

# Castle and Hightae Lochs



## Wildlife Report 2024

# Castle and Hightae Lochs L N R Wildlife 2024

Castle Loch is owned by the local community and managed by a trust on their behalf. Hightae Loch is privately owned and managed for fishing. Whilst the bird life on Castle Loch is regularly counted as part of the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) access to Hightae Loch has been difficult for some time and so regular bird counts are not currently possible. Occasional surveys of other species are conducted.

The Pink-footed Goose roost (international importance) and Greylag Goose roost (national importance) are now defunct although feeding grounds around the area remain in use.

The continuing decline in Willow Tit numbers gives cause for serious concern.

This report is based on the WeBS bird counts conducted each month throughout the year by Drew Davidson and Kath Davidson (D&KD). In past years Freda Seddon has walked round Castle Loch at the end of each month recording the non-waterbirds she sees but this has not been possible this year. The report is compiled by Andy Riches (AR). Additional records for birds and non-avians come from other visits and observers. In 2019 I included moth records for the first time which were kindly provided by Jean Robson of the local Butterfly Conservation Moth Group. Sadly, post pandemic no records have been received. Continuing access problems to Hightae Loch have resulted in fewer records from this site.

The once internationally important Pink-footed Goose roost, the nationally important Greylag Goose roost and the sub-nationally important Goosander gathering are now defunct. The breeding population of Willow Tit, at its northern-most boundary in D&G has also declined.

Happily the population of Variable Damselfly, an important and little understood species in the UK, remains fairly strong at Castle Loch.

Many thanks to the following: Iain Anderson (IA), Pete Antrobus (PA), Chris and Pat Baines (C&PB), Derek Bearhop (DB), Colin Bushell (CB), Alyn Chambers (AC), Edmund & Elizabeth Fellowes (E&EF), Kevin Findlater (KF), Darren Flint (DF), Ross Gemmell (RG), Stuart Graham (SG), Michael Granger (MG), Brian Henderson (BH), Joyce Henderson (JH), Ryan Irvine (RI), Pete Jeavons (PJ), Helen Kelly (HK), Ivan Lang (IL), Jim Logan (JL), Paul Massey (PM), Richard and Barbara Mearns (R&BM), John Miles (JM), Heather Murray (HMu) Ciril Ostroznic (CO), Tristram Reid (TR), Jean Robson (JR), David Rose (DR), Paul Seddon (PSed), Paul Shimmings (PSh), Dave Pullan (DP), Violet Sinclair (VS), Angus Sloan (AS), Anna White (AW), Dawn Wright (DW). Thanks also to those folk who kindly provide records but prefer to remain anonymous. Records marked (BT) are kindly provided by the BTO from their Bird Track recording system. Records marked (DGBN) are from the Dumfries & Galloway Bird News group.

Climate data is copyright of the UK Met Office and is used under licence.

***The Dumfries & Galloway Bird News Group, set up and managed by Pete Jeavons is an invaluable source of bird information for the whole of the region. It can be located at***

<https://dumfriesgallowaybirdnews.blogspot.com/> and is a crucial source of information for resident and visiting birders. Don't just use it **CONTRIBUTE** to it and share your sightings with others!

**In addition to providing his records, Richard Mearns has provided historical information, support and advice without which this report would not exist.**

A copyright claim has been received concerning a photograph which appeared in the 2013 report of a bittern, apparently at taken Castle Loch. It has not been possible to establish ownership of the photograph or where it was taken but it was used in good faith and appropriate acknowledgements will be made should it be established that it was wrongly attributed.

The weather maps at the end of the report are provided under the copyright of the Met Office.

The descriptions of status refer to status on the reserve only.

**Species recorded in 2024 are listed in bold type.**

**In spite of the many regular contributors listed above new records are always welcome and should be sent to Andy Riches [sloch69@aol.com](mailto:sloch69@aol.com) as soon as possible after the end of the year. Thank you.**

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## MAMMALS.

**SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE BAT:** *Present throughout the year and probably breeds.*

**COMMON PIPISTRELLE BAT:** *Present throughout the year and probably breeds.*

**DAUBENTON'S BAT:** *Present throughout the year and probably breeds.*

**NOCTULE BAT:** *Reported occasionally from Hightae Loch. Numbers reported are declining since 2002 when at least 22 were noted on 28<sup>th</sup> May. This may simply be due to lack of observers or possibly results from the clearfell in 2009. Last record 18<sup>th</sup> July 2006 (R&BM).*

**PIGMY SHREW:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**COMMON SHREW:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**WATER SHREW:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**WOOD MOUSE:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**FIELD VOLE:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**BANK VOLE:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**WATER VOLE:** *Present in the Castle Woodland and Valison Burn area and breeds.*

**BROWN RAT:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**RED SQUIRREL:** *Present in Castle and Dalton Road Woodlands throughout the year and breeds.*

**WEASEL:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**STOAT:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**AMERICAN MINK:** *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

**OTTER:** *Present throughout the year at both lochs and breeds.*

**BADGER:** *Regular visitor to Castle Loch woodland.*

**RED FOX:** *Regular visitor to Castle Loch woodland.*

**ROE DEER:** *Regular visitor to Castle Loch woodland.*

## **DRAGONFLIES.**

**LARGE RED DAMSELFLY:** *Present and breeds. Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded: 6 on wing; 3 in cop; 2 ovipositing. Maximum number recorded at Hightae Loch: 3 on wing; 1 in cop; 1 ovipositing (AR).*

**BLUE-TAILED DAMSELFLY:** *Present and breeds Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded at Castle Loch: 22 on wing; 4 in cop; 1 ovipositing. Maximum number recorded at Hightae Loch: 8 on wing; 2 in cop; 0 ovipositing (AR).*

**COMMON BLUE DAMSELFLY:** *Present and breeds. Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded at Castle Loch: 30 on wing; 8 in cop; 4 ovipositing. Maximum number recorded at Hightae Loch: 11 on wing; 3 in cop; 2 ovipositing (AR).*

**AZURE DAMSELFLY:** *Present and breeds. Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded: 22 on wing; 2 in cop; 1 ovipositing (AR).*

**VARIABLE DAMSELFLY:** *Present and breeds. Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded at Castle Loch: 17 on wing; 4 in cop; 2 ovipositing. Maximum number recorded at Hightae Loch: 5 on wing; 2 in cop; 1 ovipositing (AR).*

**EMERALD DAMSELFLY:** *Present and probably breeds. No records again this year.*

**COMMON DARTER:** *Present and breeds at Hightae Loch. Single seen on wing at Hightae Loch this year. A single also seen on wing at Valison Burn, Castle Loch (AR). This is a first record for Castle Loch.*

**FOUR-SPOTTED CHASER:** *Generally present and breeds. Single seen on wing at Castle Loch this year (AR).*

**COMMON HAWKER:** *Present and probably breeds. Maximum number recorded at Castle Loch: 2 on wing; 4 in cop; 2 ovipositing. Single seen on wing at Hightae Loch this year (AR).*

**BLACK DARTER:** *Visited and was seen apparently ovipositing in Valison Burn area in 2010. But the habitat preferences of this insect would suggest that this behaviour was an aberration. A single record of a male in 2011 (AR). No records prior or since.*

**GOLDEN-RINGED DRAGONFLY:** *Occasional visitor. Single male recorded at Castle Loch on two occasions in 2012 and a single occasion in 2013 (AR). Single record from Vendace Burn in 2014. Single seen on wing on the Valison Burn this year (AR).*

**MIGRANT HAWKER:** *First recorded in 2004. No records since 2013.*

**SOUTHERN HAWKER:** *Single insect recorded at Castle Loch on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014 (BH). A first for the reserve. No records this year.*

## HOVERFLIES.

**ARCTOPHILA SUPERBIENS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**BACCHA ELONGATA:** *Present at both loch and breeds.*

**CHRYSOTOXUM BICINCTUM:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**DASYSYRPHUS VENUSTUS:** *Last recorded 16<sup>th</sup> May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

**EPISTROPHE GROSSULARIAE:** *Last recorded on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1979 at Castle Loch.*

**EPISYRPHUS BALTEATUS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**ERISTALIS ARBUSTORUM:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**ERISTALIS HORTICOLA:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**ERISTALIS INTERRUPTUS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**ERISTALIS PERTINAX:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**ERISTALIS TENAX:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**EUPEODES LUNIGER:** *Present at both lochs and breeds at Hightae Loch.*

**HELOPHILUS PENDULUS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**HELOPHILUS TRIVITTATUS:** *Last record on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1980 at Castle Loch.*

**LEUCOZONA LATERNARIA:** *Last record on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1976 at Castle Loch.*

**LUCOZONA LUCORUM:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**MELANOSTOMA MELLINUM:** *Last record on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

**MELANOSTOMA SCALARE:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**MERODON EQUESTRIS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**MYATHROPA FLOREA:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**NEOASCIA PODAGRICA:** *Last record on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

