on the Sugar Loaf on 28 Jan. One was watched hunting Meadow Pipits (unsuccessfully) over the Village on 15 Mar. On 23 Apr, “two adolescent (2cy) *Peregrines* seen flying together along the east coast (possibly two females – large birds) until the Terrace area, then both birds flew out to sea and headed south calling loudly” (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones). On 26 Apr there were “Numerous predation attempts on a Fulmar by a female *Peregrine* in Jenny’s Cove” (Dean Jones).

2018 was a poor year for Lundy’s *Peregrines*. Breeding attempts were noted at three, possibly four, sites, but no young were seen. Lundy Warden Dean Jones speculates that given the strong winds and low temperatures at the start of spring, and then very warm, humid weather for the majority of the summer, conditions may well have prevented the birds from getting into prime condition for breeding.

### **Away-day food-finding *Peregrines*?**

Mark Darlston and Adele Rennells contributed the following observation of *Peregrines* while at Hartland Point on 16 Feb: “At 13:20 we watched an adult male *Peregrine* attacking a pair of adults (picking on the female more than the male). Fairly typical behaviour as they start to get more territorial with spring approaching, but usually it’s a single intruder. The male was from the local territory and we expected the pair to be from either the next site to the south, down the coast, or to the east. The local bird broke off and came back into a nearby cliff while the pair gained height in mutual soaring. They then set out purposely for Lundy in continual wing beating flight. I followed them through my scope (wound up to 50x) for some 15 minutes until they were tiny dots, then lost them as Lundy appeared in the background. It was a crisp day with very sharp visibility – the resolution was pretty amazing in that, through the scope, I could see sheep grazing and people walking on the top of Lundy, so I probably had followed them around three-quarters the way back before I lost them. A tentative estimate that a *Peregrine* would be doing 30-40mph in a straight purposeful flight like this would see them cover the 11 miles from Hartland Point to Lundy in a bit under 20 minutes. This shows the island isn’t that isolated from the mainland in terms of how the *Peregrine* flies. What is unusual, this wasn’t a single bird but a pair, pointing towards some pair-bond and perhaps a day’s foraging flight to the mainland when food is scarcer on Lundy in winter.”

### **Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*** *Nationally scarce migrant.*

A juvenile was in upper Millcombe during the late afternoon and early evening of 26 Sep. It was seen briefly near Millcombe House on the morning of 27th, but not subsequently (Tim Davis & Tim Jones *et al.*). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

### **Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*** *Nationally scarce migrant.*

One was at Quarter Wall, initially just east of the main track on 24 May (Ken & Joan Saul) and 25 May (Jo Alexander) but had moved to the western end of the wall by 27th (Rebecca & Richard Taylor, Tony Taylor *et al.*), where it was still present on 28th (Martin Thorne). Record accepted by DBRC.





A Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*,  
Millcombe, 20 October.  
© Dean Jones

**Red-eyed Vireo** *Vireo olivaceus*

*UK vagrant. Seven previous records for the island.*

One showed well in Millcombe on 19 Oct (Dean Jones, Zoë Barton *et al.*). What is presumed to be the same bird, but conceivably a second individual given the number of Nearctic landbirds appearing in Britain and Ireland during the second half of Oct 2018, was seen briefly near Brambles on 22 Oct (Andy Jayne). Record accepted by BBRC – the eighth Lundy record; the last in Sep 2005.

**Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus*

[Eurasian Golden Oriole]

*Nationally scarce migrant.*

A male in Millcombe on 31 May was singing first thing and last seen flying high across the valley to the north at around 10.30 hrs (Tony Taylor *et al.*). A female or immature was in Millcombe on 4 & 5 Sep (Rebecca & Richard Taylor, Tony Taylor *et al.*). This is only the second autumn record for Lundy, the first dating back as far as 11 Oct 1967. Records accepted by DBRC.

**Jackdaw** *Coloeus monedula*

[Western Jackdaw]

*Rare spring migrant; very rare autumn migrant and winter visitor.*

Three late winter and early spring records: one in Barton Field on 22 Feb (Dean Jones); one with a roosting flock of Carrion Crows on 16 Mar (Dean Jones); and one in Tent Field on 25 Mar and in St Helen's Field the following day (Tony Taylor). The only autumn record was of one from 24 to 27 Oct (Andy Jayne, Grant Sherman *et al.*).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

*Breeds; present throughout the year.*

The highest pre-breeding count was 41 on 24 Mar. Ten nests were located: at Castle (Hammers) Copse, St Helen's Copse, Millcombe Wood, Quarter Wall Copse, Quarry Beach, Gannets' Combe, Old Light, Dead Cow Point, along the West Side near the Heinkel site just south of the Earthquake, and at the western end of Threequarter Wall (Dean Jones). Successful breeding confirmed with a fledgling in South West Field on 31 May. The highest autumn count was 53 on 12 Sep.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
35	34	41	38	25	39	23	34	53	40	50	44

**Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix* or Carrion x Hooded Crow hybrid**

*Hooded Crow is a Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.*

One, initially seen on Ackland’s Moor on 20 Mar (Rob Waterfield), was at Quarter Wall the next day (Dean Jones). Presumably the same individual was in Tillage Field on 28 Mar (Grant & Shelley Sherman). Dean Jones noted: “*Obvious contrast in colouration of head and wings to the rest of the bird’s body but body colouration much darker than typical Hooded Crow.*”

DBRC considered that this individual may have been a hybrid, rather than a pure Hooded Crow.



*Ravens Corvus corax, Brick Field, 13 November. © Richard Campey*

**Raven *Corvus corax***

[Northern Raven]

*Breeds; present throughout the year.*

On 30 Jan apparently territorial birds were seen at South End, Halfway Wall Bay, Gannets’ Combe and Long Roost. A pair was carrying sticks to a nest site in Halfway Wall Bay on 1 Feb, at one point chasing off an interloper, a first-year Raven with a brownish cast and missing flight feathers on the right wing – a distinctive bird seen at Long Roost and North End on 30 Jan (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). One was found dead between Quarter Wall and Pondsbury on 27 Feb (LFS Working Party). The corpse was checked over by Lundy Warden Dean Jones, who suspected it may have died in a territorial fight. Fledged young were seen near North West Point (four), and the pair at Halfway Wall Bay fledged two young, as did a pair in the south west of the island, near Goat Island. The highest count of the year was 20 on 29 Aug.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9	20	10	10	9	12	14	20	11	13	6	7

**Coal Tit *Periparus ater***

*Uncommon autumn migrant and very rare spring migrant; occasional in winter.*

One in Millcombe and St Helen's Copse from 26 Jan to 1 Feb (Tim Davis & Tim Jones *et al.*) was presumed to be the same individual present at the end of 2017. It was heard singing on 30 Jan. A very active bird, calling frequently, was in Millcombe on 31 Mar and 1 & 3 Apr (Dean Jones, Tony Taylor, Neil Trout). This appears most likely to have been a newly arrived migrant, it seeming improbable that the bird seen in late Jan would have avoided detection for two months.

