



Birds in Moray & Nairn

2013

Birds in Moray & Nairn in 2013

MORAY & NAIRN BIRD REPORT
No.28 – 2013

Published at www.birdsinmorayandnairn.org in February 2015

CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial	3
How to submit records	4
Assessment of rarity records	4
Observers contributing to Birds in Moray & Nairn 2013	6
Species accounts	7
Red-backed Shrikes breeding in Moray in 2013	72
<i>Martin Cook</i>	
Mongolian (Lesser Sand) Plover at Lossiemouth - new to Moray & Nairn	
<i>Margaret Sharpe</i>	74
White-rumped Sandpiper in Findhorn Bay - second record for Moray & Nairn	
<i>Richard Somers Cocks</i>	76
Ringling Report 2013	
<i>Bob Proctor</i>	78
Grid references of localities mentioned in the species accounts	86

Edited by Martin Cook (Scottish Ornithologists' Club Recorder for Moray & Nairn).

Cover photograph: White-rumped Sandpiper at Findhorn, 11 June 2013 (Tony Backx).

Species account authors:

Tony Backx	Brambling to Corn Bunting
Mike Collins	Ring Ouzel to Wheatear
Martin Cook	Quail to Crane, Pomarine Skua to Guillemot, Feral Pigeon to Red-backed Shrike, Goldcrest to Skylark, Long-tailed Tit, Waxwing to Dipper, Dunnock to Tree Sparrow
Duncan Gibson	Oystercatcher to Snipe
Bob Johnson	Wood Warbler to Sedge Warbler
Melvin Morrison	Sand Martin to House Martin, Grey Wagtail to Rock Pipit
Bob Proctor	Mute Swan to Goosander
Richard Somers Cocks	Little Tern to Great Black-backed Gull
Alastair Young	Magpie to Raven

EDITORIAL

Twenty-eight annual editions of Moray & Nairn's bird report have now appeared since the first in 1985. Things have come a long way since that first report - a 25 page typed A4 document, copied on a duplicating machine. The printed report gradually evolved - entitled *Moray & Nairn Bird Report* until 1998 and *Birds in Moray & Nairn* thereafter. Since 2010, the report has been available only online at www.birdsinmorayandnairn.org. For those who wish a hard copy, this can be printed from the website. Among many benefits of the online approach is that the report is searchable, and can be amended if necessary.

In 1985, a total of 25 observers contributed only a few hundred records between them. In 2013, if the input from BirdTrack is included, 207 observers contributed 27,767 records. Clearly this great volume of material is very much to be welcomed in building an increasingly thorough knowledge of the bird life of Moray & Nairn. It does however impose an ever-increasing workload on those involved with compiling the information, writing the species accounts and editing the report. The editor is very grateful to those (named above) who have assisted with the production of species accounts for this report. Any further forms of assistance would be greatly appreciated - please get in touch with the editor if you feel able to devote some hours to the cause.

In addition to the species account authors, the editor would like to thank all those who have submitted their observations, and the photographers who have generously permitted the use of their images.

HOW TO SUBMIT RECORDS

There are two main ways in which you can submit your records:

1. To Birdtrack

The Scottish Ornithologists' Club is now a BirdTrack partner with the BTO, RSPB and BirdWatch Ireland.

BirdTrack is an exciting new web-based bird recording project that looks at migration movements and distributions of birds throughout Britain and Ireland. It provides facilities for observers to store and manage

their own personal records as well as using these for the production of local bird reports, and to support species conservation at local, regional, national and even international scales.

The principle behind BirdTrack is that if you have been out birdwatching anywhere in Britain and Ireland, or merely watching birds in your garden, records of the birds you have seen (or indeed have not seen) can be useful data. Thus the scheme is year-round, and ongoing, and anyone with an interest in birds can contribute. Important results produced by BirdTrack include mapping migration timings and monitoring scarce birds. We know very little about the timing of arrival and departure of winter visitors and this is just one area in which BirdTrack will provide useful information. There are also many scarce birds where we would like to know much more about their populations. The SOC hopes that most birdwatchers in Scotland will soon adopt BirdTrack as their main bird recording and information sharing tool.

To find out more, or to register and get started, visit the BirdTrack website at www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdtrack

2. To the Moray and Nairn Recorder

Records may be submitted periodically during the year or in one batch as soon as possible after the end of the year, and by the end of January at the latest. Although any format is acceptable, the Recorder would be very grateful to receive as many submissions as possible on Excel – a spreadsheet with appropriate headings may be obtained from the Recorder (see below). Minimum information required for each record should include species name, number, date and location (if possible with a 6-figure map reference, although a 4-figure map reference is often adequate).

More information on how, and where, to submit your records can be found in the ‘Submitting records’ section of the Birds in Moray and Nairn website at www.birdsinmorayandnairn.org/bird-recording/submitting-records/.

ASSESSMENT OF RARITY RECORDS

In order that an entirely accurate archive of records of rare and scarce species is maintained it is clearly important to apply consistent standards to the acceptance of such records. This is ensured through a system of assessment of written descriptions of the circumstances of the occurrence and of the bird itself. Those who make use of our reports in the future must have confidence that all published records have been scrutinised and considered acceptable by the birding community of today.

A three-tier system of record assessment exists:

British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) assesses records of extreme rarities, in a British context. The full committee contains ten voting members of which at least nine must vote in favour of a record for it to be accepted.

A list of species currently considered by BBRC can be found at www.bbrc.org.uk/currentrarespecies.htm

Scottish Birds Records Committee (SBRC) assesses records of birds rare in a Scottish context but not sufficiently rare to be assessed by BBRC. The committee consists of seven voting members of which at least six must vote in favour.

A list of species currently considered by SBRC can be found at www.the-soc.org.uk/sbrc-list.htm

Moray & Nairn Rarities Committee (MNRC) assesses slightly less rare Scottish species and all other local rarities. The committee consists of five voting members of which at least four must vote in favour for a record to be accepted. Current membership of MNRC is Martin Cook, Roy Dennis, Duncan Gibson, Bob Proctor and Dave Pullan.

The following species are currently on the MNRC list:

Bewick's Swan	Bean Goose	American Wigeon
Green-winged Teal	Garganey (not ad.M)	Ring-necked Duck
Ruddy Duck (not ad.M)	Surf Scoter (not ad.M)	Balearic Shearwater
Leach's Petrel	Red-necked Grebe	Black-necked Grebe
White Stork	Spoonbill	Bittern
Little Egret	Great White Egret	Honey-buzzard
Rough-legged Buzzard	Hobby	Spotted Crake
Corncrake	Crane	Avocet
Little Ringed Plover	American Golden Plover	Temminck's Stint
Pectoral Sandpiper	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Red-necked Phalarope
Grey Phalarope	Long-tailed Skua	Sabine's Gull
Mediterranean Gull	Ring-billed Gull	Black Tern
Roseate Tern	Turtle Dove	Nightjar
Hoopoe	Wryneck	Green Woodpecker
Red-backed Shrike	Great Grey Shrike	Golden Oriole
Chough	Bearded Tit	Shore Lark
Pallas's Warbler	Yellow-browed Warbler	Reed Warbler
Icterine Warbler	Lesser Whitethroat	Firecrest
Nuthatch	Rose-coloured Starling	Bluethroat
Black Redstart	Yellow Wagtail	Richard's Pipit
Water Pipit	Common Rosefinch	Hawfinch
Lapland Bunting		

Please note the addition of Red-necked Grebe and Green Woodpecker to this list in 2011 and of Rough-legged Buzzard, Great White Egret and Water Pipit in 2012.

Other species recorded for the first time in Moray & Nairn, and not on BBRC or SBRC lists, are also assessed by MNRC.

If you find a rare species in Moray & Nairn, please contact the recorder (Martin Cook) who will provide forms and forward these to the relevant committee. Alternatively, further information and forms can be found and downloaded from the website at www.birdsinmorayandnairn.org/bird-recording/moray-nairn-rarities-committee/

Records of species on the lists of BBRC, SBRC or MNRC will only appear in *Birds in Moray & Nairn* following acceptance of the record by the relevant committee. It must be stressed, however, that the failure of a record to be accepted by a committee does not imply disbelief of the observer, or that the observer is mistaken in the identification; simply that not quite enough evidence has been assimilated by the observer in the time or conditions available.

OBSERVERS CONTRIBUTING TO *BIRDS IN MORAY & NAIRN 2013*

T. Adkins, G. Aitken (GAa), S. Andrews (SA), F. Antley (FA), D. Avis (DA), A. Backx (ABa), C. Baggott, I. Bailey, K. Barnes, I. Bell, K. Bennett, G. Biggs (GBig), J. Bingley, B. Blackhall, W.R.P.B. Bourne, A. Bowie, R. Brand, I. Brown, S. Brown, M. Bruce, A. Burgess, J. Butcher (JBU), M. Byatt, J. Byrne, M. Cameron (MCa), P. Carter, B. Catlin, S. Chalmers (ScC), B. Chappell, R. Christopher, H. Clark (HC), B. Clarke (BCl), J. Clarke (JCl), K. Clarke (KCl), M. Coath (MCoa), M. Collins (MColl), G. Connell, M.J.H. Cook (MJHC), S. Cooper (SuC), C. Corfield, P. Cosgrove (PC), B. Cosnette (BCo), B. Coursey, J.K. Craib (JKC), R. Cripps, G. Cross, M. Crutch (MCR), A. Cunningham, M. Darling (MDa), A. Davidson (AD), J. Davies, R.H. Dennis (RHD), D.G. Devonport (DGD), T. Donaldson, D. Dugan, J. Duncan, K. Duncan (KD), A. Edward (AE), C.S. Elder (CSE), M. Esson, B. Etheridge, E. Evans, H.&D. Failey, H. Farquhar (HF), C. Farrell, N. Fettes, I. Francis (IFr), A. Fraser (AFr), M. Fraser (MFr), C.A. Gervaise (CAG), D.A. Gibson (DAG), A. Gordon (AlaG), J. Gordon, P. Gordon (PG), P. Gordon Smith (PGS), L. Graham, M.N. Grant (MNG), I. Green, K.L. Guthrie (KLG), A. Hall, A. Harrison, P. Harvey, E. Harwood (EH), G. Helweg, D. Heptinstall, R.F. Hewitt (RFH), J. Hogg, P. Hyvonen (PH), R. Ingleston, H. Insley, D. Jarett, R. Johnson (RJ), C. Jones, M. Keighley (MKe), S. Kerr, A.G. Knox (AGK), J.D. Law (JDL), A.J. Lawrence (AJL), C. Leslie, N. Littlewood (NLi), B. Loveland, N. Lynch, W. MacAlpine, A. MacAskill (AMca), D. MacAskill (DMca), J. MacKinnon, A. Maclean-Chang, D. Main (DMai), J. Mair, V. Mayall, P. Mayhew, K. McArdle, S. McArdle (SMc), J.&H. McDonald, F. McHugh (FMc), L. McInnes, R. McIntyre, G. McMullins (GMcM), A. McPherson, A. Millar, C. Miller, S.P. Milligan (SPM), C. Mitchell (CMit), E. Mitchell (EMit), P. Moore, L. Morrison, W.M. Morrison (WMM), A. Murray (AMu), R. Murray (RMu), G. Nairne, S.D. Noble, P. Osborn, B. Osborne, K. Patterson, S. Patterson, D. Pierce (DPi), T. Poole (TP), J. Pott, J. Poyner (JPoy), R. Prentice (RPr), G. Prest (GP), J. Preston, D. Pritchard, R. Proctor (RP), D.M. Pullan (DMP), D. Puplett, J.C. Quilter, M. Ranner (MRa), S. Reed (SRee), D.J. Rennison, A.&F. Ritchie (AR, A&FR), K. Rome (KR), C. Round (CRo), L. Russell, L. Schofield (LSc), E. Seal, B. Seim, H. Shannon (HS), M. Sharpe (MSh), D. & C. Shaw, C. Shepherd (CSh), A. Shields, D. Simpson, J. Simpson (JSi), K. Simpson, L. Simpson (LSi), D. Slater, G. Smith, R. Smith (RS), R. Somers Cocks (RSC), M. Souter (MSo), Mr Spackman, P. Stronach, A. Sturgeon, R. Summers, E. Sutherland, N. Sutherland (NS), I.S. Suttie (ISS), P. Sutton, P. Swainson (PSw), W.G. Taylor, C. Taylor, S. Taylor, B. Thompson, R. Tozer (RTo), C. Trollope, A.E. Turner (AET), C. Voice, S. Wanless (SWa), J. Watson, Y. Watson, E. Weston (EWe), D. Wheeler, D. Whitaker, M. Whitaker, M. Whitton (MWh), I. Wilde, D. Wilkinson, A. Williams (AW), C.S. Williamson (CSW), G. Wilson (GWi), J. Wilson, R. Wilson (RW), K. Woods, B. Woolhouse, V. Wotton, K. Yates, A. Young (AY).