**NEOASCIA TENUR:** *Last record on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

**PLATYCHEIRUS CLYPEATUS:** *Last record on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

**PLATYCHEIRUS FULVIVENTRIS:** *Last record 14<sup>th</sup> July 1979 at Castle Loch.*

**PLATYCHEIRUS PERPALIDUS:** *Last record on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

**PORTEVINIA MACULATA:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**RHINGIA CAMPESTRIS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**SCAEVA PYRASTRI:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**SERICOMYIA LAPPONA:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**SERICOMYIA SILENTIS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

**SYRITTA PIPIENS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*  
**SYRPHUS RIBESII:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*  
**SYRPHUS TORVUS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*  
**SYRPHUS VITRIPENNIS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*  
**VOLUCELLA BOMBYLANS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*  
**VOLUCELLA PELLUCENS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*  
**XYLOTA SEGNIS:** *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

## **BUTTERFLIES.**

**SMALL WHITE:** *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 8 at Castle Loch (AR).*  
**LARGE WHITE:** *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 2 at Castle Loch (AR).*  
**GREEN-VEINED WHITE:** *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 6 at Castle Loch (AR).*  
**ORANGE TIP:** *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 4 at Castle Loch (AR).*  
**PEACOCK:** *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 3 at Castle Loch (AR).*  
**SMALL TORTOISESHELL:** *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 2 at Castle Loch (AR).*  
**RED ADMIRAL:** *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 4 at Castle Loch (AR).*  
**RINGLET:** *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 16 at Castle Loch (AR).*  
**LARGE SKIPPER:** *Two seen in vicinity of Valison Burn Bridge on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 (R&BM). No records this year.*  
**SMALL COPPER:** *No records this year. One was seen on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010 (AR) which was a first record for the reserve.*  
**SMALL HEATH:** *No records this year. There have only been four records in the history of the reserve.*  
**MEADOW BROWN:** *Maximum number 1 at Castle Loch in 2012 which was only the second record for the reserve. No records since.*  
**COMMON BLUE:** *One was seen on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010 (AR) which was a first record for the reserve. No records since.*  
**PAINTED LADY:** *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 3 at Castle Loch (AR).*  
**COMMA:** *One seen at Hightae Loch on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2009 (AW). A first record for the reserve and a rarity in the region. No records since then.*

## **MOTHS.**

Sadly no moth records were available again this year but I am hopeful that some records may be available for the 2025 report.

## **BUMBLE BEES.**

**BOMBUS LAPIDARIUS:** *Present at Castle Loch and breeds.*

**BOMBUS PASCUORUM:** *Present at Castle Loch and probably breeds.*

**BOMBUS TERESTRIS:** *Present at Castle Loch and probably breeds.*

**BOMBUS PRATORUM:** *Present at Castle Loch and possibly breeds.*

**BOMBUS LUCORUM:** *Present at Castle Loch and possibly breeds.*

**BOMBUS HORTORUM:** *Present at Castle Loch and possibly breeds.*

**BOMBUS HYPNORUM:** *First recorded in the UK in 2001. Present in birdbox at Lochfield Cottage in week beginning 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 (DF). No records since.*

# AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES

*All the Aquatic invertebrate records are from surveys conducted by Jim Logan and kindly supplied by him.*



*Ranatra linearis* © Jim Logan

## MOLLUSCS.

**BYTHYNIA TENTACULATA:** > 10 Castle Loch (JL).

**ANISUS (PLANORBIS) LEUCOSTOMA:** 1 Castle Loch (JL).

**ANISUS (PLANORBIS) VORTEX:** 5 Last previous record 2019 (JL).

**PLANORBIS CARINATUS:** 18 Castle Loch (JL).

**PLANORBIS PLANORBIS:** 5 Last previous record 2019 (JL).

**RADIX BALTHICA (LYMNAEA PEREGER):** Last recorded 2023. No records this year.

**PLANORBIS PLANORBIS:** 5 Castle Loch (JL).

**LYMNAEA STAGNALIS:** 2 Castle Loch (JL).

**LYMNAEA PALUSTRIS: 1 Castle Loch (JL).**

**PHYSA FONTINALIS: > 10 Castle Loch (JL).**

**VIVIPARUS VIVIPARUS: 2 Castle Loch (JL).**

**POTAMOPYRGUS ANTIPODARUM: 1 Castle Loch (JL).**

GYRAULUS ALBUS: Last recorded 2014 (JL). No records this year.

SUCCINEIDAE: Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.

**ARIANTA ARBUSTORUM: 1 Castle Loch (JL).**

**SPHAERIUM CORNEUM: 1 Castle Loch (JL).**

ANODONTA ANATINA: Last recorded 2019 (JL). No records this year.

PISIDIUM sp.: Last recorded 2023 (JL). No records this year.

## **CRUSTACEANS.**

ARGULUS FOLIACEUS: 1 Last recorded 2018 (JL). No records this year.

ASELLUS AQUATICUS: Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.

**PROASELLUS MERIDIANUS: 8 Castle Loch (JL).**

CYCLOPS sp: Last recorded on 2021, (JL). No records this year.

**DAPHNIA sp: >100, Castle Loch (JL).**

**GAMMARUS PULEX: 100+ Castle Loch (JL).**

**GAMMARUS DUEBENI: 100+ Castle Loch (JL).**

**POLYPHEMUS PEDICULUS: 5 Castle Loch, (JL).**

**OSTRACODS: >10 Castle Loch (JL).**

**RANATRA LINEARIS 4 Castle Loch (JL). This is a first record for the reserve of a species which is just beginning to be recorded in Scotland.**

## **AQUATIC INSECTS.**

ACILLIUS sp.: Last recorded 2018 (JL). No records this year.

ANABOLIA NERVOSA: Last recorded 2018 (JL). No records this year.

**CHAOBORIS SP.: 2 Castle Loch (JL).**

GLYPHOTAEIUS PELLUCIDUS: Last recorded 2018 (JL). No records this year.

GERRIS sp. Last recorded in 2019, (JL). No records this year.

GYRINUS sp.: Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.

HALIPLUS SP. : Last recorded in 2019 (JL). No records this year.

**HYDROMETRA STAGNORUM: 2 Castle Loch (JL).**

HYDROPHILUS sp.: 1 larva, 2021 (JL). No records this year.

ISCHNURA ELEGANS: 1 Larva, Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.

LIMNEPHILUS sp.: Last recorded 2021, (JL). No records this year.

**LESSER WATER BOATMEN: 1, Castle Loch (JL). Not identified.**

NEPA CINEREA: 1 on 28th June 2021, Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.

**NOTONECTA GLAUCA: 3 Castle Loch (JL).**

**NOTONECTA VIRIDIS: 3 Castle Loch (JL).**

SIALIS LUTARIA: 1 Last recorded 2023 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.

**TRIANODES DIVERSICOLOR: Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL).No records this year.**

## **FLATWORMS.**

DUGESIA LUGUBRIS : Last recorded on 28th June 2021, Castle Loch (JL). No records this year

DUGESIA POLYCHROA: Last records 2018 (JL) no records this year.

**DUGESIA TIGRINA: (alien sp. from America) 1 Castle Loch (JL)**

**POLYCELIS NIGRA/TENUIS: 11 Castle Loch (JL).**

## **LEECHES.**

HAEMOPSIS SANGUISUGA: Last recorded 2021, Castle Loch (JL) No records this year

**ERPOBELLA OCTOCULATA: 1 Castle Loch (JL)**

## AMPHIBIANS.

**RANA TEMPORARIA:** 1 Castle Loch (JL)

*The following sections with the exception of 'Birds' contain a brief account of various species encountered 'in passing'. As yet, I have been unable to conduct a serious survey of any of these groups so in some cases many more species will be present.*

## NON-ACQUATIC INSECTS.

**PANORPA COMMUNIS:** *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

**PANORPA GERMANICA:** *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

**CHORTHIPPUS PARALLELUS:** *Regularly present on grassland at Castle Loch during the summer (AR).*

**OMOCESTUS VIRIDULUS:** *Regularly present on grassland at Castle Loch during the summer (AR).*

**CHORTHIPPUS BRUNNEUS:** *Regularly present on grassland at Castle Loch during the summer (AR).*

**CALOSOMA VIOLACEUS:** *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

**STAPHYLINUS OLENS:** *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

**NICORPHORUS HUMATOR:** *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

**NICORPHORUS VESPILLO:** *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

**NICORPHORUS VESPILLOIDES:** *Present adjacent to Valison Burn (AR).*

**GEOTRUPES STERCORARIUS:** *Present adjacent to Valison Burn and on track leading to A709. No previously recorded but has probably been present (AR).*