**Skylark *Alauda arvensis***

[Eurasian Skylark]

*Common breeder; common spring and autumn migrant; sporadic in winter with influxes during exceptionally cold weather.*

Very few were present on the island in Jan and the first half of Feb, with only four records of one to three birds in the first half of Jan and maxima of five on 30 Jan and seven on 1 Feb in spite of thorough searching of suitable habitat across the island. On 30 Jan, one was picked up (by telescope) flying in over the sea towards North Light from a considerable distance out. There was a noticeable arrival after mid-Feb, when counts included 18 on 17th (including two small, mobile flocks near the Castle and 10 singing birds) and 17 on 21st, increasing further into Mar, in spite (or possibly because) of the 'Beast from the East', with 14 clustered around South West Point on 2 Mar, 21 on 6th and 25 on 24th. The highest spring count was 37 on 28 Apr. In terms of breeding, 52 territories were located, based on the presence of singing males (Dean Jones). An adult was carrying food to a nest on Ackland's Moor on 27 May and fledged young were seen there on 31st. Twelve were singing north of Threequarter Wall on 2 Jun. A very young bird (wing and tail feathers still not fully developed) was seen on Castle Parade on 13 Jul. Autumn passage was modest, with 50 on 24 Oct by far the highest total. The final double-digit count of the year was 14 on 13 & 17 Nov and there were no further records after one on 26 Nov.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	18	25	37	30	36	21	8	30	50	14	–
11	11	18	23	25	19	12	13	21	21	18	–

**Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla***

[Greater Short-toed Lark]

*Nationally scarce migrant.*

On 13 May, one was on the track along the West Side approximately 100 m south of the Old Light at 15.20 and later on the track near the stonecrusher at 17.35. On the latter occasion it flew to the corner of Lighthouse Field nearest the Cemetery. It was seen again – and photographed – at 19.25 (Sam Bosanquet). Record accepted by DBRC.

**Sand Martin *Riparia riparia***

*Common spring and autumn migrant; occasional in summer.*

The first of a cold, late spring were three over Millcombe and St John's Valley on 15 Mar, but it was not until 7 Apr that counts reached double digits, with 15. Numbers remained low until passage peaked at 200 on 4 May and 51 on 6th, but fell away again thereafter, the next highest total being 26 on 18 May. The last were two on 22 Jun. The first of autumn were two at Pondsby on 31 Jul. Thereafter, recorded on a further 21 dates until the final sighting of the year, five on 12 Oct. Numbers were generally low, with 25 on 30 Aug, 50 on 1 Sep and 20 on 2 Sep by far the highest counts.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	3	25	200	2	2	25	50	5	–	–
–	–	1	15	20	3	1	6	13	2	–	–

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

[Barn Swallow]

*Common and at times abundant spring and autumn migrant; breeds in very small numbers in most years.*

The first of the spring were three on 15 Mar, but there were only two further records before the end of Mar and numbers remained low during the first three weeks of Apr, other than a modest influx of 61 on 7th. It was only at the end of the month and into early May when migration picked up, with 120 on 23 Apr, 1,000 on 25th, 600 on 26th and 1,200 on 4 May. However, there followed a further lull and it was not until the third week of May that numbers peaked at 3,000 on 18th – an unusually late date for such a high count – with 900 the next day. Movements continued into early Jun, when there were 45 on 2nd. Pairs were feeding young chicks in the Church tower and in the shed at the southern end of Government House on 10 Jun (Dean Jones). Successful breeding was confirmed when four fledglings, from a nest in the pigsty, were perched on a fence in Brick Field on 2 Jul and a fourth active nest was found at Quarry Pond on 20 Jul (Dean Jones). The first obvious migrants of autumn were 10 heading south over Lametor on 21 Aug, followed by an influx of 135 on 30 Aug. Numbers peaked in the last week of Sep, following a period of unsettled weather mid-month, with 1,400 on 24th, 1,500 on 26th and an estimated 4,000 on 27th. The last of the year was one on 27 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	7	1,000	3,000	45	9	135	4,000	130	–	–
–	–	3	24	31	21	19	18	28	19	–	–

**House Martin** *Delichon urbicum*

[Common House Martin]

*Common spring and autumn migrant; occasional during summer and has bred.*

Spring migration was late to get going and numbers were worryingly low. The first were four on 3 Apr but counts during the rest of the month only reached double digits on three dates, with a modest maximum of 40 on 13th. Numbers remained stubbornly low until the second half of May, when there were 124 on 18th and 100 on 19th, movements continuing well into Jun, the highest count being 21 on 2nd. After sporadic sightings of feeding or dispersing birds in Jul, autumn passage movements extended from the end of Aug until the end of Oct (one on 26th being the last), with numbers peaking at 200 on 27 Sep.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	40	124	21	12	15	200	42	–	–
–	–	–	17	27	11	4	4	16	12	–	–

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

*Lundy vagrant; three previous records.*

One was seen briefly in Millcombe on 17 Oct (Richard Campey) – only the fourth record for Lundy, following singles in 2003, 2006 and 2009, all of which also occurred during the second half of Oct.

**Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

*Uncommon spring and autumn migrant, occurring with declining frequency.*

A singing male heard briefly in Millcombe on 3 May (Rob Duncan) was the only spring passage record, whilst the only autumn bird was one in Millcombe on 5 Sep (Josh Harris).

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

*Nationally scarce migrant.*

There were records on 14 dates, 4 to 26 Oct, probably involving 15 or more individuals, with a maximum of four on 24th: two on 4 Oct, one in Millcombe and one in bracken along the East Side Path below Halfway Wall (Tim Davis & Tim Jones); one on 5 Oct in Millcombe, presumed the same as on 4th (Tim Jones); two on 11 Oct, one in Millcombe (Smelly Gully) and one on the Terrace (Dean Jones); one on 15 Oct in Millcombe (Andy Bell, Richard Campey & Malcolm Davies); three on 16 Oct, two in Millcombe and one along the Terrace (Richard Campey & Malcolm Davies); one on 17 Oct in Millcombe (Richard Campey & Malcolm Davies); one on 19 Oct in St Helen's Copse (Dean Jones); singles on 20, 21 & 22 Oct in Millcombe (Andy Jayne); four on 24 Oct in Millcombe, of which three trapped and ringed (Justin Zantboer *et al.*), and two in Quarter Wall Copse (Paul Holt); two on 25 Oct in Millcombe (Paul Holt, Justin Zantboer *et al.*); and one on 26 Oct in Millcombe (Paul Holt).

**Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*

*Nationally scarce migrant.*

One was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on 25 Oct (Rob Duncan, Ellie & Justin Zantboer *et al.*) – the sixth record for Lundy, the last being on 28 Oct 2016. Record accepted by DBRC.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

*Very common spring and autumn migrant with occasional mass arrivals; breeds sporadically.*

The first spring migrants were a single bird on 24 Mar, followed by four on 30th. Migration peaked as usual in Apr but numbers followed the same general pattern as for Chiffchaff, with small influxes spread throughout the month, suggesting that adverse conditions en route may have prevented rapid, mass movement north. The highest counts (of 50 or more) were 50 on 13th, 60 on 19th, 100 on 21st and 56 on 22nd. Movements tailed off rapidly after the first week of May and although a singing male was heard at the end of the month, it did not continue holding territory and there was no evidence of breeding. The first signs of returning migrants were three to nine birds daily 19–22 Jul, followed by an arrival of 117, including both adults and juveniles, on 25th. Passage continued throughout Aug and Sep, with a further fall of 128 on 23 Aug (the highest count of the season) following light overnight rainfall. The last of the year were two on 19 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	4	100	30	2	117	128	23	2	–	–
–	–	2	26	21	4	9	18	20	6	–	–



A Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*,  
Millcombe, 14 November.  
© Richard Campey

**Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita***

[Common Chiffchaff]