Apologies to anyone accidentally omitted.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

The following terms are used at the start of each species account to denote relative abundance:

Breeding species:

Occasional	Has bred but none in most years
Rare	1-10 pairs in most years
Scarce	11-50 pairs
Fairly common	51-200 pairs
Common	201-500 pairs
Very common	more than 500 pairs

Non-breeding species:

Rare	1-20 records in total
Very scarce	Not rare but less than 10 in most years
Scarce	10-50 in most years
Fairly common	51-200 in most years
Common	201-500 annually
Very common	more than 500 annually

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Scarce resident breeder and short-distance migrant. Common in winter.

Breeding: A total of 19 apparently occupied territories was recorded in 2013, with 13 pairs producing 87 young; of these, 73 appear to have fledged. The mean total of fledged young in 2013 is slightly higher than the mean of 4.4 fledged young for the last 10 years. Territorial disputes noted at Cooper Park pond (Elgin) and Loch Oire, the latter involving six adults - this may suggest that breeding sites are at a premium.

Mean number of young probably fledging from those pairs known to have produced young:

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Pairs	11	13	18	19	10	14	17	17	13	19	13
Young fledged	52	67	65	110	51	59	57	84	53	53	73
Mean	4.7	5.2	3.6	5.8	5.1	4.2	3.3	4.9	4.1	2.8	5.6

Maximum monthly counts of local flocks (excluding breeding birds in April-August) were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Loch Flemington	15	15	nc			Breeders			nc	67	51	79
Findhorn Bay	7	6	15	25	45	53	28	2	35	27	14	7
Lossie estuary	nc	1	2	2	2	nc	2	nc	2	nc	nc	2
Loch Spynie	115	59	80			Breeders			11	20	68	65
Cloddach	38	18	18			Breeders			14	nc	49	nc
Loch Oire	9	10	11			Breeders			4	4	3	3
Loch na Bo	nc	3	4			Breeders			6	4	nc	1
Spey estuary	2	2	1	3	13	17	20	6	12	10	2	2

nc = no count received

Other sites with counts of ten or more included ten feeding in a field at Pitairlie 14 Apr.

Coastal records (max. counts): 5 between Delnies-Nairn 13 Jan, 3 on the sea off Tugnet 4 Aug and 3 on the sea off Findhorn 1 Sep.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus**Common migrant and winter visitor.*

Winter-spring: In Nairn, two sites were used this year (three less than 2012): Loch Flemington (37 on 13 Jan) and Delnies (8 on 28 Feb). In Moray, birds were recorded at 14 sites (five more than 2012), largest counts from each site were: 158 Lhanbryde 1 Jan, 70 Pinefield 3 Jan, 6 Clochan 8 & 29 Jan, 46 Drainie 10 Jan, c.150 Barmuckity 12 Jan, 129 Loch na Bo 15 Jan, 16 Findhorn Bay 19 Jan, 47 Loch Spynie 27 Jan, 1 Kingston 29 Jan, 57 Binns (Garmouth) 11 Feb, 31 Muir of Lochs 2 Mar, 50 Muirton 3 Mar, 72 Pitairlie 18 Mar and 75 Calcots 20 Mar.

Spring: The largest flock during this period was 7 Pitairlie 19, 22 & 28 Apr. A small group was present in the Loch Spynie/Pitairlie area from 15-29 Apr. In late spring a single was present on Findhorn Bay 29 May. Unusual on Lossie estuary were 3 on 28 Apr.

Summer: An injured individual was seen throughout the summer and into the autumn on the Spey estuary from 11 Jun to at least 25 Oct. It was also seen with a Polish-ringed individual on 13 & 15 Sep, though it is unknown if the Polish-ringed individual summered locally between June-September. Two were on Loch Oire 29 Jun (one of which was the Polish-ringed individual).

Autumn: The first record for the autumn period was an individual at the Cloddach quarry 29 Sep. The next arrival date was 2 Oct when two were seen in Findhorn Bay. The first flock, consisting of seven birds, was seen at Loch Spynie 8 Oct. These were followed by other groups throughout October: 6 Aberlour 10th, c.60 Duffus Castle 10th, 2 Findhorn Bay 11th, 15 Spey estuary 11th (26 on 24th, 16 on 28th), 2 Lossie estuary 12th, 31 Gilston 12th (35 on 19th), 6 Findhorn Bay 13th (4 on 16th), 28 Loch Spynie 13th (15 on 14th, 29 on 17th, 24 on 30th), 9 Loch na Bo 16th, 12 Loch Flemington 20th, 9 Waterford (Forres) 24th, 5 Burghead 26th, 25 Orbliston 26th, 130 Salterhill 26th (122 on 27th), 23 Loch Flemington 27th, 4 Burghead Bay (on sea) 28th and 5 Broadley (Clochan) 29th. In November, flocks with ten or more individuals were seen at 11 sites; an estimated 100 Loch Spynie 1st was the largest flock recorded while 78 Loch Flemington 18th was the largest count from Nairn.

Winter (December): In Nairn, birds were recorded at two sites: Loch Flemington 94 on 1st (dropping to 85 on 15th) and 6 Moyness 14th (with only two there the next day). In Moray, seen at eight sites in December: 25 Bellie cemetery 1st, 17 Clochan 5th, 11 Burnside of Enzie 11th, 3 Loch Spynie 13th, 2 Spey estuary 15th, 1 on the sea Portgordon 15th, 36 Urquhart 21st and 1 Corbiewell 25th. A single on The Lein (Kingston) 22 Dec may have involved the injured bird from the Spey estuary.

Distinct broods during the autumn and winter periods produced a mean brood size of 2.8 young.

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis**Rare winter visitor.*

After the unprecented influx in the winter of 2011-2012, the species has regained its rarity status locally. A single individual was seen around the Netherton Farm area on the southern edge of Findhorn Bay 1-4 & 8 Jan (GMcM, RTo, RHD) and another was in this area on 4 Oct (GMcM).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus**Very common migrant and winter visitor.*

Winter (January-mid March): Six flocks reported from Nairn with two large flocks, both estimated to involve 2000 individuals, on 30 Jan & 16 Mar. Typically in Moray, well scattered reports throughout the coastal area but only a small number of sites containing flocks over 1000 individuals. The largest counts included 10360 flying east over Clochan in one hour in the early morning of 11 Jan (MJHC). Similar numbers were recorded commuting daily between Findhorn Bay (roost site) and fields around Clochan, Broadley, Muir of Holmie and Hill of Menduff (MJHC, RFH). Otherwise, 7500 Miltonduff 19 Jan, c.4500 Feddan (Brodie) 23 Jan, 5500 Woodside (Newton) 27 Jan, 2000 Findhorn Bay 10 Feb, c.8000 Cloddach quarry 16 Feb and 2500 Coltfoot 20 Feb.

Spring passage (max. counts): The largest flocks seen during this period were c.2500 Tomhommie 9 Apr and 2500 Findhorn Bay 22 Apr. Elsewhere numbers were much lower with the only sizeable flocks being c.2000 Nairn 21 Apr, 1570 Lhanbryde 25 Apr and c.2500 Coltfoot 25 Apr.

Summer: Present in the Netherton area of Findhorn Bay from 2 Jun to 3 Jul. Maximum count was 7 on 4 Jun and two still present on 3 Jul at the Mosset Burn mouth (GMcM, MJHC, AJL).

Autumn: A single at Coltfoot 8 Sep may have been one of the summering individuals. The first main arrival involved three skeins (consisting of 15, 16, & 57) in the Findhorn Bay area on 16 Sep (a typical arrival date). Between 18-27 Sep, a total of 17 skeins were reported flying over. Large counts during this period were typically in the Findhorn Bay/Forres area: c.4000 Easter Newforres 25 Sep and 2100+ Findhorn Bay 29 Sep. In October, the largest flock was 21500 roosting at Findhorn Bay on 4th (RHD) - larger estimates have occurred previously (e.g. an estimate in excess of 30000 was made on 30 Oct 2005 in the Loch Spynie area). In November, flocks over 1000 were seen at Findhorn Bay (c.4000 on 2nd), Cloddach (c.2000 on 29th), Corbiewell (c.1000 on 21st included a leucistic individual) and Lower Hempriggs (c.1000 on 29th).

Winter: Most flocks reported involved small numbers during December which has been normal for recent years. However, three large flocks were reported: 2250 Findhorn Bay 10th, c.1500 Nairn 20th and c.1000 Coltfoot 4th.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Very scarce winter visitor.

Two records. The first, considered to be of European race *A. a. albifrons*, on 19 Jan at Miltonhill (RFH) and the second, not identified to race, on 5 Oct at Coltfoot (FA).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Rare breeder and very common winter visitor.

Winter-spring: Flocks containing 500 or more birds were recorded at three sites (one site in 2012), maximum counts at each site were: 3000 Clochan area (Broadley, Muir of Holmie, Hill of Menduff) 12 Jan, 1610 (to roost) Loch na Bo 11 Jan and 1200 Woodside (Newton) 27 Jan. Twenty-three other sites held small flocks, all under 400 individuals.