**STAPHYLINUS OLENS:** *Present in Castle Wood adjacent to the Castle ruins (AR).*

**FORFICULA AURICULARIA:** *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

## **TERRESTRIAL ISOPODA.**

**ONISCUS ASELLUS:** *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

**PORCELLIO SCABER:** *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

## **TERRESTRIAL GASTROPODA.**

**ARION ATER:** *Present throughout the reserve (AR).*

**TANDONIA BUDAPESTENSIS:** *Present in Castle Wood and adjacent to the Valison Burn (AR).*

**CEPEA NEMORALIS:** *Present in Castle Wood and adjacent to the Valison Burn (AR).*

**CEPEA HORTENSIS:** *Present in Castle Wood and adjacent to the Valison Burn (AR).*

## **DIPLOPODA.**

**GLOMERIS MARGINATA:** *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

**TACHYPODOIULUS NIGER:** *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

## **CHILOPODA.**

**LITHOBIUS FORFICATUS:** *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

## BIRDS.

RED-THROATED DIVER: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 12<sup>th</sup> November 1972.*

BLACK-THROATED DIVER: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 21<sup>st</sup> March 1984.*

**GREAT NORTHERN DIVER:** *Very Rare. No previous records. First record seen at Castle Loch on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (CB). Seen thereafter by a number of observers until the end of the month. A record of two birds recorded on E Bird for 10<sup>th</sup> March this year. Unable to contact recorder for further information or confirmation.*

**LITTLE GREBE:** *Recorded most years but no evidence of breeding at either loch again this year. Maximum count: 2 at Castle Loch on 15<sup>th</sup> June (AR).*

**GREAT CRESTED GREBE:** *Once a regular breeder. First bred at Lochmaben in 1891. Reduction in numbers this year with 4 seen on 10<sup>th</sup> April (BT). No reports of young between 2019 and 2021. Report of 4 young in 2022 on 20<sup>th</sup> June from a single observer (BT). Numbers now seriously depleted. A pair seen during the breeding season (DD&KD, AR) and breeding ritual observed (AR) but no young observed.*

RED-NECKED GREBE: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 6<sup>th</sup> April 1992.*

**SLAVONIAN GREBE:** *Rare autumn/winter or early spring visitor. Last records one in October 2009 (BH) and two in November 2010. A number of records in 2023 of single birds, all in the second winter period and probably all the same individual. Recorded on 14<sup>th</sup> October (C&PB), 23<sup>rd</sup> October (BT), 23<sup>rd</sup> November (DGBN), 1<sup>st</sup> December (BG), 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 11<sup>th</sup> December (PJ) and 13<sup>th</sup> December (BT). Single bird reported on 1<sup>st</sup> January (BG) and 2<sup>nd</sup> January (C&PB).*

BLACK-NECKED GREBE: *Rare winter and summer visitor. Last recorded 6<sup>th</sup> October 1996.*

PIED-BILLED GREBE: *Rare American vagrant. One record 24-25<sup>th</sup> April 1981.*

**GREAT CORMORANT:** *Common resident. Last breeding records 1898-1903 (Sir Hugh Gladstone). Regularly seen outside the breeding season. Numbers down this year. Maximum count: 9 on 10<sup>th</sup> March (DD&KD). Maximum count in second winter period 6 on 17<sup>th</sup> November (DD&KD).*

**EURASIAN BITTERN:** *Rare vagrant. Unconfirmed report of four on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2006 (Birdline Scotland). Possible sighting on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006 when a bird took off from shallow water amongst willows but was immediately lost to view (RM). Report (via TR) of a Northumbrian birder having "good views" of 2 birds in the reeds by the yacht club on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2008. Further possible sighting on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2008 with a bird taking off from the reeds on the west side of Castle Loch but again being immediately lost to view (AR & DW). One seen on ice near the inflow of the Innerfield Burn on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2010 (AR) and again on 28<sup>th</sup> (DB). Single bird reported on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2011 (BH) and again on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> December 2011 (BH, JH). Two birds reported on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2012 (BH). Single bird*

*reported at Castle Loch on numerous occasions between 8<sup>th</sup> January and 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013 (BH). A single bird reported on 6<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> December 2013 (BH). Single bird reported on a number of occasions in the Castle Wood area between 11<sup>th</sup> January and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014 (BH). Single bird present in reeds on Lockerbie road side on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2014 (AR). Bird present on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015 (AR). No further records until 2019 when a single bird was seen on 4<sup>th</sup> February (DF). Single bird reported on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022 (DGBN). No birds reported during the second winter period of 2022 but it seems likely that at least one was present. In 2023 single birds reported regularly between the 6<sup>th</sup> January and the 15<sup>th</sup> March with two birds present on 30<sup>th</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February (All BT). This year single bird on 26<sup>th</sup> January (IL) and 15<sup>th</sup> February (Dave Pullan via DGBN).*

**LITTLE EGRET:** *Rare vagrant. Single bird seen on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2011 near mouth of Valison Burn (BH). Two birds reported on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022 (BT) and two on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2022 (DD&KD). In 2023 two birds were seen in Vendace Bay on 18<sup>th</sup> February and 3 on 21<sup>st</sup> December (both BT). A single bird was seen at various times between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February (BT). This year single birds were reported on 27<sup>th</sup> March (PJ) and 15<sup>th</sup> July (JM).*

**GREAT WHITE EGRET:** *Rare vagrant. First record was of a single bird during WeBS count at Hightae Loch on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2016 (DD). A bird was present at Castle Loch on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (DD&KD), 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 (DF) and 13<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (DD&KD). In 2021 there were records of a single bird on 30<sup>th</sup> August (DF), 20<sup>th</sup> December (DD&KD), 26<sup>th</sup> December (DF) and 28<sup>th</sup> December (R&BM,E&EF). There were a number of sightings in 2022 with a single bird being seen on 1<sup>st</sup> January and two birds on 17<sup>th</sup> January (both BT). Further sightings of single birds were made on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 13<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March (all BT), 16<sup>th</sup> April (DD&KD) 7<sup>th</sup> September (BT) · 9<sup>th</sup> September (AW), 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> September (both BT), the 9<sup>th</sup> October (DD&KD), and 22<sup>nd</sup> December (DGBN). IN 2023 two birds present during WeBS counts on 19<sup>th</sup> February and 12<sup>th</sup> March (DD&KD) and there were regular sightings of a single bird in January and February (BT). Single bird recorded again during WeBS count on 20<sup>th</sup> November (DD&KD). This year single birds were recorded by a number of observers in the first four months and the last three months of the year. Two birds were present on 17<sup>th</sup> January (BG), 10<sup>th</sup> March (DD&KD) and 15<sup>th</sup> July (JM). Two, possibly 3 birds were seen on 16<sup>th</sup> December and 4 possibly 5 on 15<sup>th</sup> March (Both PJ).*

**GREY HERON:** *Regular Visitor. Maximum count 7 birds on 17<sup>th</sup> July (JM).*

**PURPLE HERON:** *Rare vagrant. One record only 27<sup>th</sup> May 1975 at Hightae Loch.*

**MUTE SWAN:** *Regular breeder with two pairs fledging young again this year. The usual rise in numbers during the moulting period saw 160+ on 15<sup>th</sup> July (JM). Other monthly maxima 80 on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 92 on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 56 on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 37 on 4<sup>th</sup> April, 109 on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 86 on 9<sup>th</sup> June, 120 on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 23 on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 94 on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 147 on 17<sup>th</sup> November and 84 on 15<sup>th</sup> December (All DD&KD).*

**BEWICK'S SWAN:** *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 20<sup>th</sup> January 1995. Three birds at Castle Loch on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2011 (BH) rising to five birds on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2011 (BH). Five birds still present on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2012 (AR). No records since.*

**WHOOPE SWAN:** *Irregular winter visitor. Present during the first winter period with a maximum of 25 birds on 10<sup>th</sup> January (DD&KD).*

**BLACK SWAN:** *Rare vagrant. Last previous record of a single bird that arrived in early July 2010 and was in the area until mid-September of that year. Two birds present in sanctuary zone early on the morning of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013 (BH). No records since.*

**BEAN GOOSE:** *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 23-25<sup>th</sup> February 1983.*

**PINK-FOOTED GOOSE:** *Formerly regular winter visitor in internationally important numbers. Sadly, although the surrounding fields are still used by flocks of over a hundred geese for feeding, the roost on Castle Loch has collapsed. Numbers slightly up this year after last year's substantial rise with a record of 120 birds on 20<sup>th</sup> February and an annual maximum of 250c on 22<sup>nd</sup> December (both AR).*

**WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 16<sup>th</sup> February 1992.*

**GREYLAG GOOSE:** *Once a regular visitor in nationally important numbers. No resident birds recorded. Although considerable numbers of Icelandic birds continue to use their traditional feeding areas around Lochmaben. Six records this year with a maximum of 14 recorded on 20<sup>th</sup> February and 9 on 22<sup>nd</sup> December (both AR). The remaining four records were of 5 or fewer birds.*