*Common spring and autumn migrant; occasional in midsummer and winter; breeds sporadically.*

The cold weather in March meant that spring migration was rather slow to get going. After two feedings around Millcombe Pond on the fairly average first date of 14 Mar, numbers during the rest of the month were lower than normal, with one to three birds only until eight on 30 Mar and 10 on 2 Apr. There was a small fall of 49 on 4 Apr and further modest arrivals were scattered throughout the rest of Apr, including 37 on 13th, 40 on 19th, 37 on 20th and 32 on 28th, followed by 21 on the relatively late date of 21 May. This all suggests a more protracted passage than normal, with birds moving north sporadically and in relatively small numbers, probably in response to adverse conditions on their migration route. Singing birds (presumed late migrants) were heard at the bottom of Gannets' Combe on 4 Jun and at the Old Light shearwater colony (!) on 5th. One was also singing at Jenny's Cove at 05.30 on 13 Jun. Singing males were also heard in more suitable breeding habitat in Millcombe, St. Helen's Copse and Quarter Wall Copse during the first week of Jun. A pair was nest building in lower Millcombe on 6 Jun (Tim Davis & Tim Jones) and fledglings were seen in Smelly Gully on 20 Jun (Dean Jones & Zoë Barton), suggesting at least two breeding attempts were made. Autumn movements were noticeable from the second week of Sep and peaked at 60 on 29 Sep and 49 on 17 Oct. Single birds were noted on 14 dates in Nov & Dec, the last of these on New Year's Eve!

Calling individuals showing characteristics of 'Siberian' Chiffchaff *P.c. tristis* were in Millcombe on 24 Oct (Ellie & Justin Zantboer) and 27 Oct (Dean Jones). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder. On the latter date, a probable 'Siberian' Chiffchaff was also seen near the Landing Shed (Dean Jones), but this bird unfortunately did not call – a feature required for acceptance by Devon Birds.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	8	49	21	8	6	5	60	49	1	1
–	–	8	25	30	20	14	12	25	26	8	6

**Green Warbler** *Phylloscopus nitidus*

*UK vagrant. Breeds in parts of Turkey, the Caucasus and Iran, wintering in southern India and Sri Lanka. Not previously recorded on Lundy.*

One discovered in Millcombe on 7 Oct (Tim Davis & Tim Jones) was the first for Lundy and Devon and only the fifth to be recorded in the UK – see p.95. Record accepted by BBRC.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

*Common spring and autumn migrant, generally more numerous in spring. Breeds sporadically.* Spring passage was extremely sparse. Although there were records on 25 dates from 20 Apr (one) to 2 Jun (two), numbers failed to reach double digits, the maxima being just eight on 5 May and nine on 7th. All other counts were of one to four birds only. During autumn passage, recorded on 14 dates from 30 Jul (one) to 7 Sep (one), with the highest count being five on 29 & 30 Aug.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	4	9	2	1	5	2	–	–	–
–	–	–	6	17	2	2	9	3	–	–	–

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

[Eurasian Reed Warbler]

*Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.*

Spring migrants were recorded on 13 scattered dates from 30 Apr to 19 Jun, including a singing male in Millcombe on five dates 27 May to 1 Jun and (presumably) a different singing male in Millcombe on 19 Jun. All records concerned single birds, with the exception of two in Millcombe on 19 May (Dean Jones). In autumn, single birds were recorded on seven dates from 28 Aug to 1 Oct. These included a bird trapped and ringed on 29 Sep and still present on 1 Oct.

**Melodious Warbler** *Hippolais polyglotta*

Nationally scarce migrant.

One was watched for about 10 minutes from the Terrace and Lower East Side Path on 5 Oct (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). Initially perched on the willows near the Terrace Heligoland Trap, the bird worked its way along and up the sidelands towards Quarry Cottages, before diving back down towards the Terrace, where it could not be relocated. The first Lundy record since Sep 2012. Record accepted by DBRC.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

[Common Grasshopper Warbler]

*Common spring migrant; uncommon autumn migrant.*

In one of the worst spring passages on record, single birds were seen on just five dates from 12 Apr (one 'reeling' from brambles behind the Secret Garden in lower Millcombe) to 13 May (the latter at North End). The only autumn records were of singles on 26 Sep (flushed from bracken below Hanmers) and the unusually late date of 18 Oct, when one was flushed at the western end of Quarter Wall (Andy Jayne).

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	1	1	–	–
–	–	–	4	1	–	–	–	1	1	–	–

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

[Eurasian Blackcap]

*Common spring and autumn migrant; occasional in winter. Successful breeding confirmed for the first time in 2016, following a breeding attempt of unknown outcome in 2015.*

Spring migration showed a pattern similar to that for the other commoner, habitually early warblers (Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler), namely a late start, then spread over a fairly protracted period, with few big arrivals. In recent years we have come to expect the first Blackcaps before the end of Mar, but the earliest in 2018 was a single male on 1 Apr. Some notable counts included 30 on 4th, 21 on 8th, 23 on 11th, 66 on 12th and 80 on 13th. Further influxes brought 60 on 19th and 30 from 28th to 30th, followed by 20 on 3 May, but movements tailed off into the second week of May. A pair was seen in Millcombe during the first week of Jun and song heard there and at St Helen’s and Quarter Wall Copses, but it was not until 17 Jul that breeding was confirmed when a female was feeding fledglings in the ‘Secret Garden’ in lower Millcombe (Dean Jones) – only the second record of successful breeding. The first significant influx of autumn passage involved 33 on 4 Sep, counts peaking at 150 on 22 Sep and 110 on 16 Oct. The last of the year was a single male on 26 Nov.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	80	30	4	3	3	150	110	9	–
–	–	–	27	26	14	8	15	25	30	14	–



*A Garden Warbler Sylvia borin, Millcombe, 26 October.*  
© Dean Jones

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

*Regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.*

The only spring passage records were of single birds on five dates from 28 Apr to 7 May, and two on 3 May. In autumn, recorded on six dates from 23 Aug to 26 Oct; all were single birds except for three on the first date.



**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	1	2	–	–	3	1	1	–	–
–	–	–	3	3	–	–	2	3	1	–	–

**[Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca***

*Uncommon but virtually annual spring and autumn passage migrant; has bred (2002).*

Unusually, there were no records at all during 2018.]

**Whitethroat *Sylvia communis***

[Common Whitethroat]

*Common migrant in spring and autumn; has bred.*

An extremely poor spring passage saw very low numbers of migrants, with never more than four in a day, scattered across a period from 13 Apr (a male at Threequarter Wall) to 25 May (two), followed by single birds, including a territory-holding but apparently unpaired male, up to the end of Jun and into early Jul. After scattered singles from 31 Jul to mid-Aug, the first real indication of autumn passage was an influx of nine on 23 Aug. The highest count was 10 on 4 Sep, whilst the last of the year was a single bird at the head of St Helen's Combe on 4 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	4	4	1	2	9	10	1	–	–
–	–	–	6	17	10	6	9	9	2	–	–

**Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla***

[Common Firecrest]

*Uncommon spring passage migrant, more regular and more numerous in autumn; has wintered.*