Range of all flock sizes reported containing less than 400 individuals Jan-Apr 2012 and 2013:

	1-100	101-200	201-300	301-400
2013	51	6	8	3
2012	39	7	3	1

Summer: In the Dava area, a group of 10 adults and 4 young on a small lochan 23 Jul (AET) was the only record of young from this area. Nearby, adults were also present on a small lochan near Aitnoch (10), Loch Tùtach (several), Loch Dallas (pair) and Black Loch (4). In the coastal strip, breeding was confirmed on 26 May at Loch Spynie (brood of 5) and Lossie Forest (brood of 2) (MJHC). Both family groups appear to have moved to the Lossie estuary briefly; the Lossie forest brood on 23-24 Jul (DAG), and the Loch Spynie family group on 30 Jul (RP). Two pairs were also present at the Cloddach quarry 29 Jun but no broods were seen (MJHC). In other areas, maximum counts included: 2 Tugnet 7 May, 4 Tomintoul 29 May, 50 Findhorn Bay 27 Jun and 25 Nairn 28 Jul.

Late summer: Presumably as a result of post-breeding movements, records in August (max. counts) included: 285 Findhorn Bay 9 Aug, 150 Auldearn 16 Aug and 2 Spey estuary 13 Aug.

Autumn: Difficult to assess which are local birds and which are Icelandic breeders returning in September. Two large counts recorded in September from Findhorn Bay: 580 on 6th and 650 on 8th. The largest counts during October involved 64 west at Burghead 24th and 60 west Burghead 28th. In November, only one count exceeded 100 individuals: 200 Clochan 26th.

Winter (max. counts only): No flocks over 500 were recorded. The largest count in this period was 320 Clochan 31 Dec. Only one other count exceeded 100: 150 near Bellie cemetery 1 Dec.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

Rare visitor or escape.

Two blue morph individuals were seen in the Findhorn Bay/Coltfield/Burghead area 24-26 April (DMai,MJHC,DAG,GBig,AW).



Snow Geese, Coltfield 26 April 2013 (Photo: Andy Williams)

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Scarce migrant in summer, rare in winter.

Winter records: An adult was present in the Loch Spynie area 16 Feb-14 Apr (mainly associating with a group of nine Whooper Swans); the group was seen at Muirton, Loch Spynie, Pitairlie and Calcots. Others were present at Loch Spynie during this period: 3 on 26 Mar, 2 on 16 & 22 Apr, 6 on 23 Apr and 7 on 22 & 25 Apr.

Summer and early autumn passage: Most regular in Findhorn Bay where recorded from 2 Jun-10 Sep; counts were made on Jun 2nd (23), 3rd (28), 6th (9), 12th (11) and 21st (34), Jul 2nd (2), Aug 13th (1), 10th (22), 21st (25), 24th (c.60), 25th (c.95) and 27th (93), and Sep 3rd (120), 6th (2), 9th (1) and 10th (2). Elsewhere, seen at White Bridge (Cawdor) (20 south on 16 Jun), Burghead (66 south on 6 Jun and 25 south on 9 Jun), Cloddach quarry (2 on 15 Sep), Loch Spynie (21 on 4 Sep) and Spey estuary (46 on 4 Sep and 3 on 13 Sep).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Scarce migrant and winter visitor.

Winter-spring: No reports during this period.

Summer: Singles Spey estuary 24 May and Findhorn Bay 2 Jun, may relate to the same wandering individual.

Autumn: The first was a single flying east at Lossiemouth 29 Sep, which may be the same as 1 Lossie estuary 5 Oct. Also in October, seen at Nairn Bar (25 on 20th), Findhorn Bay (1 on 2nd, 8 on 4th, 1 on 12th, 16 south on 16th, 25 west on 17th and 1 on 20th), Spey estuary (8 on 24th-28th) and Portknockie (34 east on 1st). In November, seen at Corbiewell (Garmouth) (adult, 2 juveniles on 21st) and Kingston (1 on 26th).

Winter: Only one record during this period concerning a single at Binns (Garmouth) 21 Dec.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Scarce migrant and winter visitor.

All birds assigned to a race were Light-bellied Brent Goose *B.b.hrota* except for two records of Dark-bellied Brent Geese *B.b.bernicla*: 1 Spey estuary 6 Jul (MJHC) and 16 Findhorn Bay 4 Sep (GMcM).

Winter: The usual flock was present on the Nairn/Nairn Bar shore area from the start of the year until 11 Apr; on nine occasions over 70 individuals were counted - the maximum being 80 on 26 Jan when three distinct broods of 4, 4 and 5 were identified (CMit).

Autumn passage period (Sep-Oct): The first returning individual to the Nairn wintering area was on the east beach on 23 & 26 Sep, numbers increasing to 4 on 11-12 Oct and 30 by 23 Nov. Passage was good in other areas: Findhorn Bay (regularly seen 5 Sep-14 Nov; max. count 82 on 13 Sep, though majority of records less than 10). A flock of c.100 flying west in Burghead Bay on 13 Sep was probably the birds counted later in the day in Findhorn Bay. Also in Burghead Bay, 2 flying west on 5 Oct and 1 on 16 Oct. Other sightings were at Cummingston (4 on 2 Oct - same as Lossie estuary birds?), Lossie estuary (3 on 7 Sep, 4 on 2 Oct), off Lossiemouth (6 west on 22 Sep), Spey estuary (1 on 18 Sep, 3 on 26 Sep, 4 on 3-6 Oct) and Strathlene (3 flying east on 7 Sep).

Winter: The only records during this period concerned the Nairn wintering flock. This had gradually increased from a single individual in September to a maximum in the region of 60 individuals on 18 & 28 Dec.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Fairly common visitor in winter and spring. Scarce breeder.

Breeding: At the coast, a total of five broods of ducklings were seen, at Carse of Delnies (4 young), Findhorn Bay (11 & 5) and Spey estuary (13 & 5) with a mean brood size of 7.6 chicks. Fledged juveniles were later seen at Findhorn Bay (3 & 8) and on the Spey estuary (11). Up to six were on the Lossie estuary in April-June but no evidence of breeding here.

Inland, breeding was confirmed only at Cloddach quarry where a remarkable crèche containing 36 young with 4 adults was found on 18 Jun (CAG) - 27 ducklings were still surviving on 29 Jun (MJHC). Elsewhere inland in the breeding season was 1 Broadley (Clochan) 3 & 14 Apr and 3 May.

Best monthly counts at coastal sites were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Nairn/Culbin Bars	153	94	12	10	2	15	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	110
Findhorn Bay	41	56	71	33	73	89	104	27	35	27	47	41
Lossie estuary	0	0	0	4	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spey estuary	0	8	7	8	22	10	12	3	1	0	0	0

Elsewhere, 26 Whiteness Head 10 Jun.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Probable escape or feral origin.

Much more widely reported in 2013 than in recent years. This could be the result of recent releases/escapes (e.g. Cawdor area records) or possibly unconfirmed breeding locally with short distance dispersal. The main concentration of records for the species in Moray is in the Elgin area (mainly the Cooper Park pond and River Lossie), while in Nairn it is Newton of Budgate (Cawdor).

Cawdor: Three males at Dallaschyle and a single male at White Bridge 22 May, while on 16 Jun a male at Old Newton of Budgate and a female at Dallaschyle (GAa).

Forres: Sightings around the Mosset area involved a male 28 Jan, a female 2 Nov and a pair 8 Dec. At Sanquhar pond a pair intermittently 26-29 Nov and 1-10 Dec (many obs.).

Findhorn Bay: A male on 12 Jun (RHD).

Burghead Bay: A male on 7 Jun (EH).

Elgin: A male was present on the Cooper Park pond, Elgin 19 Jan-20 May, two males 12 May, female 24 Aug, and 3 (male, juvenile male and juvenile female) 31 Aug (many obs.). In September, numbers at the pond increased to a maximum of 8 (2 males, 2 1st-year males, 4 females/1st-year females) (RP). Also at the Cooper Park pond, aggressive behaviour towards Mallards (but not Tufted Ducks) on 26 Jan and display to a female Mallard on 6 Apr may suggest bonding to a foster species when the

individual was a duckling (RP). Elsewhere in the Elgin area reports included a pair River Lossie (Old Mills) 9 Apr (EMit) and a male in a garden Hamilton Drive 18 May (FA).

Cloddach quarry: A male 6-7 Jan (DAG,CAG).

Loch Oire: A male on several dates 14 Jul-6 Aug (EH, A&FR, MJHC).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Very common winter visitor and rare breeder.

Breeding: A male on a lochan near Loch Stuart (Dava) 25 May (MJHC), two males on Loch Tùtach 25 May (MJHC) and a female at Loch Kirkaldy 3 Jul (MCoa) were all in suitable habitat.

Non-breeders in summer (May-July): Present Findhorn Bay 9 May-8 Jul (max. 13 on 24 Jun), pair Lossie estuary 5 May, 2 pairs Spey estuary 5 May, male & two females Cloddach quarry 26 May, male Loch Spynie 5 May (increasing to four males on 11 Jun) and 1 Loch Oire 1-16 Jul (2 on 30 Jul).

A large count in late summer was 55 Findhorn Bay 25 Aug.

Winter: Monthly maximum counts at main coastal sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn harbour area	50	nc	82	nc	nc	nc	6	73
Nairn/Culbin Bars	405	170	60	nc	nc	261	nc	173
Findhorn Bay	639	660	460	475	2080	1400	770	1270
Lossie estuary	760	974	637	60	152	526	789	1098
Cloddach	730	440	229	nc	nc	nc	402	nc
Spey estuary	141	124	94	100	80	150	340	343

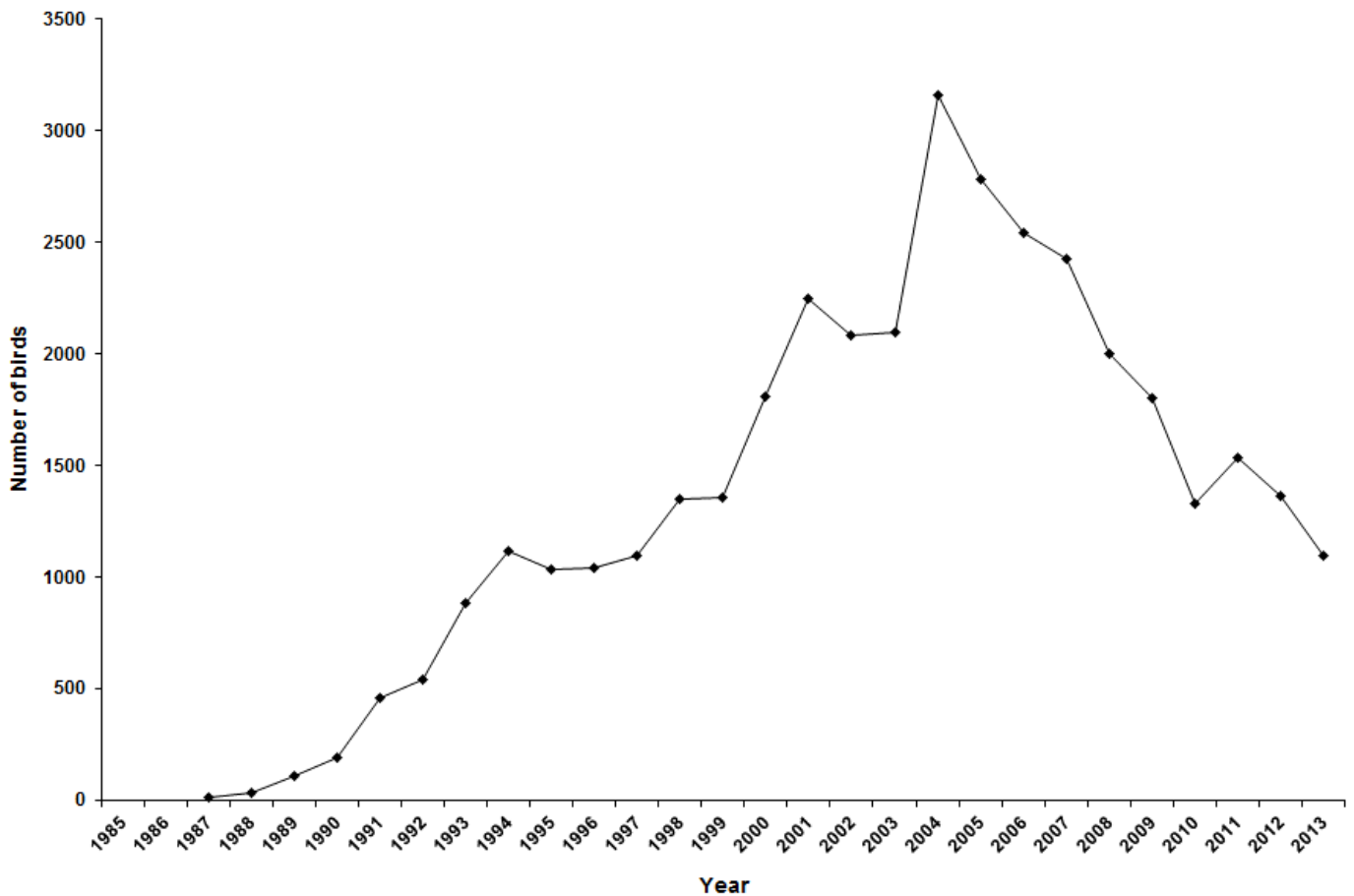
Other coastal counts include: 91 Delnies-Nairn 13 Jan, 16 Kingsteps 5 Apr, 22 west Burghead 24 Oct and 26 Portgordon-Strathlene 10 Feb.