**SNOW GOOSE:** *Rare winter vagrant and uncommon escapee from wildfowl collections. Last recorded 14<sup>th</sup> October 1990.*

**BAR-HEADED GOOSE:** *Asiatic introduction. Now feral. One record of 11 birds on two dates in August 2001 (PSh).*

**CANADA GOOSE:** *North American introduction, now a common UK resident. Occurs throughout the year and is an irregular breeder on the reserve. Maximum counts of 31 birds on 20<sup>th</sup> February and 8 on 22<sup>nd</sup> December (both AR). No reports of breeding again this year.*

**HYBRID GEESE (GREYLAG x CANADA GOOSE):** *Single hybrid seen frequently throughout 2008. Last seen on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2009 (BH).*

**BRENT GOOSE:** *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 12<sup>th</sup> January 2004.*

**BARNACLE GOOSE:** *Occasional winter visitor. Last record was a single bird overflying on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013 (BH).*

**COMMON SHELDUCK:** *Irregular breeder, usually one or two pairs only. Last recorded breeding 2007. The only records in the first part of the year were 6 birds on 20<sup>th</sup> February (AR). A single bird was recorded during the second winter period on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December (AR). No records during the rest of the year.*

**RUDDY SHELDUCK:** *Accidental from Asia or north-west Africa, or uncommon escapee from a wildfowl collection. One record 27<sup>th</sup> April 2004 (AR).*

**MANDARIN DUCK:** *Escape from wildfowl collections. Only two previous records on the reserve when a single bird was present on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2013 near Lochside plantation (BH) and a single male was present on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 (PSh).*

**EGYPTIAN GOOSE:** *Introduced now feral. Single bird at Castle Loch on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011 (BH) and seen thereafter by a number of observers.*

**EURASIAN WIGEON:** *Regular winter visitor, scarce in summer. Numbers substantially down this year with a corresponding increase in numbers regularly using the Kirk Loch. Maximum count in first winter period: 98 on 14<sup>th</sup> January (DD&KD). Numbers remained low during the first winter period. Maximum count during the second winter period was 171 on 21<sup>st</sup> November (RI). There were no records of birds from the first winter period after 19 on the 12<sup>th</sup> February (DD&KD) although birds were probably present. The first record of birds from the second winter period is that of 17<sup>th</sup> November.*

**AMERICAN WIGEON:** *Accidental from North America or escapee from wildfowl collection. There was an unconfirmed sighting in 2003 and a single male was present between early October and Mid December 2009 (BH). A single bird was present from the 22<sup>nd</sup> January until 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010 (BH). Single male at Castle Loch 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2011 (BH). This bird remained in the area alternating between Castle and Kirk Lochs until the end of the year being seen by numerous observers. A single male was seen in a flock of Eurasian Wigeon in the Castle Wood area on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2012 (BH). A further single male was seen in Vendace Bay on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2012 (both BH). No records since.*

**GADWALL:** *Occasional winter visitor or during spring passage. Single summer record of two birds in 2013. Birds were regularly present during the first three months of 2015 with a maximum count of 6 on 17<sup>th</sup> February (AR). Numbers held up during the second winter period, with 6 birds present on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015 (AR). No birds were noted during the summer of 2015. One record of a single male on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 (PSh) and a single bird on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2022 (BT). Two records in 2023 of single birds on 1<sup>st</sup> January and the 10<sup>th</sup> April (both BT). This year a single bird on 27<sup>th</sup> March (PJ) in the first winter period and two on 21<sup>st</sup> November in the second winter period (RI).*

**COMMON TEAL:** *Regular winter visitor. No records received for first winter period. Maximum count for second winter period 47 on 21<sup>st</sup> November (RI).*

**GARGANEY:** *Rare summer visitor. Last previous records 15<sup>th</sup> September 1991, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2003 5<sup>th</sup> May 2006 and a single drake seen by numerous observers between 28<sup>th</sup> February and 30<sup>th</sup> March 2008. This bird was noted to have a yellow ring on the right leg (R&BM). This and the time of its arrival (rather early for a migrant) suggest that it might not have been a wild bird. A further sighting of probably the same bird on 16<sup>th</sup> April (JB & G Garner). No records since.*

**MALLARD:** *Regular throughout the year and breeds. Numbers considerably down in 2023 with a maximum count 48 on 14<sup>th</sup> January (BT). This year numbers remain low with a maximum of 47 birds on 23<sup>rd</sup> July (DD&KD). For six months of the year under 20 birds were recorded with records for April and May being in single figures.*

**NORTHERN SHOVELER:** *Irregular visitor, winter and spring. Maximum count 11 present 21<sup>st</sup> November (RI).*

**RED-CRESTED POCHARD:** *Rare vagrant and uncommon escapee from wildfowl collections. Last recorded 9<sup>th</sup> September 1995.*

**COMMON POCHARD:** *Irregular winter visitor. Two reported on E Bird on 10<sup>th</sup> March. Unable to contact recorder for further information or confirmation. Three recorded on 21<sup>st</sup> November (RI).*

**TUFTED DUCK:** *Present throughout the year. Maximum counts: 110 on 14<sup>th</sup> January (DD&KD) and 269 on 15<sup>th</sup> December (DD&KD). Numbers in both winter periods regularly exceeded 50 birds with the exception of October when 39 birds were recorded. Four young seen during WeBS count on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2013 (AR) but no breeding records since.*

**GREATER SCAUP:** *Very occasional winter visitor. Single record from Castle Loch in 2010 and six in 2013. No records in 2014 and 2015. Single bird present on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016 (DF). Two reports in 2023. A single bird reported on 2<sup>nd</sup> December and 2 on 15<sup>th</sup> December (both BT). No records this year.*

**LESSER SCAUP:** *Rare transatlantic vagrant. Last recorded 26<sup>th</sup> January 2004 (IA). Bird with superficial appearance of Lesser Scaup seen by a number of observers in 2008. This appears to have been a hybrid although its exact nature has not been determined. In 2022 a number of records were received of a single bird between the 21<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March. Believed to be a hybrid. Report of a single bird on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (AC). No records this year.*

**LONG-TAILED DUCK:** *Rare winter visitor. Last previous records 24<sup>th</sup> December 1994, 6<sup>th</sup> November-15<sup>th</sup> December 2002, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2003, 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and 11<sup>th</sup> January-12<sup>th</sup> April 2006. Two birds present during the latter half of February 2008 and then again from 17<sup>th</sup> November until the end of the year. In 2009 a single male was present from 14<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and a female from 15<sup>th</sup> November until 16<sup>th</sup> December. One male bird was first seen on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010 (BH) and remained until 5<sup>th</sup> being seen by a number of observers. Single at Castle Loch on 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December 2016 (PSh). No records again this year.*

**COMMON SCOTER:** *Scarce visitor. Last previous record at Castle Loch on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2006 (RM). Single male present in Vendace Bay on 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> August 2013 (BH). A total of three records submitted in 2023. Four birds all male on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 3 on 10<sup>th</sup> April and 1 on 20<sup>th</sup> August (all BT). No records this year.*

**VELVET SCOTER:** *Rare visitor. One record 18<sup>th</sup> October 2000.*

**COMMON GOLDENEYE:** *Regular winter visitor, sometimes remaining well into summer. The first winter period had a maximum count of 43 on 12<sup>th</sup> February (DD&KD) and a final record of 2 on 8<sup>th</sup> April (DD&KD). In the second winter period the first record was of 5 birds on 17<sup>th</sup> November (DD&KD) with a maximum count of 50+ on 16<sup>th</sup> December (PJ).*

**SMEW:** *Used to be seen most winters in small numbers. Last previous records: 3 on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009 (BH) rising to 4 on 5<sup>th</sup> February. Last sighting: 1 on 28<sup>th</sup> February. Single redhead at Castle Loch on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2010 (AR). Single female present at Castle Loch on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2011 (BH). Single female present at Dalton Road piers on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012 (BH). Last previous record was of a single female present in Innerfield Burn area 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013 (BH). Single bird seen at Castle Loch by a number of observers from 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (DGBN). Single bird seen by a number of observers between 6<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2023 (BT, PM and D&KD). No records this year.*

**RED-BREASTED MERGANSER:** *Was once a fairly regular visitor in winter. Has declined substantially in recent years but probably slightly under-recorded. Record of a single male at Henderland Island, Castle Loch on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2012 (BH). Single female on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 (PSh).*

**GOOSANDER:** *Regular winter visitor. Breeds locally. Once present in sub-nationally important numbers. The decrease in numbers noted in 2015 and 2016 continued until 2020. Maximum count in first winter period was 12 on 12<sup>th</sup> February (D&KD). Maximum count in second winter period 14 on 17<sup>th</sup> November (D&KD).*