A female seen daily in the Smelly Gully area of lower Millcombe, 27 to 29 Jan (Tim Davis & Tim Jones), was presumed to be the same individual as seen there in Dec 2017. During spring passage single birds were seen on 23 Mar, 20, 21 & 25 Apr (the bird on the latter date sexed as a female) and 18 to 20 May (a singing male in Millcombe). The first of the autumn, a single bird photographed in Millcombe on the early date of 18 Aug (Steve McAusland/MARINELife), was followed by records on a further 17 dates, including the last of the year, one on 12 Dec. The highest count was three on 27 Sep and 4 & 19 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	–	1	1	1	–	–	1	3	3	1	1
3	–	1	3	3	–	–	1	5	10	1	1

**Goldcrest *Regulus regulus***

*Common spring and autumn migrant, most numerous in autumn; has bred; occasional in winter.*

There were sightings of a single bird on 5, 27 & 28 Jan. A strong spring passage was noted on 48 dates from 9 Mar (one) to 23 May (one), peaking in the first half of Apr when higher counts included 18 on 4th, 22 on 5th, 20 on 9th and 25 on 13th, falling back to single digits thereafter. Autumn movements were recorded from the third week of Aug, with the arrival of five on 20th, and continued until the end of Nov. The highest counts were 40 on 30 Sep and 16 Oct, and 56

on 17 Oct. During Dec there were scattered records of one to four birds on four dates, including two on 31st.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	–	9	25	2	–	–	5	40	56	9	4
3	–	14	24	10	–	–	8	29	26	16	4

**Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes***

[Eurasian Wren]

*Common breeding resident; ringing evidence of dispersal to mainland.*

A count of 37 was made during a walk of the whole island perimeter on 30 Jan. Unsurprisingly, the severe cold during Mar appears to have depleted the breeding population significantly, particularly along the East Side, where just 12 singing males were found from the north end of the quarries southward, including Millcombe/St John's, on 3 Jun. This area usually supports a much higher density of Wren territories (BTO BirdTrack data show that Wrens are much more easily detected in Jun than in Jan). Circumstantially, it appeared that birds with West Side territories might have fared better than those on the East Side (which would have been exposed to the full strength of the 'Beast from the East'); the number of singing Wrens along the West Side was not noticeably lower than normal (Tim Jones). Fledglings were seen in Smelly Gully (lower Millcombe) on 20 Jun (Dean Jones). The autumn peak of 30 on 24 Oct was also well down on many recent years and lower than the count of 37 in Oct 2017, which had also been a poor year for Wrens.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
37	14	5	13	11	24	7	14	17	30	13	12

**Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris***

[Eurasian Treecreeper]

*Uncommon late summer and autumn visitor; very rare outside this period.*

One found in Millcombe during the mid-afternoon of 6 Apr (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones) was watched until 18.00 "as it busily picked its way through every bit of lichen and bryophyte throughout the valley looking for a meal". However, it could not be found the next day.

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

[Rosy Starling]

*Nationally scarce migrant.*

Three records involving at least four individuals. Two adults (presumed male & female, as one was a distinctly brighter bird) were seen at Quarter Wall (main track gate) at 06.15 on 3 Jun. At 08.30 they were flying down St John's Valley and then perched on the Church before dropping down into the Tent Field, where they were still present 09.40-10.00, though by 10.00 the two birds appeared to have split up, with only the (presumed) female seen later in the day, e.g. Tillage Field pigsty at 18.30 (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). Almost a week later, on 9 Jun, an adult was seen with Starlings near the Old Light during the morning by one of the Manx Shearwater survey team, then by Frances Stuart and Rebecca & Richard Taylor in the afternoon, when it was wheeling around Millcombe. This could have been one of the birds seen on 3rd, but perhaps more likely a new arrival, especially given the exceptional 'invasion' of this species into western Europe during June 2018. This individual remained on the island until 29 Jun. A juvenile was around the chicken run outside Quarters on 6 Sep (Rebecca & Rich Taylor, Tony Taylor *et al.*). Records accepted by DBRC.

**Starling *Sturnus vulgaris***

[Common Starling]

*Common breeding resident; common migrant, particularly in late autumn when large influxes may occur.*

The highest count at the start of the year was 80 on 29 Jan, probably representing the size of the island's breeding population. Modest spring-passage influxes saw totals of 200 on 23 & 25 Mar and 150 on 4 Apr. A census of nests in the Village and at the Old Light complex, carried out between 31 May and 3 Jun (Tim Jones), produced a minimum of 39 active nests, all of which had young being fed. A couple of nests at least had already fledged, so it is safe to say that there were over 40 nests in 2018 – the highest total ever recorded, providing more circumstantial evidence of the benefits of rat eradication for hole-nesting landbirds (in addition to seabirds as the prime target beneficiaries). The highest count immediately post-breeding was 190 on 16 Jun. The first major influx of autumn brought 410 on 19 Oct. Other counts of ≥400 were 400 on 30 Oct and 16 & 19 Nov, and 600 (the autumn/early-winter peak) on 14 Nov.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
80	60	200	150	50	190	57	210	200	410	600	300

**Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus***

*Uncommon but regular spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.*

Spring migrants were recorded on five dates from 4 to 29 Apr. A female on 4th was followed by two females (near the Timekeeper's Hut) on 6th, single males on 11th & 12th (the latter at Benjamin's Chair) and three birds (locations not given) on 29th. In autumn there were records on ten dates from 21 Sep to 13 Nov. All of these concerned single birds with the exception of two on 15 & 27 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	1	2	1	–
–	–	–	5	–	–	–	–	2	7	1	–

**Blackbird *Turdus merula***

[Common Blackbird]

*Common breeding resident; irregular spring migrant and common late-autumn migrant; occasional winter influxes during hard weather.*

In common with other thrushes (see below), good numbers were present at the start of the year, with a maximum of 26 on 27 Jan. However, there was less indication than for other thrush species of any significant arrival prompted by the cold snap of early Mar; 14 on 7th was the highest count of that period. Birds were seen with nesting material (sheep wool) in Millcombe on 15 Mar (Dean Jones). Observations during the spring suggested that the breeding population may have been about 10 pairs, including six in Millcombe, and single pairs at Quarters, Quarter Wall, North Quarry and near Tibbetts. Successful breeding was confirmed when adults were carrying food in Millcombe on 17 May (James Diamond) and fledglings were seen there on 19th (Dean Jones). A second clutch was being incubated at the Casbah (Millcombe) on 13 Jun; a pair were taking food to a nest in gorse bushes just west of Tibbetts on 6 Jun; another nest was located in gorse at the western end of Quarter Wall on 7 Jun; and an adult was feeding a fledgling in the Tavern garden on 6 Jun. There was no evidence of any real movement in Sep and though counts occasionally reached double digits in the first half of Oct, it was not until 16 Oct that a noticeable arrival of 45 birds occurred. A further influx at the end of the month brought

40 on 28 Oct, 65 on 29th and an exceptional 200 on 30th. Numbers in Nov were modest and, after 10 on 12 Dec, only low single digits were being recorded by the end of the year.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
26	12	22	12	18	16	8	8	9	200	22	10



*A Fieldfare Turdus pilaris, Quarter Wall, 25 November.*  
© Dean Jones

**Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris***

*Common migrant in early spring and, especially, late autumn; winter visitor in variable numbers, with occasional hard-weather influxes.*

Early in the year ones and twos occurred on five scattered dates from 5 Jan to 24 Feb, followed by a small influx coinciding with the cold snap of early Mar, with daily records 1st to 9th, including a max of 20 on 4th. Ones and twos were recorded on four subsequent dates to 9 Apr, the latter the remains of a predated bird near Halfway Wall. In autumn and early winter, recorded on 32 dates from 18 Oct (24) to 14 Dec (one), with a maximum of 40 on 29 & 30 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	2	20	1	–	–	–	–	–	40	34	35
2	5	12	1	–	–	–	–	–	14	15	3