Numbers of Wigeon using Lossie estuary fell again after the peak of 3158 in 2004. Wintering numbers using the estuary may be affected by habitat changes (i.e. from aquatic weed to coarse unpalatable grasses).



Wigeon at the Lossie estuary, 6 January 2013 (Photo: Bob Proctor)

Annual maxima of Wigeon at the Lossie estuary 1985-2013:



On freshwater:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Flemington	nc	6	nc	25	nc	nc	160	nc	52
Loch Spynie	140	4	nc	nc	nc	1	1	1	2
Nether Dallachy	21	8	12	6	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Loch Oire	212	90	44	2	2	34	66	27	13

Other counts on freshwater included 25+ Loch of Blairs 6 Jan.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Scarce visitor.

Seen at five sites (seven in 2012).

Findhorn Bay: 3 on 6 Jan(PMo) and 1 on 27 Oct (RSC, GMcM).

Loch Spynie: Pair present on 7 May (CAG, HF, GBig).

Loch Oire: Recorded January-June and again in October-December. One male was present 11 Jan-25 Jun, a female on 27 Jun and a pair on 9 Feb and 19-25 Apr. In autumn, one male 7 Oct-28 Dec, and a pair on 21 Nov. (many obs.). On 28 Dec the male was seen displaying to a female Mallard (RP).

Loch na Bo: Pair 24 Jan and 26 Mar (MJHC).

Spey estuary: Frequent in spring between 21 Apr-30 May, usually 2-4 but 7 (4 males, 3 females) on 21 Apr (MJHC), 5 on 27 Apr and 6 on 4 May (DAG). Less frequent in autumn when 3 females on 21 Aug and 1 male on 16-21 Oct (MJHC).



Gadwall on Loch Oire, 25 April 2013 (Photo: Martin Cook)

Teal *Anas crecca*

Scarce breeder and very common winter visitor.

Breeding: A female with a brood of ducklings was at Loch Noir 9 Jun (IFr).

Potential breeding sites occupied during the breeding season included a male near Loch Tùtach 25 May and a female nearby on 16 Jun (MJHC). In the early part of the year 5 Loch Kirkaldy 28 Mar were also at a potential breeding site.

In the coastal strip in summer, a pair Birnie pool 9 Jun, female Cooper Park pond (Elgin) 18 Jun, 2 pairs Kingston 11 May, 2 males Loch Spynie 11 Jun, 2 Loch Oire 7 & 25 Jul and 21 Spey estuary 2 May.

Monthly maximum counts from main coastal/inland sites outside the breeding season were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	35	7	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Findhorn Bay	45	nc	40	75	17	339	397	57	30
Lossie estuary	67	32	66	46	5	11	35	159	200
Loch Spynie	103	59	10	6	nc	nc	nc	10	2
Spynie Canal	162	150	30	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	50
Cloddach quarry	61	4	18	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	nc
Nether Dallachy tip	8	6	2	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Loch Oire	15	29	15	10	27	66	89	110	166
Loch na Bo	23	48	35	18	nc	13	7	20	41
Spey estuary	114	90	36	75	135	160	111	161	116

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Common resident breeder and winter visitor.

Breeding: The mean brood size from 11 broods was 7.3 chicks. Upcountry, broods of ducklings found at Loch Dallas and Loch Noir on 9 Jun. Mallards were seen at four sites at the Dava lochans but breeding not confirmed. In the lowlands, breeding confirmed at Moray Crematorium (Broadley) where a nest contained 10-12 eggs, while broods were seen at River Nairn (Nairn), Cooper Park Pond (Elgin), Loch Spynie, Spynie

Canal, Loch na Bo, Loch Oire and Kingston. Also recorded in suitable breeding habitat in the coastal strip at Findhorn Bay, Bruntlands, Coltfoot, Lossie estuary, Netherglen (Coleburn) and Rothes.

Best monthly flocks in regularly counted areas were:
Freshwater:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Loch Flemington	15	24	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	nc	20
Cooper Park, Elgin	51	40	nc	12	11	11	31	45	39	28	14	12
Loch Spynie	329	120	25	4	3	9	180	nc	19	nc	35	33
Cloddach quarry	163	150	118	nc	nc	88	nc	nc	nc	nc	182	nc
Loch Oire	35	102	109	nc	11	113	79	118	20	30	104	101
Lochna Bo	251	4	11	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	110	53	31	19
Nether Dallachy tip	22	35	5	nc	nc	4	11	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc

Other freshwater sites holding more than 50 birds were: 100 Spynie Canal (Ardivot) 27 Jan and 90+ River Nairn (Nairn) 30 Nov.

Coastal sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	345	94	nc	nc	nc	8	nc	16
Findhorn Bay	276	144	139	400	375	102	250	270
Lossie estuary	4	2	5	19	2	12	29	11
Spey estuary	nc	nc	13	77	47	7	nc	24

The only other coastal site holding more than 50 birds was Portgordon-Buckpool where 131 were counted on 15 Dec.

Maximum monthly counts during the summer period in Findhorn Bay were 2 in Apr, 48 in May, 260 in Jun and 176 in Jul, and at the Spey estuary, 10 in May, 54 in Jun and 68 in Jul. A white-plumaged individual was present at Lossie estuary 8 Jun-3 Jul.

A hybrid male Mallard × Pintail was present at the Mosset pond (Forres) on several dates from 2 Nov-27 Dec (AJL, RP).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Fairly common winter visitor and migrant. Occasional breeder.

Present at three sites (nine in 2012).

Findhorn Bay: Present between 1 Jan-29 Jun and 8 Sep-31 Dec. Large numbers recorded during both periods with maximum counts of 207 on 10 Feb and 197 on 27 Nov (RSC, GMcM et al.).

Loch Spynie: A pair on 7 May (HF, CAG).

Spey estuary: Recorded on 18 May (a pair), 6 Sep (1 female) and 9 Oct (3 females) (MJHC).

The size of the winter flock has increased spectacularly over the last 10 years, when maxima in each winter have been as follows:

2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
18	25	20	38	35	21	156	212	216	207

A hybrid male Mallard × Pintail was present at the Mosset pond (Forres) on several dates from 2 Nov-27 Dec (AJL,RP).



Pintail, Findhorn Bay 2 February 2013 (Photo: Richard Somers Cocks)

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Occasional breeder and scarce migrant.

Seen at six sites (four in 2012).

- Findhorn Bay: Present from 11 Sep (single), 13 on 20 Oct, 4 on 26 Oct, female on 28 Oct, juvenile male 9 Dec and a pair 10 & 11 Dec.
- Loch Spynie: Female on 24 Jan.
- Lossie estuary: A female on 27 Sep was the 10th record for the estuary.
- Loch na Bo: Male on 24 Jan.
- Loch Oire: A single male on 13 Jan-17 Feb, 5 May-27 Jun and 16 Sep-2 Nov. A single on 30 Nov. A pair was present on 25 Apr and 4 Oct. A male & 2 females on 20 Sep & 23 Oct. Four, consisting of 2 males & 2 females, on 23 Oct & 1 Nov. A male, 2 first-year males and 3 females together on 3 Nov decreasing to a male, 2 first-year males & female on 21 Nov.
- Spey estuary: Pair on 21 Apr.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Scarce winter visitor and occasional breeder.

Recorded at only two sites:

- Loch na Bo: One male 10 & 24 Jan and 2 males 15 Feb (MJHC).
- Loch Spynie: One male 2 Jan-6 Feb and 2 males 24 Jan. Also 1 male 29 Apr-21 May and 26 Jul. (many obs.)
- No records in the second winter period.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Scarce breeder and common winter visitor.

Breeding: A nest with a clutch of five eggs was found at Loch Oire (EH). Broods were seen at Cooper Park pond (Elgin) and Loch Spynie, with the mean brood size from five broods being 6.2 chicks.

Other potential breeding sites occupied during the summer months included Black Loch (Dava), Lossie Forest and Sanquhar Loch (Forres).

Monthly maximum counts (excluding ducklings) at main sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Loch Spynie	62	40	30	46	60	24	19	nc	40	73	60	43
Cloddach quarry	44	44	52	nc	nc	21	nc	nc	nc	nc	33	nc
Cooper Park	42	40	23	15	nc	1	nc	nc	7	17	12	25
Nether Dallachy tip	7	5	11	6	nc	5	12	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Loch na Bo	8	nc	39	50	nc	nc	nc	nc	97	51	34	43
Loch Oire	34	30	29	57	22	31	42	31	19	29	35	24

Elsewhere, 15 Spynie Canal was the highest count.

Coastal records included 10 Roseisle 22 Feb, 3 Findhorn Bay 6 May, 1 Carse of Delnies 20 May, 1 Spey estuary 6 Sep and 3 Nairn 30 Nov.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Scarce winter visitor.

At the coast, only seen at Burghead, where 12 flew west on 24 Sep (DMP).

Estuaries: In Findhorn Bay, 1 male on 29 Apr-6 May (GMcM, RSC) and on the Spey estuary, 1 male 21 Jun, 3 males 4 Aug, 1 female 3 Oct, 5 on 6 Oct and 1 on 24 Nov (MJHC, FA, DGD).