**RUDDY DUCK:** *North American introduction. Occasional visitor. Last record is a pair at Castle Loch on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2006 (RM).*

**RED KITE:** *Rare vagrant. Four records: single at Hightae Loch early 1990s (FSe). Single at Castle Loch in May 2020 (FSe). Single seen on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2021 (FSe). Single on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 (BT). Single bird seen over Castle Loch on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (BT). No records this year.*

**MARSH HARRIER:** *Scarce summer visitor. Last previous records a single on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1984 at Hightae Loch and a single at Castle Loch on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2010 (BH). Single bird quartering over the Vendace Bay reed beds on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2013 (BH).*

**HEN HARRIER:** *Scarce visitor. Last recorded 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1990.*

**NORTHERN GOSHAWK:** *Scarce local breeder. Last previous record one flew over Castle Loch from the west, circled and then returned west on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2008 (AW). Single bird present on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018 (CO). No records this year.*

**EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK:** *Resident, probably breeds in woodland on reserve. Seen regularly at Castle Loch by a variety of observers.*

**COMMON BUZZARD:** *Resident, has bred in woodland on reserve. Seen regularly at both lochs by a variety of observers. The area is traditionally used by two pairs, one based in woodland to the East and the other in Castle Wood. As is usual two pairs were seen soaring on a number of occasions by a number of observers.*

**ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD:** *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded at Hightae Loch February 2004 (FSe).*

**OSPREY:** *Occasional on passage, spring and autumn. A single bird was seen in the Lochside Plantation area on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2013 and there was a further sighting of a single bird in the same area on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2013 (all BH). One at Castle Loch on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015 (DF). One at Castle Loch on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016 (DF). Single in June 2020 (FSe). One seen week commencing 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 (DF) and a further singleton, possibly the same bird on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2021 (FSe). No records this year.*

**KESTREL:** *Resident breeder. Seen regularly hunting over sanctuary zone by a variety of observers.*

**MERLIN:** *Scarce visitor. Last recorded 8<sup>th</sup> April 2005 (but probably under-recorded).*

**HOBBY:** *Rare summer visitor. One record 17-18<sup>th</sup> July 1982.*

**PEREGRINE:** *Occasional winter visitor. Single flying over at Castle Loch on 24<sup>th</sup> February (BH). Last previous records were a single at Castle Loch on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2010 and a juvenile seen at Hightae Loch on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011 (both BH).*

**RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE:** *Sometimes reared and released in area. Single bird seen on entrance road to castle on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2012 (BH). No records since.*

**GREY PARTRIDGE:** *Declining farmland resident. Last recorded 1991.*

**COMMON PHEASANT:** *Resident breeder with small number seen regularly throughout the year.*

**WATER RAIL:** *Regular winter visitor but breeding has only rarely been confirmed. There were ten records in 2013, a considerable advance on 2012 in which there were only three. Numbers dropped in 2014 with only records of single birds, although they were recorded in all seasons. Single records in all seasons of 2015 but no signs of breeding. Single records in first three seasons of 2016 with 5 birds at various locations around Castle Loch on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 (PSh). Two records in 2022 on 14<sup>th</sup> February and 9<sup>th</sup> September. In 2023 two birds heard near Valison Burn on 18<sup>th</sup> July and a single at the same location on 25<sup>th</sup> July (Both PSh). No signs of breeding. No records this year.*

**SPOTTED CRAKE:** *Very rare breeder in UK. Only record 26<sup>th</sup> August 2001 at Hightae Loch (PSh).*

CORN CRAKE: *Former resident breeder? Last recorded 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1980 (PSh and Dugald Black).*

**MOORHEN:** *Resident breeder, in small numbers. Maximum count: 4 on 9<sup>th</sup> June (DD&KD). No confirmed breeding this year.*

**EURASIAN COOT:** *Winter visitor. Small numbers have bred but no records this year. Numbers improved again this year. A maximum count of 31 on 14<sup>th</sup> January in the first winter period and 20 on 17<sup>th</sup> November in the second winter period (Both DD&KD).*

AMERICAN COOT: *Rare American vagrant. One record 10-17<sup>th</sup> February 2004 (AW).*

**OYSTERCATCHER:** *Irregular visitor in spring and autumn, sometimes breeds in or near reserve. No records again this year of a pair of birds present in the reserve during the breeding season*

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER: *Scarce summer visitor to Scotland. One record 18<sup>th</sup> May 1996 (RM).*

RINGED PLOVER: *Occasional passage migrant. Last recorded March and July 2005.*

GOLDEN PLOVER: *Occasional passage migrant. None on reserve since 8<sup>th</sup> September 1995. Large flocks still regular at Greenhill, near River Annan, where 650 on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2006 (PSh).*

**NORTHERN LAPWING:** *Irregular visitor in spring and autumn, sometimes breeding on or near the reserve. Serious decline in numbers in recent years. No breeding noted since 2013.*

CURLEW SANDPIPER: *Rare passage migrant. One record 8<sup>th</sup> September 1999 at Hightae Loch (RM).*

DUNLIN: *Scarce passage migrant. Seen very occasionally, last previous records 10<sup>th</sup> May 1999, 29<sup>th</sup> April and 20<sup>th</sup> July 2003 with eleven birds seen on the latter date. Single bird at Henderland Island on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2013 (BH). No records since 2013.*

RUFF: *Scarce passage migrant. Very occasional, last previous record several autumn dates in 1995. Three present at Castle Loch on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2010 and one on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2010 (both BH).*

JACK SNIBE: *Scarce winter visitor. Last recorded 9<sup>th</sup> March 1986.*

COMMON SNIBE: *Common passage migrant and local breeder. Single bird seen on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2022. No records this year.*

WOODCOCK: *Occasional breeder and winter visitor. Last recorded roding 27<sup>th</sup> March 1990. Single records at both lochs in March 2004. Single at Castle Loch on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> December 2010 (BH). Two in Castle Woods on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013 (BH). Single in Castle Woods on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015 (AR). Single near Vendace Burn on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2016 (PSh). Single bird at Hightae Loch on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2019 (DD&KD). Two present at Castle Loch on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022 (BT). A record of 6 birds during WeBS count on 10<sup>th</sup> March (DD&KD).*

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT: *Scarce passage migrant. Last previous record 29<sup>th</sup> August to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005. Single in the Sanctuary Zone at Castle Loch on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2010 (BH).*

BAR-TAILED GODWIT: *Scarce passage migrant. Last recorded 21<sup>st</sup> October 1983.*

WHIMBREL: *Scarce passage migrant. Last recorded 9<sup>th</sup> May 2006 (RM).*

CURLEW: *Regular passage migrant. In the past there have sometimes been large numbers in spring but these are now much reduced. Breeds locally. No records this year.*

SPOTTED REDSHANK: *Uncommon passage migrant. Last recorded 26<sup>th</sup> August 2001 (PSh).*

COMMON REDSHANK: *Irregular visitor to the reserve, usually in spring. Last records singles on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2006 and 13<sup>th</sup> July 2006 (RM).*

COMMON GREENSHANK: *Uncommon passage migrant. Last recorded 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> September 2005.*

GREEN SANDPIPER: *Uncommon passage migrant. Two records of single birds on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1994 and 14<sup>th</sup> September 2013 (BH). No records since.*

WOOD SANDPIPER: *Rare passage migrant. Last record 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2005.*

COMMON SANDPIPER: *Uncommon passage migrant, local breeder. An adult with 3 juveniles was present in Sanctuary Zone on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2013 (BH) and this suggested breeding within the reserve. No records thereafter until a single bird seen on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2022 (BT). Single bird seen in 2023 flying past hide on 25<sup>th</sup> July (PSh). No records this year.*

ARCTIC SKUA: *Rare passage migrant. Last recorded 8<sup>th</sup> October 1995.*

GREAT SKUA: *Rare passage migrant. Last recorded 27<sup>th</sup> April 1999.*

LITTLE GULL: *Scarce passage migrant. Last previous record 20<sup>th</sup> March 2004. Single in gull roost on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014 (BH). No records since.*

**BLACK-HEADED GULL: *Common winter visitor; breeds locally. Maximum daytime count: 23 on 17<sup>th</sup> November (DD&KD). No winter roost count conducted this year.***

MEDITERRANEAN GULL: *Rare vagrant. Only previous records: One bird on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2003 (Birdguides). At least one bird present in Castle Loch roost between 24<sup>th</sup> January and 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013 with two birds confirmed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013 and three on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2013. Two birds in the roost during the second winter period on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> December 2013 (all BH). A single bird seen in the roost on each occasion it was checked in 2014 with two birds present on 19<sup>th</sup> February (BH). No records since.*

**COMMON GULL:** *Mainly a winter visitor. Recorded in small numbers at Castle Loch in both winter seasons. No roost count this year.*

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** *Most birds migrate south in winter. Usually at least one or two birds present throughout the year. No roost count this year.*