**Redwing *Turdus iliacus***

*Common migrant in early spring and late autumn; winter visitor in variable numbers, with occasional hard-weather influxes.*

At the start of the year, unusually high numbers remained on the island from the influxes of the previous autumn and early winter, with maxima of 37 on 5 Jan, 22 on 12 Feb and 25 on 22 Feb. A significant new influx coincided with the severe cold weather of early Mar, with 31 on 3rd, 257 on 4th (scattered across the whole island, though most in Brick, Tillage and St Helen's

Fields), 52 on 5th, 124 on 6th and 48 on 7th. Numbers were subsequently much lower, with observations on just six dates, including a peak of 11 on 28 Mar, until the last of the spring, a single bird on 4 Apr. The first of the autumn, a single bird on 10 Oct, was followed by records on a further 46 dates until the last of the year on 17 Dec. The highest counts were 290 on 29 Oct and 250 the following day.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
37	25	257	1	–	–	–	–	–	290	51	12
16	11	11	2	–	–	–	–	–	17	22	8

**Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos***

*Common migrant in early spring and late autumn; winter influxes during hard weather. Occasional resident and sporadic breeder prior to 2010.*

There were large numbers of winter visitors on the island at the beginning of the year, with peak counts of 21 on 5 Jan and 24 on 27th. Numbers dropped back in Feb but rose again during the ‘Beast from the East’ in early Mar, when 18 were counted on 2nd (of which 17 were at South West Point, apparently attempting to leave the island with other passerines) and 14 on 4th. From 14 Mar onwards only single birds were noted, with the exception of two on 12 Apr. The last was one on 8 May. Although winter visitors were singing in Millcombe at the end of Jan, there was no evidence of territory-holding birds later in the spring. The handful of records in Jul/Aug is thought to relate to one or more juveniles dispersing from the mainland. In autumn, only scattered singles were recorded until mid-Oct, but there were daily sightings from 15th to the end of the month, with peaks of 16 on 19th and 14 on 25th. Small numbers remained through Nov & Dec.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
24	12	18	2	1	–	1	2	1	16	7	4
16	11	15	4	2	–	1	5	3	22	14	5

**Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus***

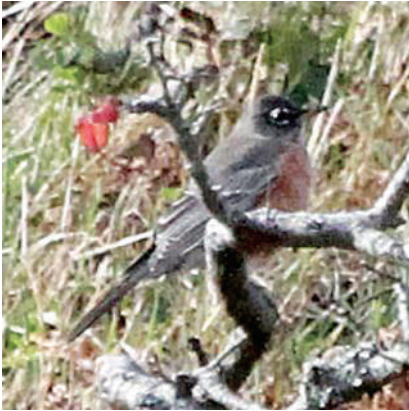
*Rare spring migrant; uncommon autumn migrant; rare summer and winter visitor.*

In late winter, single birds (probably one and the same individual) were seen near the Heinkel wreck on the plateau on 26 Feb (Trevor Dobie & Louise Cookson/LFS Working Party) and below Benjamin’s Chair on 28 Feb (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones). One was feeding at the eastern end of Halfway Wall, close to the Logan Stone on 4 Jun (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). There were autumn records on nine dates from 29 Sep to 26 Nov, all involving single birds in the Millcombe area, except for two flying over the Village on 21 Oct (Dean Jones).

**American Robin *Turdus migratorius***

*UK vagrant.*

A first-winter bird was watched and photographed in Millcombe for about 15 minutes on 26 Oct (Paul Holt). There have been three previous Lundy records, in 1952, 1962 and 1982, all between 27 Oct and 18 Nov. Record accepted by BBRC.



*American Robin* *Turdus migratorius*,  
Millcombe, 26 October. © Paul Holt



*A Spotted Flycatcher* *Muscicapa striata*,  
Millcombe, 10 October. © Philip LyMBERy

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

*Common but declining spring and autumn passage migrant; irregular breeder, last confirmed in 2017.*

Spring migrants were recorded on 32 dates from 28 Apr (three) to 21 Jun (one), with a maximum of 12 on both 31 May and 2 Jun. In autumn, recorded on 37 dates from 13 Aug (one) to 8 Oct (one), with maxima of 24 on 28 Aug, 15 on 30 Aug, 12 on 3 Sep and a late influx of 11 on 26 Sep. Suitable habitat, including Quarter Wall Copse, where a pair nested successfully in 2017, was carefully checked, but there was no indication that breeding occurred in 2018.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	3	12	12	–	24	12	1	–	–
–	–	–	3	19	10	–	9	24	4	–	–

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

[European Robin]

*Common breeding resident in small numbers; uncommon spring migrant; common autumn migrant in moderate numbers.*

Late winter and early spring counts showed a healthy island population with monthly maxima in double digits for Jan–Apr. However, the small numbers recorded during the breeding season suggest that some of these may have been winter visitors and/or passage migrants. There were at least four territories and two successful pairs during the breeding season. Two pairs bred in Millcombe: an adult was carrying food in Millcombe wood on 2 & 7 Jun; an adult carrying nesting material was seen on 6 Jun; and adults were feeding young at a nest on 20 Jun (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones). The highest autumn passage counts were 27 on 30 Sep, 21 on 24 Sep & 4 Oct and 20 on 16 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
15	10	11	13	4	5	3	3	27	21	9	7

**Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos*

[Common Nightingale]

*Lundy vagrant. Last recorded in Aug 2017.*

One was in Millcombe on 20 Apr (Dean Jones). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

[European Pied Flycatcher]

*Uncommon spring migrant; common autumn migrant, usually in small numbers; occasional records in midsummer.*

Spring passage was noted on 10 dates from 7 Apr to 2 Jun. These were all single birds apart from two on 11 & 13 Apr. In autumn, recorded on 20 dates from 8 Aug (one) to 26 Sep (one), with a maximum of 20 on 31 Aug – by far the highest count of recent years and part of a significant arrival of passage Pied Flycatchers reported elsewhere in Britain. Numbers remained high from 1 to 3 Sep, with counts of 16, 15 & 11, respectively.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	2	1	1	–	20	16	–	–	–
–	–	–	7	1	2	–	9	11	–	–	–

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

*Common late-autumn migrant, usually in small numbers; uncommon spring migrant; has overwintered.*

In late winter two were below Benjamin's Chair on 31 Jan, followed by singles there on 15 & 27 Feb. Spring passage was recorded on six dates from 6 Apr to 27 May, with a maximum of two on 13 Apr. Scarce in autumn, with ones and twos on only 10 dates from 15 Oct to 15 Nov.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	1	–	2	1	–	–	–	–	2	1	–
1	2	–	4	2	–	–	–	–	8	2	–

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

[Common Redstart]

*Common but declining spring and autumn migrant in small numbers.*

In spring there were records on seven dates from 12 Apr (five) to 20 May (two), with a maximum of six on 13 Apr. During autumn passage there were records on nine dates from 3 Sep to 16 Oct – all single birds with the exception of two on 1 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	6	2	–	–	–	1	2	–	–
–	–	–	5	2	–	–	–	5	4	–	–

**Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra***

*Uncommon spring migrant; more regular in autumn; occasional records in midsummer.*