Inland: Only recorded at Loch Spynie. In the early part of the year, 1 female 26 Jan-1 Feb and 15 Mar, and 1 male 25 Apr-4 Jun (many obs.). Later in the year, a pair on 9-10 Dec (ABa, RP) and 3 (2 males, 1 female) on 22 Dec (DAG).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Scarce breeder, common offshore.

Breeding: The mean from four broods was 2.5 chicks, however there is the possibility of duplication. Broods of 2 and 3 ducklings were seen at Tronach Head on 12 Jun (MJHC, RMu) and broods of 2 and 3 were also found east of Cullen on 18 Jul (SPM). At Portknockie an incubating female was found on a nest on the cliffs on 12 Jun (RMu).

Maximum counts from coastal areas were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Delnies-Nairn	nc	nc	nc	25	80	46	nc	nc	nc	1	9	11
Culbin/Nairn Bars	6	6	nc	nc	5	4	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Burghead Bay	60	49	45	14	6	18	3	1	118	16	22	80
Burghead-Hopeman	83	23	nc	12	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	19	nc	118
Spey Bay	29	23	19	4	0	12	2	23	22	15	6	8

The only other count over 100 was 106 Portknockie 14 Apr.

In harbours (max. counts): 9 Nairn 11 Jan, 5 Hopeman 21 Feb, 108 Burghead 28 Nov, 5 Lossiemouth 5 Dec and 57 Buckie 6 Dec.

A male with good 'sails' suggestive of Northern Eider *S.m.borealis* was seen off Burghead on 7 Dec (DMP).

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*

Rare visitor.

A male was seen on three occasions: on the east side of Burghead on 18 Sep in eclipse plumage (RW) and on 15 Nov (RP), and presumably the same individual was off Easter Delnies (Nairn) on 8 Dec (DMca).

King Eiders have been seen in Moray & Nairn in 22 of the last 38 years. Many records relate to returning individuals making assessment of actual numbers involved impossible.



King Eider, Burghead Bay 18 September 2013 (Photo: Bob Wilson)

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Common winter visitor offshore.

Coastal records in summer: 14 Burghead Bay 6 May, male Findhorn Bay 10 May, 23 Spey Bay 13 May.

Maximum monthly counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Delnies-Nairn	19	13	nc	nc	29	nc	51
Nairn	nc	8	nc	20	30	2	40
Nairn Bar	8	7	nc	nc	64	nc	8
Culbin Bar	8	4	nc	nc	54	nc	6
Off Findhorn	4	25	5	420	93	120	nc
Findhorn Bay	8	11	11	6	1	10	5
BurgheadBay	25	26	36	72	230	85	60
Off Burghead	12	25	10	9	30	nc	57
Burghead-Hopeman	11	15	nc	nc	nc	nc	10
Lossiemouth	nc	4	nc	nc	12	nc	37
Spey Bay	4	6	21	30	18	1	3
Portgordon-Strathlene	20	11	nc	nc	35	nc	17

In harbours after stormy weather (max. counts): 7 Burghead 23 Jan, 4 Lossiemouth 26 Jan and 2 in breeding plumage Buckie 27 Apr.

On estuaries: 1 Lossie estuary 23-26 Jan and 14-17 Oct, and 5 Spey estuary 16 Jan and 27 Feb.

One inland record involved a female/immature at Loch Flemington 13 Jan (KCI, JCI).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Common winter visitor, small numbers in summer.

Maximum monthly counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Delnies-Nairn	1	2	nc	20	nc	0	nc	15
Nairn Bar	23	7	nc	nc	nc	31	nc	0
Culbin Bar	15	5	nc	nc	nc	12	nc	11
BurgheadBay	73	46	19	58	130	130	80	65
Burghead	6	8	20	20	93	86	nc	50
Burghead-Hopeman	13	11	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	48
Spey Bay	nc	9	11	nc	nc	46	nc	14

Summer records (maximum counts from each site) included: 18 Delnies 12 Apr, c.250 Burghead 27 Apr and 10 May, c.300 Burghead Bay 3 May and 10 Spey Bay 9 Jul.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Fairly common winter visitor.

Another year of low numbers reported.

Maximum counts for main areas were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn Bar	0	8	nc	0	nc	1
Burghead Bay	24	6	9	30	14	9

In spring, 12 Burghead Bay 7 Apr.

Coastal summer records included: 1 Portknockie 13 May, 4 Delnies 10 Jun and 1 off Findhorn 25 Jul.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Rare breeder and fairly common winter visitor.

Breeding: A male Black Loch (Dava) 25 May was in breeding habitat but no further evidence was obtained (MJHC).

Maximum counts on most frequented lochs were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Flemington	16	12	nc	7	nc	nc	1	nc	10
Loch Spynie	37	22	50	31	21	25	13	19	20
Cloddach quarry	0	1	1	nc	nc	nc	0	1	0
Loch na Bo	5	9	45	35	0	2	0	17	20
Loch Oire	7	5	0	4	2	0	0	8	8
Nether Dallachy tip	8	11	13	15	0	nc	nc	0	0

During the spring build-up, display was seen at Loch Spynie - latest there was a male on 22 Jun.

Unusual were two males on Cooper Park pond (Elgin) 27 Jan. In late summer, a female was on Nether Dallachy tip pool on 27 Jul.

Well inland in winter were 1 Loch Park 1 Feb, 2 Aberlour (on the Spey) 21 Nov and 2 Balvenie distillery (Dufftown) 5 Dec.

Maximum counts at most frequented coastal sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Delnies-Nairn	1	2	nc	nc	0	nc	2
Nairn/Culbin Bars	26	8	nc	nc	6	nc	0
Nairn	2	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	3
Findhorn Bay	19	32	39	40	9	15	11
Burghead Bay	5	4	6	17	3	nc	1
Burghead-Hopeman	5	3	nc	nc	0	nc	2
Lossie estuary	2	3	2	6	0	2	2
Spey estuary	12	18	21	17	5	51	33
Spey Bay	17	7	nc	nc	nc	50	nc

Other spring records included 1 Kingsteps 5 Apr and 2 Findhorn 7 May. In late summer, 4 Findhorn 23 Jul and 2 Kingston lagoon 27 Jul).

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Rare winter visitor.

A 'redhead' (1st winter/adult female) was on Loch Spynie 23 Jan-13 Mar (many obs.), and another 'redhead' was first seen on Loch Oire on 1 Nov (EH) before moving to Loch na Bo the following day and remaining until 31 Dec (EH,MJHC,RP,DAG).



Smew, Loch Spynie 24 January 2013 (Photo: Hugh Clark)

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Scarce breeder, fairly common offshore.

Breeding: No broods reported this year. In potential breeding habitat were six lower River Findhorn 14 Jul. Display noted off Lossiemouth 9 Feb involving 2 males and 6 females.

Coastal records in summer (May-June): 8 Spey Bay 6 May and a female Tugnet 24 Jun.

Regular monthly maximum counts at Findhorn Bay, Burghead Bay and on the Spey estuary:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Findhorn Bay	18	21	21	67	28	21	3	0	4	10	17	15
Burghead Bay	5	18	11	56	37	29	nc	nc	12	14	32	5
Spey estuary	5	3	5	10	6	1	0	0	0	4	1	10

Maximum monthly counts at other sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Delnies-Nairn	4	2	nc	nc	nc	6	nc	2
Nairn	1	2	2	nc	nc	6	3	1
Nairn/Culbin Bars	16	4	nc	nc	nc	51	nc	6
Off Lossiemouth	nc	8	nc	nc	nc	nc	5	6
Lossie estuary	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	1

In harbours: a male in Burghead harbour 1 Jan after stormy weather.

On rivers in winter: 1 River Nairn (in Nairn) regularly in Nov-Dec, and 5 on 20 Dec.

Inland:

Loch Flemington: 2 on 13 Jan and 1 on 10 Feb (KCI, JCI).

Loch Spynie: present in both winter periods. During 4 Jan-24 Mar, 1-3 females on majority of dates except for 4 on 8 Jan, 5 on 18 Feb and a male on 24 Mar. At the end of the year, 1 female 21 Nov and 9 Dec, and 2 (male and female) on 15 Dec.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Scarce breeder and fairly common visitor.

Breeding: No broods were reported this year. Courtship behaviour noted by a pair on the River Nairn (Nairn) 20 Apr.

Seen in potential breeding areas: Pair Drynahan 21 Apr, pair River Nairn (Nairn) 8 May, pair River Nairn (Broadley) 9 Apr, two River Nairn (Househill) 9 Apr, pair River Nairn (Howford Bridge) 13 Apr, two pairs & one male at three areas River Nairn (Jubilee Bridge-Firhall) 23 Apr, two males & four females on the River Fiddich 12 May, male lower Mosset Burn 2 Jun, and 5 'redheads' Loch Builg 5 Jul.

Maximum monthly counts:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Nairn	0	0	1	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	17	3	2	0
Culbin	0	0	nc	nc	nc	9	26	47	41	8	nc	0
Findhorn Bay	0	0	0	1	45	40	51	65	53	18	5	0
Burghead Bay	0	0	nc	1	nc	nc	40	44	26	0	nc	0
Cloddach quarry	0	0	3	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	8	0	0
Loch Spynie	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
Lossie estuary	0	0	0	0	21	3	0	23	33	7	6	0
Loch Oire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	10
Loch na Bo	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Spey estuary	0	1	0	20	73	80	79	191	100	49	0	4

Elsewhere, 120 Glenlatterach reservoir 20 Sep, 2 Fochabers-Tugnet 28 Sep and pair Muckle Burn (Dalvey) 25 Nov.

Inland in winter were five males & four females River Fiddich 4 Jan, 1 Loch Flemington 13 Jan, 1 Milntoduff 26 Jan, female River Lossie (Elgin cathedral) 26 Jan and four males (max. count) Cooper Park pond (Elgin) 14-15 & 25 Dec.

[Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Escape.

One throughout the year at the Cooper Park, Elgin (RP) and another at the Buckie Burn (Buckpool) on 13 Jan, 10 Feb and 6 Apr (MJHC, GBig).]

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Rare summer visitor and breeder, occasionally more numerous.

Another blank year, with no calling Quail reported in 2013. The number of calling birds reported in recent years is as follows:

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
4	2	6	8	8	4	4	2	9	0	0

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Introduced scarce breeder. Commonly released.

The usual scatter of records: 2 Balmore 17 Jun, 1+ Bancher 17 Jun, 2 Binns (Garmouth) 21 Jun, 1 Bridge of Forteach 18 Jul, 2 Buckie 21 Jul, 2 Cairn Duhie 21 Jul, 1 Clochan 13 Aug, 8 Dava 4 Nov, 1+ Drumin Castle

30 Mar, 8 Kellas 24 Jan, 1 Loch Kirkaldy 3 Jul, 2 Moor of Findochty 29 May, 2 Broadley (Clochan) 14 May, 1 Portknockie 3 Jul, 10 Strathavon 10 Jan and 1 Tomintoul 1 May.
No evidence of 'wild' breeding.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Very common resident breeder.

Few reports received: 4 Ben Rinnes 5 Nov, 15 Dava 18 Nov, 4 Machattie's Cairn (Drummuir) 15 Oct, 1 Mill Buie (Dallas) 3 Nov and 1 near Dunearn Lodge 21 Apr. Evidence of continued presence on Ben Aigan where fresh droppings were found on 3 Jul.