**HERRING GULL:** *Seen regularly in small numbers in day time. Breeds locally. No roost count this year.*

**GLAUCOUS GULL:** *Rare winter visitor. Last previous records 25<sup>th</sup> February 1974 and 11<sup>th</sup> January 1984 and first winter bird at Castle Loch 17 November 2008 (CB).*

**ICELAND GULL:** *Rare winter visitor. One record 25<sup>th</sup> February 1974.*

**GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL:** *Scarce local resident, seen occasionally. Last previous records three seen in roost on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2015 (AR). Two seen in roost count on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016 (AR). Single on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (DD&KD). A single bird was recorded on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 (BT). Last year produced four records. Three sightings of two birds, on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 23<sup>rd</sup> February and 4<sup>th</sup> March and a sighting of a single bird on 21<sup>st</sup> December (All BT). No records received this year.*

**KITTIWAKE:** *Rare visitor. Last previous record 10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> January 1984. Two birds passed through on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014 (BH).*

**COMMON TERN:** *Occasional on passage. Last recorded 19<sup>th</sup> August 2001, 26<sup>th</sup> August 2003 and 8-10 October 2006.*

**ARCTIC TERN:** *Occasional on passage. Last previous records singles on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2003 and 12<sup>th</sup> August 2011 (BH). Two at the Lochside Cottage area of Castle Loch on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012 (BH).*

**BLACK TERN:** *Once fairly frequent on spring and autumn passage, most often seen second week of May to first week of June, and late August to early September. Last records 7<sup>th</sup> September 1998, a single at north end of Castle Loch from 8<sup>th</sup> –10<sup>th</sup> October 2006 (SG, RM) one at Castle Loch 16<sup>th</sup> May 2009 (BH) and other observers. A single bird was seen near the Lockerbie road on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2010 (BH).*

**SANDWICH TERN:** *Rare visitor. One record only 6<sup>th</sup> September 1973.*

**COMMON GUILLEMOT:** *Rare vagrant. Last recorded 26<sup>th</sup> December 1987 (2 birds).*

**LITTLE AUK:** *Rare vagrant. Last recorded mid to late 1980s.*

**ROCK DOVE/FERAL PIGEON:** *Common local resident in and around farms and towns. Occasional visitor to reserve.*

**STOCK DOVE:** *Resident breeder. Seen throughout the year by a number of observers.*

**WOOD PIGEON:** *Present throughout the year in the woods at both lochs with a maximum count of 48 recorded 14<sup>th</sup> January at Castle Loch (BT).*

**COLLARED DOVE:** *Common local resident in and around farms and towns. Noted throughout the year by a number of observers. No breeding recorded.*

**COMMON CUCKOO:** *Scarce summer visitor. Last records 10<sup>th</sup> May 2002 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020.*

**BARN OWL:** *Scarce visitor, former breeder until 2019 when breeding was confirmed with two young in nestbox. Nesting reported in 2022 but no success confirmed (DF). Single record from the 2023 breeding season but no breeding confirmed (AR). Recorded during breeding season this year but no successful breeding confirmed.*

**TAWNY OWL:** *Resident regular breeder.*

**LONG-EARED OWL:** *Irregular visitor. Last recorded at Hightae Loch 28<sup>th</sup> October 1978 (PSh).*

**SHORT-EARED OWL:** *Rare visitor. Last recorded 28<sup>th</sup> November 1985.*

**COMMON SWIFT:** *Common summer visitor, breeds in Lochmaben. Regularly recorded hawking above the lochs in June, July and August.*

**COMMON KINGFISHER:** *Regular visitor, breeds locally. Often seen on the Valison Burn. .*

**EUROPEAN GREEN WOODPECKER:** *Scarce resident locally. Last recorded 31<sup>st</sup> May 1984.*

**GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER:** *Resident regular breeder. Records from every month of the year although no breeding could be confirmed again this year.*

**EURASIAN SKYLARK:** *Irregular visitor. Last record 3 on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011 (AR).*

**SAND MARTIN:** *Regular visitor in spring and summer: breeds in banks of River Annan and at Applegarthtown Wildlife Sanctuary. Early record of 35 birds on 10<sup>th</sup> April (PM). Recorded regularly between then and early September with a maximum of 50 birds on 18<sup>th</sup> August (D&KD).*

**BARN SWALLOW:** *Summer visitor, breeds locally. No first records or maximum counts available this year.*

**HOUSE MARTIN:** *Summer visitor, breeds locally.*

**TREE PIPIT:** *Scarce summer visitor. No records again this year*

**MEADOW PIPIT:** *Irregular visitor. No recent breeding records for the reserve. Last records 2003 and 2021. No records this year.*

**YELLOW WAGTAIL:** *Rare summer visitor. Last recorded 25<sup>th</sup> September 1981.*

**GREY WAGTAIL:** *Common local resident but irregular visitor to the reserve. Records of a single bird on grassland adjacent to A709 on 5<sup>th</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 (bothBT). No records this year.*

**PIED WAGTAIL:** *Irregular visitor and breeder. Confirmed breeding for the thirteenth consecutive year. Two adults with four young seen at Bowling Club Car Park/Victoria Park area on several occasions in June by a number of observers.*

**WHITE WAGTAIL:** *Last recorded 28<sup>th</sup> April 1995.*

**BOHEMIAN WAXWING:** *Irregular, rare winter visitor. Last previous record 15 by Lochmaben Kirk on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008.*

**WREN:** *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

**DUNNOCK:** *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

**ROBIN:** *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

**COMMON REDSTART:** *Scarce summer visitor and occasional breeder on the reserve. A pair present in Castle Woods on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2013 (BH). No records since.*

**WHINCHAT:** *Scarce summer visitor. Last recorded 10<sup>th</sup> May 1982.*

**COMMON STONECHAT:** *Scarce local resident. First record for the reserve a single on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (FSe). Recorded in both April and October in 2020 (FSe). No records this year.*

**NORTHERN WHEATEAR:** *Occasional passage migrant. Last recorded 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1991.*

**BLACKBIRD:** *Resident throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

**FIELDFARE:** *Regular autumn and winter visitor.*

**SONG THRUSH:** *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

**REDWING:** *Regular autumn and winter visitor.*

**MISTLE THRUSH:** *Recorded in most years, breeds locally. No 2001 or 2002 records. A few records in 2003, 2004 and 2005. No reports for 2006, 2007 or 2008. Maximum count of 3 in 2010. Single singing in Castle Wood 2011. Single seen in Castle Wood in 2012. Three seen in boardwalk area on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2013 (BH). Pair present in Castle Wood in May/June 2014 but no proof of breeding found. Seen in Castle*

*Wood on a number of occasions during, and outhwith the 2015 breeding season but no proof of breeding found. Present in Castle Wood in 2016 but no proof of breeding found. Single bird seen on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2019 (FSe). Recorded in January, February and June in 2020 (all FSe). Single record on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (FSe). Maximum 2 on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Seven records received in 2023, all within the winter periods, with a maximum of 4 birds on 1<sup>st</sup> January (BT). Five records received for this year, all within the winter periods and all of single birds..*

*GRASSHOPPER WARBLER: Occasional summer visitor and irregular breeder. Last records on two spring dates in 1997 and a single on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016 (DF). Two singleton records on 29<sup>th</sup> May and 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2021 (both FSe). No records this year.*

***SEDGE WARBLER: Summer visitor and regular breeder at both lochs. No breeding confirmed again this year.***

***REED WARBLER: Summer visitor and recent breeder. No breeding confirmed again this year.***

*COMMON WHITETHROAT: Scarce summer visitor. Last recorded 12<sup>th</sup> August 1996 and 19<sup>th</sup> May 2013 (BH). Singletons on 30<sup>th</sup> April and 29<sup>th</sup> May 2021 (both FSe). No records this year.*

***GARDEN WARBLER: Summer visitor and breeder. No breeding confirmed this year.***

***BLACKCAP: Summer visitor and breeder. No breeding confirmed this year.***

*WOOD WARBLER: Scarce summer visitor. Occasional in spring. Last recorded 25<sup>th</sup> July and 5<sup>th</sup> August 2003.*

***CHIFFCHAFF: Regular spring and autumn migrant, occasional breeder. No confirmed breeding this year.***

***WILLOW WARBLER: Summer visitor and regular breeder.***

*YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER: Scarce autumn visitor to Western Europe. A single bird, probably the same individual, was seen on three occasions in October 2013. These are the only records from the reserve.*

***GOLDCREST: Present throughout the year and confirmed breeder at Castle Loch.***

*SPOTTED FLYCATCHER: Irregular summer visitor and occasional breeder. Last previous records: single at Castle Loch 25<sup>th</sup> August 2006 (RM), three at Castle Loch on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2009 (MG ) and single at Hightae Loch on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2009 (JM ). Two records from 9<sup>th</sup> June 2019 (both FSe). No records this year.*