Depressingly, for a species that appears to be getting scarcer on Lundy, there were just two spring records, both of single birds, on 22 Apr and 7 May. Autumn migrants were noted on only six dates from 2 Sep to 18 Oct, with a maximum of four on 3 Sep.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	4	1	-	-
-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	5	1	-	-



*A Stonechat Saxicola rubicola, Pondsbury, 14 November. © Richard Campey*

**Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola***

[European Stonechat]

*Breeds occasionally (most recently in 2015, following a five-year gap); uncommon spring migrant and regular autumn migrant; sporadic in winter.*

An exceptionally high spring-passage count of 24 (13 male and 11 females) was made on 7 Mar. A pair were feeding fledged young just north of St Helen's Copse on 21 Aug, the first confirmation of successful breeding since 2015 (Dean Jones *et al.*). The highest counts during autumn passage were 21 on 17 Oct and 14 the next day.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	3	24	8	2	3	3	4	9	21	5	1
1	10	16	13	9	3	9	9	12	24	8	1



**Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe***

[Northern Wheatear]

*Summer visitor; breeds; common spring and autumn migrant.*

The first of the year was a male on Ackland's Moor on 12 Mar (Zoë Barton). However, the severe weather during Mar meant that returning migrants faced extremely challenging conditions, such that peak counts during spring passage were lower than normal – 38 on 9 Apr, 48 on 30 Apr and 36 on 18 May being the highest totals. Nevertheless, the ongoing colour-ringing study of the island's breeding population showed that at least 56% of the birds breeding in 2017 survived migration to and from their African winter quarters and bred on Lundy in 2018. The main study area (from the Castle, along the South End and West Side as far north as Halfway Wall) was estimated to have held 53 pairs in 2018, the same as in 2017, but the whole-island population estimate was down slightly at 114 pairs. Autumn passage was even thinner than in spring with only 11 double-digit counts from mid-Jul to the beginning of Nov. The Sep max of just 15 occurred on 13th, whilst the last of the year was a single bird, in Lighthouse Field, on the very late date of 11 Nov (Richard Campey).

**Request.** *Please continue to record any Wheatear colour-ring sightings in the LFS logbook. Photos are particularly appreciated and can be sent to [gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk](mailto:gen@birdsoflundy.org.uk).*

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	7	48	36	86	30	14	15	6	1	–
–	–	12	22	28	19	15	13	22	10	1	–

**House Sparrow *Passer domesticus***

*Common breeding resident; present throughout the year; only one confirmed instance of emigration to the mainland and no confirmed immigration.*

**Maximum count for each month recorded in the LFS Logbook**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
40	70	20	50	20	50	36	170	160	40	17	50

Lucy Winder has contributed the following report on behalf of the Lundy Sparrow Project:

The first winter period of 2018 was very harsh, with the first snow on Lundy in 10 years. Though there was no obvious decline in sparrow numbers, we believe they were somewhat affected. The subsequent breeding season began quite late in comparison to previous years and though sparrows can have up to four broods a year, few had more than two. There were also few adults from the previous year's fledglings, suggesting that the young birds didn't fare very well in the cold. Those breeding in the lambing shed appeared to do a bit better, as birds there began breeding before elsewhere on the island (likely due to the shelter provided).

Overall however, the breeding season was largely successful. In total, there were 175 broods, a fairly average number compared to other years, but lower than in 2017 when 218 broods were recorded. Interestingly, the number of chicks didn't vary much between years. In 2018, 309 chicks were ringed (chicks are ringed when 12 days old and fledge when roughly 17 days old), whereas 317 chicks were ringed in 2017. This could be due

to parents raising larger broods in 2018 or a higher mortality rate of young chicks (fewer reaching the age of 12 days) in 2017.

The summer was a complete contrast to the cold winter, with some of the highest temperatures on record. It was incredibly dry, with hardly any rain in June and July. High temperatures can be an advantage to breeding birds, as the parents don't need to spend as much time brooding the young and can therefore spend more time foraging for food. Conversely, if temperatures are too high, the chicks can overheat, but as most of the nestboxes are shaded from the sun, this is unlikely to have been a major issue. The dry conditions did mean that insect numbers were likely reduced as the plants they feed on struggle without sufficient water. This was evident as we found a number of chicks that had choked (or were choking) on something they shouldn't have been fed. For example, a few chicks were found choking on moss, others on bits of straw or hay and some on horse hair. Though occasionally this does happen by accident when chicks find something in the nest, the number of instances in 2018 suggests that they were being fed these items by their parents – probably because the parents were struggling to find insects. This may be another factor causing the lower number of broods compared to 2017, though the overall population size appears not to have been affected.

We returned to Lundy in November 2018 to mist-net adult birds to replace lost colour-rings (used for identification); 146 individuals were caught over a period of a week. Approximately half were fledglings from the summer. It is normal to have such a high proportion of the year's chicks in the population at that time of year as most birds don't survive their first winter.

**Dunnock *Prunella modularis***

*Breeding resident in small numbers; small influxes of passage migrants detected occasionally in autumn.*

One was carrying nesting material in Smelly Gully (lower Millcombe) on 4 May and an adult was taking food to chicks in upper Millcombe on 2 & 31 May. On 2 Jun there was a singing male near Brambles stream, a pair carrying food just below Smelly Gully dam and an adult feeding fledged young by Millcombe gates. Further singing males were noted just north of St Helen's Copse and just south of Quarter Wall Copse on 3 Jun. Altogether, there were three nests in Millcombe, one below the Terrace and a possible nest along the Lower East Side Path above White Beach (Dean Jones). There were hints of a small post-breeding or autumn passage influx, with counts reaching 11 on 24 Sep and 19 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	7	5	4	4	7	4	5	11	11	7	7

**Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava***

[Western Yellow Wagtail]

*The British race M. f. flavissima is an uncommon spring migrant, regular early autumn migrant in small numbers and occasional summer visitor. It was formerly more numerous, particularly in autumn. The continental race M. f. flava 'Blue-headed Wagtail' occurs occasionally in spring; all other races are vagrants.*

During spring migration there were records of ones and twos on four dates from 8 May to 2 Jun. Autumn records were equally scarce, with single birds on just five dates from 29 Aug to 26 Sep.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	-	-	2	2	-	1	1	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	3	1	-	2	3	-	-	-

**Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea***

*Uncommon spring migrant; common autumn migrant in small numbers; occasional summer records; rare in winter.*

The only winter occurrences concerned one over South West Point on 17 Feb and likely the same bird reported on 19th. During spring and early summer, singles were recorded on two days in mid-Mar and on the unusual dates of 16 May and 2, 3 & 26 Jun, the last of these in Millcombe (Dean Jones). Autumn passage yielded records on 33 dates from 23 Aug (one) to 1 Nov (one), with a maximum of four on 24 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	1	1	-	1	1	-	2	3	4	1	-
-	2	2	-	1	3	-	3	12	17	1	-



*Pied Wagtails Motacilla a. yarrellii, Millcombe, 20 June.*  
© Dean Jones

**Pied / White Wagtail *Motacilla a. yarrellii* / *M. a. alba***

[White Wagtail]

*Pied Wagtail: nests most years in small numbers; common spring and autumn migrant: rare in midwinter. White Wagtail: occurs annually during both spring and autumn migrations.*

After a single Pied Wagtail in flight over Tillage Field on 26 Jan, there were no further sightings until the end of Feb. The cold weather during much of Mar was presumably responsible for the unusually low numbers recorded during spring passage, with no count reaching double digits, the peak being eight on 6 Mar. A pair were carrying food to a nest near the stonecrusher on 5 Jun, whilst a second pair, also carrying food, were perched on Quarry Cottages and active

around Brick Field on 6 Jun (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). A third pair bred successfully in Millcombe walled gardens (Dean Jones). Noticeable autumn movements began in the last week of Aug and continued through Sep and Oct, peaking at 23 on 29 Sep and 33 on 1 Oct. There were further scattered records in Nov and Dec, including, two on the unusual date of 31 Dec.