Ptarmigan *Lagopus muta*

Fairly common resident breeder.

Counts on Ben Rinnes were 15 on 16 Aug, 10 on 19 Oct, 2 on 5 Nov and 6 on 8 Dec (AE, HF). Several reports from the Cairngorms plateau, max. 21 on 26 Aug.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Scarce resident breeder.

The only reports concerned 12 near Tomintoul on 16 May (AlaG) and birds heard near Lochan Tutach on 16 Jun (MJHC).

Capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus*

Scarce resident breeder.

Breeding: Leks or single cocks were located in nine areas, containing a total of 15-18 males, similar to 2011 and 2012. Only one brood of young was found during the season (TP, RSPB).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Common resident breeder.

In the breeding season, 4 Auldearn 10 May and 2 Netherton/Seafield (Findhorn Bay) 24 Apr - 11 Aug. At other times, 2 Roseisle 21 Feb, 5+ Easter Delnies 27 Oct, 4-5 Seafield 8-22 Feb, 1 North Alves 25 Mar and, by far the largest covey of the year, 13 Kinloss 4 Nov.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Very common resident breeder.

Widespread. 25 Loch Belivat 26 Jan was the only count received.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Rare breeder. Fairly common autumn and winter visitor offshore.

Summer: A pair was on lochans in the usual area of south Moray on 19 Apr (KLG), 25 May (MJHC), 13 Jul (MCR) and 14 Aug (GBig). Only a single bird was seen on 7 Jun (KLG) suggesting that its mate may have been on a nest. However, no young were seen and there was no firm evidence of breeding.

At the coast in the April-July period, very numerous in Spey Bay between Boar's Head Rock and the mouth of the River Spey, where 26 were counted near Boar's Head Rock on 2 May (MJHC) and 61 between the Kingston rifle range and the rivermouth on 3 May (FA). Still 10 Boar's Head Rock on 26 May. Elsewhere, up to 3 Burghead April-May, up to 8 Findhorn April-Jun, 2 Cullen Bay 16 May, 1 Lossie estuary 19-24 Apr, 8 Lossiemouth 9 May, 4 past Lossiemouth 23 May, 1 Strathlene 3 May and 8 off Nairn 3 Apr.

Best monthly counts offshore in each winter period were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Delnies	4	1	nc	nc	0	nc	1
Nairn/Culbin Bars	0	0	nc	nc	1	nc	1
Burghead Bay	7	5	nc	7	6	3	1
Spey Bay	1	14	1	35	42	17	9

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Rare breeder. Scarce autumn and winter visitor offshore.

Upland lochs: For the 7th successive year, one pair laid eggs – but for the first time they bred successfully, hatching two young and raising one (IFr,MJHC,AGK).

Monthly maxima in Burghead Bay and Spey Bay were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghead Bay	0	0	2	2	12	5	0	0	1	3	14	5
Spey Bay	0	1	4	2	5	0	0	0	2	1	0	2

Best days in Burghead Bay were 12 on 6 May and 14 on 23 Nov (GMcM, RSC).

Elsewhere, 1 Buckie 3 May (MJHC), 2 Cullen Bay 17 Feb (LSi), 1 Portknockie 20 Feb (LSi) and 2 there 5 Apr (ABa). Passing offshore at Lossiemouth were 1 on 24 Oct and 2 on 6 Dec (RP).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Scarce visitor offshore.

Numerous offshore in early May - probably birds pausing on their movement to northern breeding areas such as Iceland. Largest groups were 14 off Buckie on 12th (per Birdguides), 9 Burghead 2nd (MJHC), 6 Kingston 2nd (MJHC), 12 Spey Bay (near Boar's Head Rock) 2nd (MJHC), 9 Strathlene 3rd (MJHC), 5 off Lein (Kingston) 3rd (FA), 3 Tugnet 2-6 May (DPi,MJHC) and 3 Portknockie 20th (LSi). One or two were also seen at this time off Buckpool, Burghead, Findhorn, Lossiemouth, Portgordon and Delnies.

A most unusual record was of a bird in breeding plumage on Loch Spynie on 24 May (HF,RP,MJHC).

At other times of year, 1-2 were seen off Burghead/in Burghead Bay (Jan, Mar, Sep), Kingston (Feb), Lossiemouth (Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec), Nairn (Jan), Nairn Bar (Jan) and Spey Bay (Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec). In December, 2 flew west past Lossiemouth on 6 Dec, and 3 flew west there on 8 Dec (RP).

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*

Rare visitor.

The only acceptable record was of one at Burghead during 9-14 May (DMP et al.). This is the sixth successive year in which at least one has been found there.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Common breeder, very common offshore.

Breeding: Return indicated by good numbers back on ledges at Covesea on 22 Feb, at Portknockie on 25 Feb and 24 on the cliffs at Cummington on 28 Feb.

Passage: In early summer, 600+ passed Burghead in 2.5 hours on 23 May (AMca), and, at Lossiemouth, 392 past in 40 minutes on 23 May and 109 in 1 hour on 24 May (RP). Autumn passage was heavy in early September when 1876 passed Lossiemouth in 1 hour on 6 Sep and 378 in 90 minutes on 7 Sep (RP). Other counts at this time included 329 past Strathlene in 30 minutes on 7 Sep (MJHC) and 341 past Portknockie in 2 hours on 10 Sep (LSi).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus**Very scarce migrant in late summer and autumn.*

The only record was of one flying east past Lossiemouth on 29 Sep (RP).

Annual totals since 2003 have been as follows:

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
3	0	23	1	38	11	0	7	605	11	1

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus**Fairly common offshore in summer and autumn.*

First of the year was 1 Burghead 22 Apr. Thirty were off Delnies on 10 Jun (LSc). Reasonable passage noted in late June when 108 passed Lossiemouth in 3 hours on 23rd (DAG,RP), 15 passed Lossiemouth in 30 minutes on 28th (DAG) and 37 passed Tugnet in 30 minutes on 30th (MJHC).

Best autumn passage, past Lossiemouth, was 12 in 1 hour on 23 Aug and 35 in 1 hour on 6 Sep (RP).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus**Summer and autumn visitor offshore, probably very common at night.*

Two in Burghead Bay on 10 Oct was the only record (JPoy).

Gannet *Morus bassanus**Very common offshore in summer and autumn, fewer in winter.*

In mid winter, 12 Portknockie 20 Feb, 2 Culbin Bar and 1 Nairn Bar 15 Dec. Passing Lossiemouth in December during 30 minutes counts were 39 on 25th, 15 on 28th and 14 on 29th (RP).

Passage recorded past Lossiemouth between May-November (RP). Best days in each month were:

May: 115 in 1 hour on 24th.

June: 218 in 90 minutes on 23rd.

July: no notable passage

August: 277 in 2 hours on 11th, 631 in 2 hours on 18th, 124 in 1 hour on 23rd, 351 in 1 hour on 31st.

September: 196 in 2 hours on 1st, 212 in 2 hours on 7th, 171 in 1 hour on 18th, 335 in 1 hour on 29th.

October: 131 in 30 minutes on 23rd, 287 in 1 hour on 24th.

November: 479 in 30 minutes on 3rd.

Elsewhere in autumn, 137 past Portknockie in 1 hour on 9 Sep and 649 there in 2 hours on 10 Sep (LSi).

Passing Strathlene were 316 in 30 minutes on 7 Sep and 391 in 10 minutes on 10 Oct (MJHC).

Counts of 50 or more elsewhere (mostly feeding flocks) were 50 Boar's Head Rock 27 May, 50 Burghead Bay 11 Aug (also 75+ on 1 Jul, 58 on 17 Aug, 56 on 1 Sep, 68 on 17 Sep, 74 on 26 Sep, 80 on 29 Sep, up to 175 in early Oct and 86 on 24 Oct), 120 Kingston 13 Aug and 100 Burghead 18 Oct.

On 21 Aug, off Tugnet, 500+ Gannets were resting on the calm sea (MJHC).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo**Rare breeder and fairly common winter visitor.*

Breeding: Two occupied nests at the small Covesea colony on 3 Jun (MJHC).

Counts of 25 or more were 52 Burghead Bay 23 Aug, 30 Halliman Skerries (Lossiemouth) 15 Dec and 25 between Portgordon and Strathlene 15 Dec.

The pattern of occurrence at selected sites is revealed by maximum monthly counts:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Spynie	9	7	6	7	3	1	0	0	1	5	6	5
Tugnet (mouth of Spey)	2	3	1	3	1	0	0	1	5	9	nc	9
Findhorn (mouth of Bay)	2	3	3	8	8	5	3	15	12	5	5	1



Cormorants breeding at Covesea, 3 June 2013 (Photo: Martin Cook)

Inland: Mostly at Loch Spynie - see table above. Elsewhere, 1 on River Fiddich near Craigellachie 4 Jan, 1 Elgin (flying over Asda) 26 Dec, 1 Forres duck pond/ Sanquhar Loch 2 Jan and 9 Feb, 2 Loch Flemington 13 Jan, 1 Loch na Bo 10 Feb and 31 Dec, and 1 Loch Oire 3-14 Jan, 9 Feb and 28-31 Dec.

One adult at Loch Spynie on 21 Nov showed the characters of the Continental race *P.c.sinensis* (RP).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Fairly common breeder and very common visitor, chiefly in winter.

Breeding: At Portknockie/Bow Fiddle Rock cliffs, numbers fell slightly to 86 occupied nests on 4 June, but there was a substantial increase, also to 86 occupied nests, at Tronach Head on 5-12 June (MJHC). Breeding success at Portknockie was around 1.6 chicks/nest (SWa). Little change at Covesea, where 16 occupied nests were counted on 3 Jun (MJHC).

Over the last ten years the occupancy of the three colonies (apparently occupied nests) has been as follows:

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Portknockie	47	49	49	73	79	79	76	85	93	86
Tronach Head	7	8	nc	21	23	26	60	58	53	86
Covesea	10	13	13	13	11	14	14	17	14	16

Following severe weather, heavy local mortality was indicated by the presence of 9 corpses in Burghead harbour on 4 Jan, and 12 corpses in Buckie harbour on 13 Jan. Large numbers continued to come to roost on the Bow Fiddle Rock in winter. Away from there, 102 Buckie shipyard 20 Oct was the highest count. Up to three on the Lossie estuary opposite the caravan park were unusual.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris**Rare visitor.*

One was seen flying over the reeds at Loch Spynie on 24 Jan (AMu) and 3 Mar (HS). Assuming, as seems likely, that both records refer to the same overwintering bird, this is the first Bittern to be seen in Moray since one at Cairnfield near Buckie in March 1996 - and only the 5th since 1900.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta**Rare visitor.*

On 30 May, two were on the shore at Portgordon at low tide but were pushed off by the rising water and never seen again (MJHC). One was seen in Findhorn Bay on 27 Jul (DGD) but not again until what is presumed to be the same bird was seen at Culbin Bar on 14 & 21 Oct (MCa). It then moved back into Findhorn Bay where there were regular sightings between 27 Oct-15 Nov (RHD et al.). These are the 7th and 8th records for Moray & Nairn.



Little Egrets on the shore at Portgordon, 30 May 2013 (Photo: Martin Cook)

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea**Fairly common resident breeder.*

Heronries: Eleven occupied nests at Loch Spynie (RP) and 2 beside the Spey at Rothes (EMit).