*PIED FLYCATCHER: Scarce summer visitor. Last recorded 9<sup>th</sup> August 1993.*

***LONG-TAILED TIT: Resident and breeds at Castle Loch.***

**WILLOW TIT:** *Resident and regular breeder. The Willow Tit (Poecile montana) is a scarce resident of Dumfries & Galloway, very close to the northern boundary of its range. Between 2011 and 2016 an annual survey was carried out at Castle Loch to monitor success and failure of breeding. Published studies have suggested that Willow Tit nest site preferences are for standing dead wood of between 2-4m in height, within an area of developed understorey and high soil water content. Because of this, locating suitable points within the narrow bands of woodland around Castle Loch is not a particularly difficult task.*

*The methodology was a simplified form of that used by Lewis et al 2009<sup>i</sup>. The woodland strips to the west, south and east of the loch were walked in the early morning on several days of suitable weather during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April. A recorded call was used at regular points 200m apart. The call was sounded for two minutes or until a bird responded, whichever was the sooner. When a bird responded, its location (ten figure grid reference) and the direction from which it came, were carefully recorded. All spontaneous calls and sightings were also recorded. Once territories were established they were monitored regularly during the breeding season to establish the success or failure of the breeding attempt. Five factors were monitored where possible although time constraints and other factors meant that it was unusual to be able to record all five for a particular territory.*

- 1) *Singing male*
- 2) *Female present*
- 3) *Nest building*
- 4) *Adults with food or faecal sacs.*
- 5) *Fledged young*

*The maximum number of territories held at the start of the 2011 season was eight. The table below shows the results for the years 2011 to 2016. Sadly the downward trend of numbers of fledged young continued in 2016. It was not possible to conduct a full nesting survey in 2017 and 2018. In 2019 only previously recorded territories were monitored as they comprised all the suitable habitat.*

*The 2020 lockdown due to the pandemic made a full nesting survey impossible.*

*In 2021 a limited survey was conducted by Heather Murray. A single bird was spotted during the survey on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May at NY 08453 81824. Two birds were located during the survey conducted on 30<sup>th</sup> of May one at NY 09042 81087 and a second at NY 09039 81105. Two other casual records were received both out with the breeding season.*

*The Willow Tit is the UK's most rapidly declining resident bird species and is a Conservation Priority Species. The south of Scotland is its most northerly breeding area and Castle Loch has been a crucial site. Because the species is sedentary once lost from a site it is extremely unlikely to be able to return. Although the data is limited for the years 2020 and 2021 there has been a marked decline at Castle Loch since 2011 which is a ground for serious concern that it may soon be lost altogether.*

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Territories</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>H</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>
	<i>2012</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	
	<i>2013</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	
	<i>2014</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	
	<i>2015</i>		<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	
	<i>2016</i>		<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>
	<i>2019</i>		<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>		
	<i>2022</i>		<i>X</i>					<i>X</i>	
	<i>2023</i>		<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>			<i>X</i>	
	<i>2024</i>		<i>X</i>					<i>X</i>	
	<i>2011</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>			<i>X</i>	
	<i>2012</i>		<i>X</i>						
	<i>2013</i>								

2	2014		X		X		X	X	
	2015		X		X			X	
	2016		X		X			X	
	2019		X		X			X	
	2022							X	
	2023				X			X	
	2024		X					X	
3	2011	X			X	X		X	
	2012		X						
	2013								
	2014		X		X	X		X	
	2015		X		X	X		X	
	2016		X		X			X	
	2019		X					X	
	2022								
	2023							X	
	2024							X	
4	2011		X			X			
	2012		X						
	2013							X	
	2014		X					X	
	2015							X	
	2016		X						
	2019		X						
	2022							X	
	2023							X	
	2024							X	
5	2011	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	2012	X		X		X	X	X	
	2013		X	X				X	
	2014		X	X	X			X	
	2015		X		X			X	
	2016		X					X	
	2019		X					X	
	2022							X	
	2023							X	
	2024							X	

Lewis, Alex J. G., Amar, Arjun, Daniells, Laura, Charman, Elisabeth C., Grice, Phil and Smith, Ken (2009) 'Factors influencing patch occupancy and within-patch habitat use in an apparently stable population of Willow Tits *Poecile montanus kleinschmidti* in Britain', *Bird Study*, 56:3,326 — 337

**COAL TIT:** *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

**BLUE TIT:** *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

**GREAT TIT:** *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

**EURASIAN NUTHATCH:** *Increasingly numerous resident in Dumfries and Galloway, having spread westwards from Cumbria and the Scottish Borders during the 1990s. First reserve record near the castle on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2003 (PSed). Single birds seen at a number of locations within woodland around both lochs since 2015. Several sightings of pairs again this year but still no confirmed breeding.*

**COMMON TREECREEPER:** *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

**JAY:** *Resident, and confirmed as breeder since 2017.*

**MAGPIE:** *Rare vagrant. Last previous records 24<sup>th</sup> March 1978 and 5 recorded on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 (BT). No records this year.*

**JACKDAW:** *Resident breeder, usually supplemented by larger numbers coming to winter roost. No roost counts submitted again this year.*

**ROOK:** *Sporadic resident breeder usually supplemented by larger numbers coming to winter roost. No roost counts submitted again this year.*

**CARRION CROW:** *Resident breeder usually supplemented by larger numbers coming to winter roost. No roost counts submitted again this year*

**HOODED CROW:** *Last recorded 1981.*

**COMMON RAVEN:** *Occasional visitor. Last previous record two birds overflying 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2008 and one on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2011. Two birds overflying on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2013 (BH). Two over Vendace Bay on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014 (BH) and a single bird overflying on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014 (AR). Single on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2019 (FSe). Single bird seen on 30<sup>th</sup> April and 28<sup>th</sup> August 2021 (both FSe). Two records in 2023 both of single birds. One on 19<sup>th</sup> February (BT) and one on 4<sup>th</sup> April (R&BM). Single record of overflying bird this year.*

**COMMON STARLING:** *Winter visitor and local breeder. No regular roost counts this year but occasional visits suggest that the decline in the roost in the reeds around Vendace Bay continues.*

**ROSE-COLOURED STARLING:** *Rare Eurasian vagrant. One record late October 2003.*

**HOUSE SPARROW:** *Common resident in Lochmaben and at surrounding farms. Irregularly recorded on reserve.*

**EURASIAN TREE SPARROW:** *Scarce and declining resident on local farmland. First record since 1984 was 4 on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Single record week commencing 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 (DF). No records again this year.*

**COMMON CHAFFINCH:** *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites*

**BRAMBLING:** *Irregular winter visitor. No records again this year.*

**EUROPEAN GREENFINCH:** *Present throughout the year, probably breeds. Numbers continue to decline this year.*

**EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH:** *Occasional visitor. Probably breeds in some years.*

**EURASIAN SISKIN:** *Winter visitor and passage migrant.*

**EUROPEAN LINNET:** *Scarce resident locally. Last recorded 30<sup>th</sup> August and 29<sup>th</sup> December 2003.*

**LESSER REDPOLL:** *Resident in wider vicinity, irregular on the reserve. No records this year.*

**COMMON CROSSBILL:** *Irregular visitor. Probable breeder in conifer forests in vicinity. Last recorded 27<sup>th</sup> May 2003.*