Small numbers of White Wagtails were recorded on 15 dates in spring, from 1 Apr to 25 May (max two on eight of these dates), and on seven occasions in autumn, from 23 Aug (one) to 1 Oct (one), with a maximum of four on 23 Sep.

**Pied Wagtail, including unidentified *alba* wagtail: maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	8	6	5	5	3	10	23	33	2	2
1	2	20	23	29	16	20	11	24	22	7	2

**White Wagtail: maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	2	2	–	–	2	4	1	–	–
–	–	–	7	8	–	–	2	4	1	–	–



A Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*,  
Pondsbury, 10 June.  
© Dean Jones

**Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis***

*Breeds; very common passage migrant in spring and autumn; uncommon in winter.*

Following small numbers in Jan and Feb, spring passage got underway in Mar, in spite of the exceptionally cold conditions that prevailed during much of the month. Peak counts were 150 on 11th and 147 on 15th, although counts in Apr appeared lower than in many previous springs, with 119 on 13th being by far the highest. One was gathering nesting material below the Ugly

on 23 Apr, an adult was carrying food to young in a nest on Ackland's Moor on 27 May (Dean Jones) and the first fledged young were reported from South West Field on 31 May (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). Presumed second broods were being fed in the nest at Quarter Wall and along the Upper East Side Path on 15 Jul (Dean Jones). No estimate was made of the size of the breeding population. Autumn passage peaked during the last week of Sep and the first week of Oct when there were three counts >500: 1,000 on 28 Sep, 650 on 29th and 700 on 3 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4	8	150	119	42	80	79	100	1,000	700	17	7
7	10	16	24	26	18	13	12	26	26	16	4

**Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis***

*Uncommon spring and autumn migrant.*

Spring passage was noted on eight dates from 20 Apr to 28 May, when all records concerned ones and twos only. The first returning migrants were three over Millcombe on 13 Aug, after which there were records on a further 18 dates until the last of the year, a single bird on 14 Oct. The highest count was seven on 21 Aug, of which six were seen and heard calling loudly as they moved south in a loose group, whilst one was perched at the top of Millcombe (Dean Jones).

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	2	1	–	–	7	2	1	–	–
–	–	–	4	4	–	–	10	7	2	–	–

**Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus***

[Eurasian Rock Pipit]

*Common breeding resident; extent of migratory or dispersive movements involving Lundy unknown.*

A count of the entire island perimeter on 26 Jan yielded a minimum total of 23 birds (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). Adults carrying food were seen on Rat Island and Lametor on 1 Jun, and 14 adults, including at least two carrying food, were counted from the Castle, around South West Point and the West Side as far as Dead Cow Point on 3 Jun (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). An adult was feeding a fledgling east of Benjamin's Chair on 7 Jun (Rebecca & Richard Taylor). The autumn maximum of 18 was recorded on 6 Oct and included a feeding flock of 15 (together with a Wheatear) taking advantage of the shelter from a stiff northerly afforded by the lower sidelands on the sunny, south-facing flank of Dead Cow Point (Tim Jones).

**Maximum count for each month**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
23	15	9	9	16	19	5	9	9	18	5	7

**Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs***

[Common Chaffinch]

*Resident, breeding annually in small numbers. Common, at times abundant, on autumn passage; noticeable spring passage rarely recorded; winter influxes in some years.*

Late winter and early spring counts were in low single digits, with the exception of 10 on 20 &

21 Feb, nine on 22 Mar and 10 on 4 Apr. Song was heard in Millcombe on 5 Apr, but only one to three birds were recorded on all except one date from the last week of Apr until the last week of Sep, and there was no proof of breeding. An unpaired bird singing from the sycamore next to the dining room window of Millcombe House built a nest in a neighbouring sycamore just above the staff cottages. Curiously, this bird, which sang for about a week and was captured on video on 4 May, had extremely pale, female-like plumage, with just a hint of a pink flush in the centre of the breast (Zoë Barton & Dean Jones). An apparent female may have been carrying food to a nest site or fledgling in blackthorn on the south-east side of the Ugly on 6 Jun, but there was no sign of a male (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). In autumn and early winter the first signs of passage occurred during late Sep and the first half of Oct, with eight on 24 Sep, 10 on 27th and 14 on 7 Oct. The main movements took place in the last two weeks of Oct and included, 160 on 20th, 600 on 21st, 478 on 27th, 1,410 on 29th and 200 on 31st. Passage extended well into Nov, with peak counts of between 400 and 500 on 9th, 10th & 12th, 120 on 16th & 19th and double-digit counts as late as 26th.

#### Maximum count for each month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	10	9	10	3	4	2	3	10	1,410	500	3



*A Brambling Fringilla montifringilla,  
Brick Field, 13 October.  
© Richard Campey*

#### **Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

*Uncommon spring migrant; annual autumn migrant in variable numbers; occasional in winter.*

A lone male in Millcombe from 26 to 31 Mar was heard singing on 31st; an event that appears to be a first for the island. This was the only occurrence until autumn passage, during which birds were recorded on 21 dates from 15 Oct (one) to 26 Nov (two), with maxima of 14 on 25 Oct and 17 on 29 Oct – a fairly good showing for Lundy.

#### **Hawfinch** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

*Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.*

A male, first seen in a tree in the Laundry garden on 8 May (Zoë Barton) was in Millcombe, on feeders at Pig's Paradise and flying over the Tavern on 10th (Dean Jones *et al.*). What seems very likely to have been the same male (though this is by no means certain given the

large numbers present in the UK after the influx of autumn 2017) was seen in Millcombe on at least seven further dates from 17 May to 2 Jun (James Diamond, Dean Jones *et al.*). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

[Eurasian Bullfinch]

*Rare spring migrant and very rare autumn migrant.*

There was a remarkable series of spring records between 28 Mar and 2 Jun. Single females were seen in Millcombe on 28 Mar, 12 & 21 Apr (Darrin Dowding, Rob Duncan, Martyn Roper *et al.*). A probable male was reported on 22 Apr (Rob Andrew); two females were seen together on 23rd and one was later ringed on the same date (Rob Duncan, David Kightley). One was heard calling in Millcombe, 25 to 27 Apr, and single females were seen there on 28th and 2 & 5 May – the bird on 2nd confirmed as being unringed (Rob Duncan, Dean Jones *et al.*). A single female was again noted in Millcombe daily from 29 May to 2 Jun (Dean Jones, Tony Taylor *et al.*). On 31st “it perched calling near Government House at c.17.00, flew high in a big loop over the Village and farm, calling constantly, before turning back and dropping into Millcombe again” (Tim Jones).



A Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrina*, Millcombe, 25 May.  
© Richard Campey

**Common Rosefinch** *Carpodacus erythrina*

*Nationally scarce migrant.*

A singing male in full breeding plumage was in Millcombe on 25 May (Tony Taylor *et al.*). A first-winter bird was seen briefly in Millcombe on 20 Oct (Andy Jayne). Common Rosefinches have now been recorded on Lundy for 12 consecutive years. Records accepted by DBRC.