As usual, the largest congregations were on the three estuaries where best monthly counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Findhorn Bay	5	2	2	3	4	8	11	17	22	17	6	4
Lossie estuary	1	1	0	0	3	3	15	11	9	6	2	2
Spey estuary	2	2	0	1	3	4	7	7	7	2	3	2

Notable elsewhere were birds on rocky shores at Burghead (2 on 23 Nov, 1 on 30 Nov), Buckie (1 on 20 Oct) and Lossiemouth west beach (1 on 20 Jan). Four were at a small pond near Covesea on 23 Oct.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia**Rare visitor.*

One was on the Spey estuary on 18 Jun (MJHC, MColl). This is the fourth record for Moray & Nairn, following single birds at Culbin Bar on 19 Oct 1064, Findhorn Bay on 2 July 1077 and Loch Spynie on 11 Jul 1984.



Spoonbill, Spey estuary 18 June 2013 (Photo: Mike Collins)

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis**Scarce breeder, scarce on the estuaries in winter.*

Mid-winter: On freshwater in January and December were 2 Loch Flemington 13 Jan, 1 Loch na Bo 11 Jan (and 2 on 24 Jan), 2 Loch Spynie 8 Jan (and 3 on 13 Jan, 2 on 12 Dec, 1 on 15 Dec and 2 on 29 Dec) and 2 Spynie canal 1 & 23 Jan.

Unusual here was 1 Cooper Park pond (Elgin) 2 Feb-11 Mar.

Present in spring/summer (*italics* = proved breeding) at Burnside of Birnie pool, *Clochan*, *Cloddach quarry* (2 pairs), *Laggan (near Dufftown)*, Loch Flemington, Loch na Bo, *Loch of Blairs* (2 pairs), *Loch Oire* (9 pairs with 7 visible nests 30 Jul [MJHC]), Loch Spynie (2 pairs), *Nether Dallachy tip pool* (2 pairs) and Wellhill (Culbin). The pair at Laggan (NJ3437), with chicks on 14 Jul (FMc), was unusually far upcountry. Largest post-breeding congregations in summer/autumn were 38 Loch Spynie 15 Sep and 18 Loch Oire 8 Aug.

Coastal in autumn/winter: Regular in Findhorn Bay, often in the south-west corner where highest counts were 6 on 13 Jan and 5 on 31 Oct. Also in the north of the bay near Findhorn village where 1-2 regularly in Jan-Feb, max. 6 on 20 Feb. Frequently seen in autumn and winter on the Spey estuary, where usually 1-2, but 3 on 29 Jan and 4 on 24 Sep. On the Lossie estuary, one on several dates in Jan-Feb, and 2 on 7 Dec.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Occasional breeder, and very scarce offshore in autumn and winter.

One was seen in Burghead Bay, off Findhorn, on 12 dates between 26 Oct-15 Dec (RSC,GMcM,RP, FA,RS). It seems likely that the same bird was involved on each occasion.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Very scarce migrant and winter visitor.

One was seen off Kingston on 19 Feb (FA) and one was in Spey Bay near Boar's Head Rock on 18 Oct (MJHC).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Rare breeder. Scarce offshore in winter.

Breeding: Probably one pair visited two former breeding sites but did not attempt to breed in 2013.

Site 2 - One adult was present on 21-27 Apr, and a pair was there on 3 May. There were no sightings on subsequent visits.

Site 13 - A pair on 26 May, but they were not seen again and there was no evidence of a breeding attempt.

It is quite possible that the same pair was involved at both sites.

Coastal: In Burghead Bay, monthly maxima were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	3	2	3	6	8	18	5
(10th)	(10th)	(14th-15th)	(13th)	(19th)	(11th,12th,21st)	(2nd)	(1st)

(RSC, GMcM, et al.)

Also seen off Nairn Bar on 13 Jan (1), 10 Feb (2) and 20 Oct (3) (GP). Elsewhere, 1 Nairn harbour 11 Jan (RPr), 1 off Kingston 20 Mar (DMai) and 1 Lossie estuary 3 Jan-10 Feb (DAG et al.). One was found dead in Burghead harbour on 4 Jan (RJ).

Honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Rare breeder.

No proof of breeding in the most recent breeding area but a single bird was seen nearby on 27 Jul (DPi). One was also seen in a different area on 14 Jul (MCR).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Formerly common breeder, reintroduced in Highland and North-east Scotland.

Single birds were seen at Ardyge 23 May (MWh), Cragganmore 2 Oct (NS), Findhorn Bay 2 Dec (RSC), Inchbroom 27 Dec (CAG), Little Urchany 5 Apr (SuC), Rafford 3 Oct (CSh) and Carse of Delnies 10 Jun (LSc). A welcome increase in birds wandering into Moray & Nairn, but how long before they settle to breed?

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Occasional breeder and very scarce visitor.

A female was seen regularly at Loch Spynie on 12-23 Apr, 5 May, 20-26 May and on 22 Jun (many obs.) but a male was reported on only four dates - 22 Apr, 9 May and 14-15 May (CAG). Although the female was seen carrying plant material into the reedbed on 5 May (JDL), there was nothing further to suggest a breeding attempt. Elsewhere, a female circled over Birnie on 9 Jun (IFr).

Unusually, a female/juvenile was briefly present at Loch Spynie on 31 Dec (HF,MJHC).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Rare resident breeder, very scarce migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding: Nineteen current and former sites were checked in west Moray and Nairn. Four sites were found to be occupied by pairs in west Moray but none in Nairn. Two pairs were successful, rearing five young between them. The other two pairs failed to breed successfully for unknown reasons (JKC, DGD, AF).

Outside the breeding season, 1 Lecht 23 Sep (NLI).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Rare resident breeder.

Breeding: At least one pair bred successfully but no other information was received.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Common resident breeder.

Breeding season (April-July) records included birds/pairs at Budgate, Coltfeld, Dava, Findhorn Bay, Kinloss, Linkwood (Elgin) (carrying food), Loch Oire, Loch Spynie (carrying food), Nairn, Tomintoul and the Spey estuary.

On the estuaries in May, one was watched chasing Dunlin at the mouth of the Spey and, in Findhorn Bay, one was seen chasing an Osprey!

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Common resident breeder.

Groups of five or more together were 6 following a plough at Clochan 7 Feb (and 5 on 15 Feb and 13 Mar) and 5 over Marcassie Farm (Rafford) 23 Sep.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Rare resident breeder.

Breeding: At the three usual/most recent breeding sites: i) no breeding activity, ii) a pair reared one young (KD), iii) a pair occupied the site but no young were reared (EWe).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Scarce summer visitor and breeder.

First reports were in the first week in April when 1 Roseisle 3rd and 1 Tugnet 4th. Breeding: In west Moray and Nairn, eight pairs nested, as in 2012. All 8 pairs laid eggs and raised a total of 17 young. The breeding productivity was 2.13 young per pair and the mean brood size of successful pairs was also 2.13 young per nest. In east Moray, five pairs nested - one more than in 2012. All five pairs laid eggs but the new pair failed due to poor weather or predation; the other four pairs raised a total of 10 young, which is two more than in 2012. The breeding productivity was 2 young per pair (compared to the decade 2001 - 2010 variations of 1.0-2.6 young per pair). Mean brood size of successful pairs was 2.5. (RHD).

Largest congregations, as always, were in Findhorn Bay where highest numbers reported were 9 on 27 Aug, 8 on 13 Sep and 7 on 23 Aug and 3 Sep. Last seen, in Findhorn Bay, were 2 on 25 Sep and 1 on 26 Sep.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce breeder and winter visitor.

Breeding: One adult with at least four young at Loch of Blairs on 21 Jun (ISS) and regular sightings of a fledged juvenile near the hide at Loch Spynie in August-September (GBig, DAG et al.). Also in the breeding season were 1 Kinloss 25 Jun (AJL) and 1 Lein (Kingston) 5 May (PGS).

Present at Loch Spynie throughout the year, regularly coming to food beside the hide - usually 1-2 but 3 on 24 Dec (CAG). At least five heard around the loch on 25 Jan (MJHC). Elsewhere in autumn/winter, 1 Loch Oire 12 Dec (EH) and 1 heard Lein (Kingston) on 15 Oct and 4 Nov (PGS).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Fairly common resident breeder.

Breeding proved (*italics*) or probable at *Cooper Park pond (Elgin)*, *Dallas Dhu*, *Laggan (near Dufftown)*, *Loch Flemington*, *Loch of Blairs*, *Loch Oire*, *Loch Spynie* and *Marcassie Farm (Rafford)*.

Best counts were 14 Loch Oire 24 Sep, 14 Loch Spynie 27 Feb, 9 Loch Flemington 20 Oct and 5 Sanquhar Loch (Forres) 3 Nov.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Scarce resident breeder and winter visitor.

Breeding proved (*italics*) or probable at *Cloddach quarry*, *Fogwatt pool*, *Loch Flemington*, *Loch Oire* (at least 3 pairs) and *Loch Spynie*.

Maximum monthly counts on main lochs were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Flemington	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Loch Spynie	3	14	14	0	0	0	0
Loch Oire/na Bo	3	16	18	6	2	2	4
Cloddach quarry	5	2	4	0	0	0	0

Remarkably poor numbers in the second winter period.

Crane *Grus grus*

Rare visitor.

One was seen flying high over Forres on 11 Jun (AD) and 19 Jun (BCI).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Very common resident breeder, winter visitor and migrant.

First reported inland was 1 Cloddach quarry 27 Jan. In Forres, 1 on 3 Feb and also 1 at the Academy on 19 Feb. At Cooper Park (Elgin), 1 on 15 Feb and 2 on 18 Feb. Calling also at the Wards (Elgin) 15 Feb and at Elgin Community Centre 18 Feb. On the tern nesting platform at Loch Spynie were 3 on 16 Feb and 2 on several dates in March. At Muirton (Lossiemouth) were 2 on 17 & 28 Feb. At potential breeding sites in Elgin were 2 at Tyock 1 Mar and, on 4 Mar, there was 1 Halfords (also 2 here 9 & 17 Mar), 2 Moray College, 2 displaying Elgin Mart and 2 Elgin cemetery. Elsewhere, 1 Broadley (Clochan) 14 Mar and, well inland, 1 in the Drynahan valley 21 Apr.

Pre-breeding inland flocks at Cloddach quarry, where 131 on 24 Feb, 44 on 17 Mar and c100 on 24 Mar and at Dufftown where 11 on 3 Mar.

Breeding: Various breeding records received; at Moray College (Elgin) there was a nest with a brood of two and one egg on 16 May, brood of three 19 May and then two chicks ringed on 26 May. Two chicks were also ringed at The Oaks (Elgin) 7 May. One pair were present at Tomcork (Altyre) 9 May. One adult was incubating on a nest on the beach at Tronach Head 12 Jun. At Cooper Park (Elgin) there was a brood of two on 17 May. At Binn Hill rifle range there was a nest with three eggs 24 May. At Moray Crematorium (Broadley) there was a nest with a clutch of one noted on 28 Jun and 2 Jul. A pair with two young were seen at Cullen on 18 Jul.