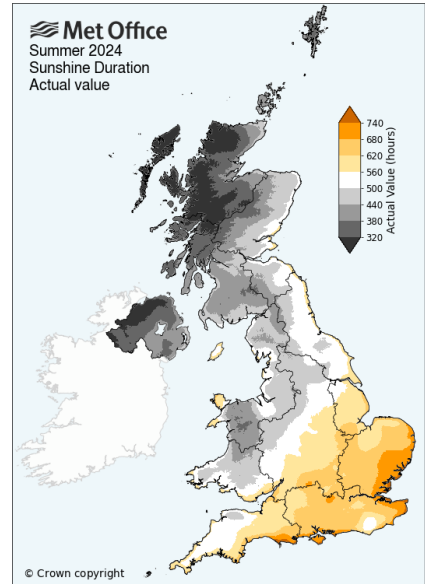
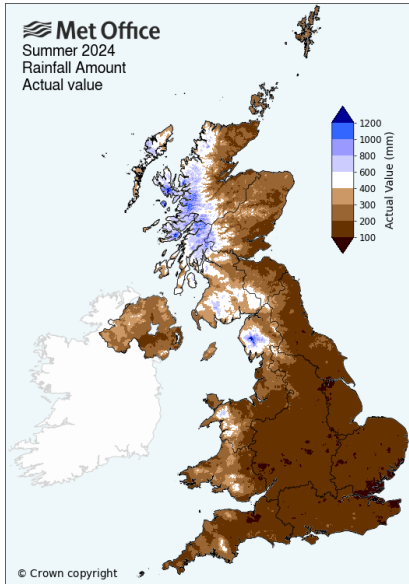
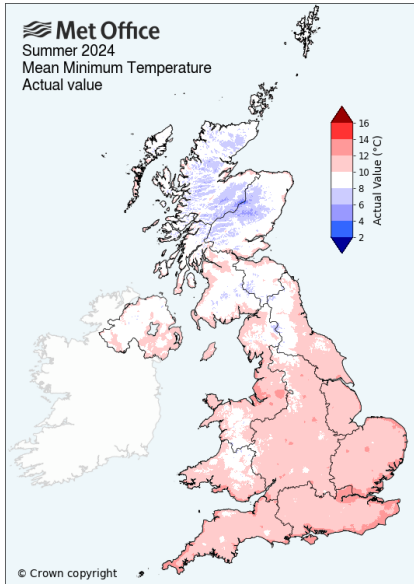
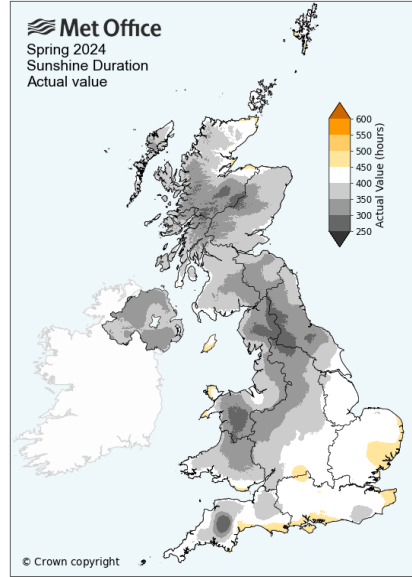
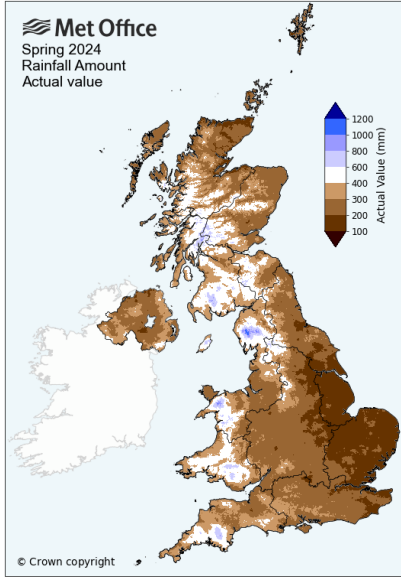
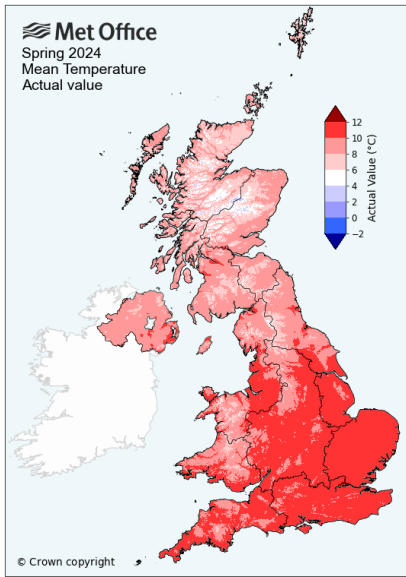
**EURASIAN BULLFINCH:** *Irregular. May breed occasionally.*

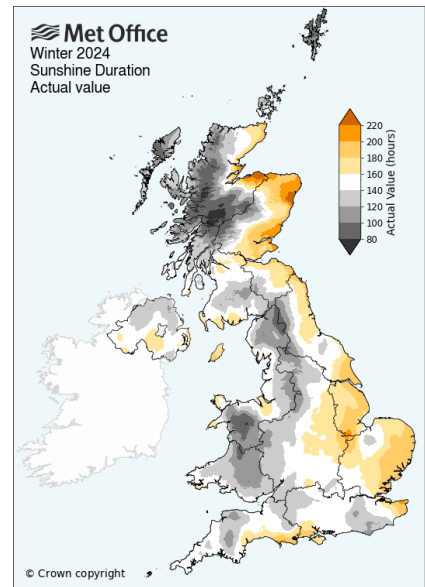
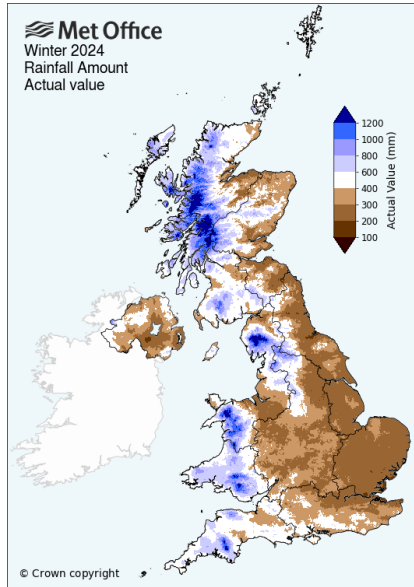
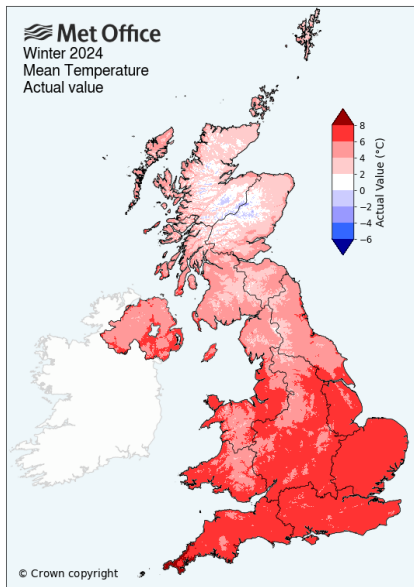
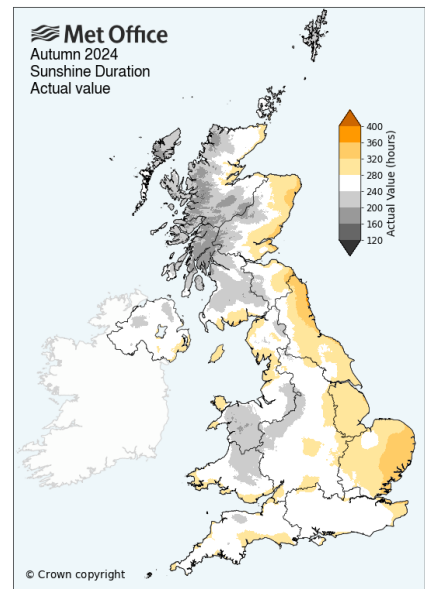
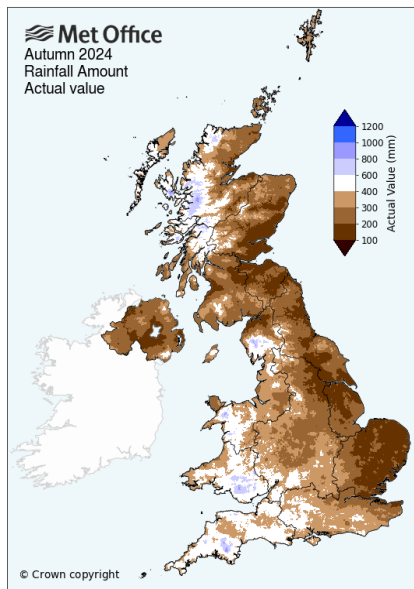
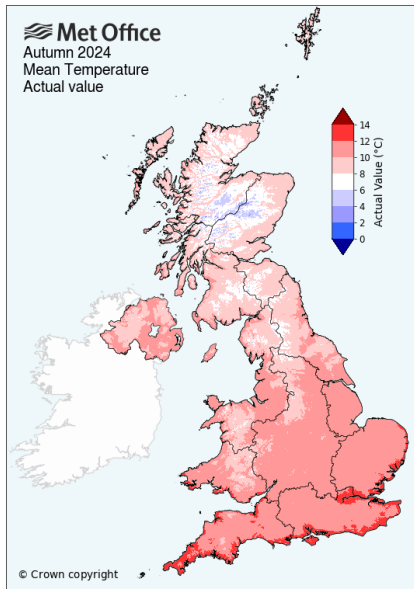
**YELLOWHAMMER:** *Used to be a regular resident breeder. Last record of a single bird on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2019 (FSe).*

**COMMON REED BUNTING:** *Regular resident breeder. No breeding confirmed again this year.*

**CORN BUNTING:** *Rare visitor (and now extremely rare resident in D&G). Recorded 26<sup>th</sup> February and 6<sup>th</sup> May 1978 at Castle Loch and at Hightae Loch on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1980 (all records PSh).*

# Climate Data for 2024





Climate data are provided by the Met Office and used under licence.

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/uk-actual-and-anomaly-maps>