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

[European Greenfinch]

*Rare spring migrant; uncommon autumn migrant; occasional visitor in summer and winter.*

The only spring record was of a single female on 28 Apr. In autumn, records on 22 dates from 4 Sep (one) to 29 Oct, with maxima of six on 29 Sep and three on six days during the first half of Oct.



A Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*, Millcombe,  
14 October. © Dean Jones



A Linnet *Linaria cannabina*, Halfway Wall,  
3 March. © Dean Jones

**Linnet *Linaria cannabina***

[Common Linnet]

*Common breeder; irregular spring and autumn migrant; more numerous in autumn; occasional in winter.*

Lundy's breeding population of Linnets is migratory and it is normal for there to be few, if any, records in Jan or Feb. The cold weather in Mar preceded a late start to spring passage, nine on 5 Apr being the first occurrence of more than the odd one or two. After that, numbers built up rapidly, reaching 50 on 6 & 9 Apr and 271 on 13th, the highest count of the spring. There was no estimate of the size of the breeding population and no records of fledged young were entered in the LFS logbook. However, four females carrying nesting material were seen on 6 May, a pair was courtship feeding near Brambles on 31 May and another pair was visiting a nest on Lametor, in scrub near the top of the steps up to South Light, on 1 Jun. Higher post-breeding counts included 99 on 25 Jul, 170 on 29 Aug, 147 on 9 Sep and 330 on 29 Sep, the latter being the autumn-passage maximum.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	2	2	271	48	50	99	170	330	235	20	2
2	1	13	23	28	15	18	14	26	26	15	2

**Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret***

[Common Redpoll]

*Uncommon spring and autumn migrant in variable numbers; rare in winter.*

In spring, records on 17 dates from 23 Apr to 13 Jun, mostly involving single birds, with two on 4 & 18 May and 1 Jun. A male was singing from the roof of Government House on 7 May. There was an unusual summer record of one on 3 & 4 Jul, calling over the Village on the first date (Dean Jones). Autumn migrants were recorded on 19 dates from 1 Oct (five) to 15 Nov (one), with a peak of 14 on 26 Oct.



**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	1	2	2	1	–	–	14	1	–
–	–	–	2	12	3	2	–	–	18	1	–



A Goldfinch fledgling *Carduelis carduelis*, Millcombe, 9 August.  
© Dean Jones

**Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis***

[European Goldfinch]

*Breeds occasionally; common spring and autumn migrant; irregular in summer and winter.*

Recorded in all months of the year. Ones and twos were seen regularly from Jan to Mar, and there were three on 26 Mar. After an influx of 30 on 13 Apr, spring migration was modest until the second half of the month, when there were four further counts of 30 or more, peaking at 38 on 26th. Two pairs bred in Millcombe, with a third in the willows next to the Terrace Trap (the remains of the latter nest were still visible in Feb 2019). Fledged young were seen in the Secret Garden (lower Millcombe) on 31 May (Dean Jones) and presumably the same pair was feeding three or four young in Millcombe Wood on 1 Jun. The main autumn passage occurred between the last week of Sep and middle of Oct, with counts reaching 100 or more on six dates during this period, including the maximum of 230 on 3 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	2	3	38	27	17	18	25	160	230	6	1
10	7	12	26	31	19	17	18	25	26	14	4

**Siskin *Spinus spinus***

[Eurasian Siskin]

*Late autumn migrant in greatly varying numbers; very rare in spring.*

During spring passage, ones and twos were reported on six dates from 5 Apr to 1 Jun. There were no further sightings until autumn, when there were records on 27 dates from 26 Sep (one) to 18 Nov (two), with a maximum of 50 on 14 Oct.

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
–	–	–	1	2	2	–	–	13	50	2	–
–	–	–	2	3	1	–	–	3	22	2	–

**Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus***

[Lapland Longspur]

*Uncommon but regular autumn migrant; rare spring migrant; very rare in winter. Devon rarity.*

Unusually, there were no Sep or Oct records, the only bird of the year being one flying over Quarter Wall and heading south across the Airfield on 2 Nov (Ross Bower). Record accepted by Devon Bird Recorder. The near absence of Lapland Buntings in autumn 2018 may have been associated with a cold, late summer in Greenland and drought conditions in Scandinavia.

**Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis****Uncommon but regular autumn migrant in small numbers; uncommon spring migrant; rare in midwinter. Devon rarity.*

A poor season with just eight records, one in spring and seven in autumn, all of single birds. A very bold female, seen initially by Peter Lambden, spent the morning of 12 Apr feeding along the High Street track across from the pigsty and was present in the same area at 18.45 on 13th. The first autumn migrant was watched as it flew out over the sea from the Castle on 28 Sep (Tim Davis). This was followed by singles at the Rocket Pole and in flight near the Tillage Field pigsty on 20 Oct (Andy Jayne); at the Rocket Pole on 28 Oct (Paul Holt); along the cliff-tops near Old Light, then flying south over South West Field on 31 Oct (Ross Bower); on the track to the Castle on 1 Nov (Ross Bower); calling over Millcombe on 13 Nov (Tony Taylor *et al.*); and calling over Quarter Wall on 26 Nov (Dean Jones). Records accepted by Devon Bird Recorder.

**Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana****Nationally scarce migrant.*

One was on the track outside Quarters during the morning of 2 Sep, then briefly above Benjamin's Chair in the afternoon (Richard & Rebecca Taylor *et al.*). Record accepted by DBRC.

**Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus***

[Common Reed Bunting]

*Regular autumn migrant in very small numbers; rare and irregular spring migrant; very rare in winter.*

A female was at Pondsbury on the unusual date of 26 Jan (Tim Davis & Tim Jones). One on 4 Apr was the only spring migrant. In autumn and early winter there were records on 18 dates from 1 Oct (one) to 26 Nov (two), with a maximum of eight on 17 & 19 Oct.



A female Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*, Ponsbury, 15 November.  
© Richard Campey

**Maximum count for each month (top) and number of days recorded (bottom)**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	8	2	–
1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	15	3	–

**DBRC DECISION PENDING**

**Rough-legged Buzzard** *Buteo lagopus*

*Lundy vagrant and Devon rarity.*

A record of one reported over the West Side, north of Tibbetts, on 1 Nov 2018 remains under consideration by DBRC.

**BIRDS SEEN ON THE CROSSING TO OR FROM LUNDY**

Records of birds seen close to the island are incorporated in the main list, above. Other reports of interest for the 'open sea' part of the crossing are given below, but we do not cover the North Devon shoreline or the Taw & Torridge Estuary. Records for these areas should be submitted to the Devon Bird Recorder ([recorder@devonbirds.org](mailto:recorder@devonbirds.org)).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

23 Oct – three males seen from MS *Oldenburg* en route to Lundy (Justin Zantboer *et al.*).

**DBRC DECISIONS ON DEVON COUNTY RARITY RECORDS**

**Little Bunting** *Emeriza pusilla lapponicus*

*Nationally scarce migrant.*

**2017.** A record of one seen on the Terrace on 17 Oct (Richard Campey) was accepted by DBRC.

**BBRC DECISIONS ON UK RARITY RECORDS ASSESSED AS 'NOT PROVEN'**

**Black-browed Albatross** *Thalassarche melanophris*

A submission of one off the Landing Bay on 17 Oct 2016 was considered by BBRC as 'not proven'.