Inland post-breeding flocks were 41 Cloddach quarry 29 Jun and 21 at the Dava Way 7 Jul.

One fairly late inland record of a bird calling over Aberlour at midnight on 18 Sep.

Spring, summer and early autumn peak counts of ten or more at coastal localities:

Apr: 172 Findhorn Bay 2nd and 30 Lossiemouth 21st.

May: 145 Findhorn Bay 4th, 25 Carse of Delnies 20th and 60 Lossie estuary 22nd.

Jun: 75 Binsness 2nd, 13 Kinneddar 7th, 43 Carse of Delnies 10th, 160 Findhorn Bay 13th and 31 Lossie estuary 29th.

Jul: 76 Spey estuary 19th, 240 Findhorn Bay 28th and 141 Lossie estuary 29th.

Aug: 200 Carse of Delnies 6th, 23 Spey estuary 22nd, 62 Burghead 28th, 79 Lossie estuary 29th and 554 Findhorn Bay 30th.

Sep: 530 Findhorn Bay 14th and 81 Burghead 30th.

Winter maxima at the coast were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	728	608	714	310
Findhorn Bay	c.325	630	630	644
Burghead-Hopeman	123	108	80	138
Lossiemouth	28	62	51	56
Portgordon-Strathlene	92	44	74	59

Outwith the above dates were maxima of 198 Findhorn Bay 11 Mar and 480 there on 19 Nov.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Common breeder, migrant and winter visitor.

An early up-country record of 1 Little Aitnoch 29 Mar. A flock of 80 in breeding plumage were at Findhorn Bay 2 Apr and a flock of 26 adults feeding in rough grass at Whitefold (south of Nairn) 19 May were probably in the process of heading towards breeding grounds.

Breeding: Only a small number of records from potential breeding grounds: 4 Berryburn fields and one displaying at Berryburn moor 9 Jun (IFr), 2 Creag Mhor 16 Jun (GWi) and one behaving anxiously on the bare summit area of Ben Aigan 3 Jul (MJHC).

Still up country were 34 Machattie's Cairn (Drummuir) 15 Oct, 2 Ben Rinnes 17 Nov and late flock of 22 on Meikle Balloch Hill (Keith) 26 Dec.

Assumed to have returned from its breeding grounds to the coast was 1 Findhorn bay 12 Jul.

Winter coastal maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Kinloss	nc	nc	nc	67	nc	c.120
Findhorn Bay	119	54	25	214	c.325	90

Outwith the above locations were 15 Mains of Tannachy (Portgordon) 18 Jan, 20 Buckpool 26 Oct, 24 Hillhead (Forres) 9 Nov and 17 flew south over Clochan 14 Dec.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Scarce autumn migrant and winter visitor.

The largest winter gatherings were 11 Culbin Bar 13 Jan, 16 Nairn Bar 10 Feb and, in the second winter period, 11 Nairn Bar 15 Dec. Elsewhere, 1 Findhorn Bay 10 Feb and 1 Lossiemouth 23-29 Mar and 17 Apr. In the autumn/second winter period, 2 flew west Findhorn 24 Sep, 7 Findhorn Bay 10 Oct (and 1 there 11 Nov), 1-2 Lossie estuary 25 Sep-15 Oct and 1 Spey estuary 14-25 Oct.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Very common migrant breeder, small numbers in winter.

Breeding: Although a widespread breeder in both the coastal fringe and up-country, of the 105 records received there was very little information on actual breeding activity. In the coastal lowlands, 3 displaying Broadley (Clochan) 14 & 16 Mar, and a pair there 3 & 19 May. Possible nesting by a pair at Moyness (Nairn) 1 May. Up-country there was an early individual in a field that is a usual breeding site at Dufftown on 2 Jan and 24 Feb. A scattering of other records from up-country included 6 Loch Kirkaldy 28 Mar (and 3 there 3 Jul), 2 Aitnoch 29 Mar and 20 Apr, a pair displaying Burnside (Dulsie) 5 May, three pairs in the Cabrach House fields 19 May and, on 9 Jun, there was one bird showing alarm in fields at Berryburn and one pair at Tomcork (Altyre). Two birds were still up-country at Tornichelt (Cabrach) on 18 Jul.

Pre-breeding flocks in the coastal fringe included 50 Cloddach quarry 17 Mar (and 35 there 24 Mar), 20 Ardivot 23 Mar and 20 Muirton 23 Mar. Up-country, 30 at Upper Knockando 21 Feb, 45 Achdregnie 2 Apr, 40 Croughly (Tomintoul) 2 Apr and 13 Aldunie (Cabrach) 19 May.

No post-breeding flocks were reported from up-country but lowland flocks of 50 or more were noted at the Spey estuary (70 on 2 Aug, 110 on 4 Aug, 52 on 6 Aug, 90 on 10 Aug and 53 on 24 Oct), in the Loch Spynie area (c.200 on 3 Oct and 52 on 16 Oct), Cloddach quarry (68 on 12 Oct) and near Roseisle maltings (100 on 12 Oct).

In mid-winter (Jan-Feb and Nov-Dec) flocks of 50 or more included 100 Ardivot 20 Jan, 67 Muirton 23 Jan and c.100 near the Drainie/Duffus road 8 Dec.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Scarce resident breeder and very common migrant.

Breeding: One in territorial flight at Binn Hill rifle range 17 May (PGS) and a pair displaying at the start of the shingle on Lossiemouth east beach 1 Jun (DAG) - but no further breeding evidence from these sites. One pair bred on the spit at the mouth of Findhorn Bay where a pair with two chicks was seen on 14 & 16 Jun and with three chicks on 19 Jun. A pair and three juveniles were still there on 7 Jul (RSC). Three adults were seen in the east dunes area at Findhorn 12 Jun and two adults and one juvenile were in the same area on 27 Jul.

Winter maxima at the coast were:

	Jan-Feb	Nov-Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	15	5
Findhorn Bay	38	34
Kinloss	35	35
Burghead-Hopeman	4	2
Lossiemouth	14	13
Portgordon-Strathlene	2	15

Spring passage (April-early June):

Findhorn Bay: Fluctuating numbers throughout May with highest counts being 360 on 3rd, 375 on 6th, 425 on 8th, 450 on 14th, 445 on 24th and 290 on 27th.

Lossiemouth: Fourteen records of 10 or more between 13 Apr-22 May with a peak of 65 on 1 May.

Spey estuary: Fourteen records of 10 or more between 21 Apr-9 Jun with a peak of 78 on 21 May.

Autumn passage (July-September):

Findhorn Bay: Nineteen records of 50 or more between 1 Aug-27 Sep. Two counts exceeded 100: 121 on 21 Aug and 157 on 31 Aug.

Lossie estuary: Only eight records of 10 or more, with a peak of 41 on 2 Sep.

Spey estuary: Eighteen counts of 10 or more between 9 Jul-4 Sep with the highest being 70 on 13 Aug.

Mongolian (Lesser Sand) Plover *Charadrius mongolus**Rare visitor.*

An adult in breeding plumage was an unexpected and exceptional find on Lossiemouth east beach on 16 Jul (MSH). This is the first record for Moray & Nairn, the third for Scotland and the sixth for Britain.

A full account of the discovery of this bird can be found on page 74 of this Report.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus**Scarce summer visitor and breeder.*

All records from the Cairngorms area. Thirteen were counted on the plateau 25 May (DPi), 1 Coire Raibeirt 4 Jun (ScC), 2 Cairn Lochan 9 Jun (RSC) and a single there 25 Jun (DA).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus**Scarce migrant.*

Spring: The earliest record was 6 Spey estuary 21 Apr. Also at the Spey estuary in spring were 6 on 25 Apr, 5 on 27 & 28 Apr, 8 on 3 May, 2 on 5 May and 16 on 6 Jun. Eight records received from the Findhorn area between 5-17 May with the highest count of 5 on 6th. Elsewhere, 2 Lossiemouth 1 May, 1 Covesea 6 May, 1 Portknockie 12 May, 1 Burghead 18 May and 2 Lossiemouth 23 May. Two records of birds inland in the lowlands were 7 over Cloddach quarry 27 Apr and 2 in a field of barley at Darkland 18 May.

The table below shows the earliest spring arrival dates for the preceding ten years:

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
14 Apr	26 Apr	22 Apr	23 Apr	22 Apr	27 Apr	24 Apr	22 Apr	21 Apr	4 May

Autumn: Extreme dates of passage were 7 Jul-24 Sep. Seventy-seven records were received during this period with a geographical range from Carse of Delnies to Strathlene with a total number of 276, although duplication of records of birds on migration is unfortunately probably inevitable. Flocks of ten or more were 12 Spey estuary 23 Jul (and 16 there 29 Jul), and 13 at (or passing) Lossie estuary on 2 Aug (and 11 on 5 Aug and 13 on 27 Aug). Passing Findhorn were 12 on 18 Aug and 27 (largest flock of the year) on 26 Aug.

Distribution of flock sizes during autumn migration was:

Flock size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	11	12	13	16	27
No. of flocks	34	10	5	7	3	1	4	3	1	2	2	1	1



Whimbrel, Cloddach 27 April 2013 (Photo: Gordon Biggs)

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Common breeder. Very common migrant and winter visitor.

Early spring flocks in the lowlands included 207 Findhorn Bay 5 Mar (and 145 on 13 Mar), 168 Cloddach quarry 17 Mar and, around Loch Spynie, 115 on 3 Apr and c.150 on 19 Apr.

First up-country were a single bird at Loch Kirkaldy 28 Mar and 15 Croughly (Tomintoul) 2 Apr.

Breeding: Two displaying Burnside (Dulsie) 21 Apr. On 9 Jun a single bird was showing anxiety at Berryburn, as were a pair at Tomcork. Near Tomintoul, 2 Lecht 29 Jun and 2 Chalcaidh quarry 27 Jul.

Post-breeding flocks of 100 or more in late summer/autumn included:

- Jul: In Findhorn Bay, weekly maxima increased steadily from 146 to 232 to 346 to 367 (on 22nd). At the Spey estuary, 115 on the 16th and 270 on the 19th.
- Aug: In Findhorn Bay, counts were close to 400 all month with maximum of c.475 on the 26th. At the Spey estuary, 278 on 4th and at Carse of Delnies, 200 on 6th.
- Sep: In Findhorn Bay, maximum of 395 on the 13th but a decline after mid month to 270 on 27th. Conversely, an increase at the Spey estuary where 100 on the 1st, 154 on 21st and 176 on 29th. In the fields to the west of Loch Spynie, 130 on the 30th.

Coastal winter maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	123	108	119	147
Findhorn Bay	441	367	395	368
Burghead-Hopeman	22	40	22	10
Lossiemouth	13	3	10	11
Portgordon-Strathlene	5	7	16	27

Counts of 100 or more from other locations, included 110 Drainie 1 Jan, 163 Spey estuary 6 Jan, 140 Loch Spynie 8 Jan (and 130 on 15 Feb) and 400 Cloddach quarry 13 Jan (with 175 there on 27 Jan) and 140 Mains of Gollachy 15 Jan. At the Spey estuary in autumn 138 on 6 Oct, 115 in nearby fields 11 Oct and 170 on 21 Oct. At Milltown airfield, 227 on 25 Dec and 225 on 28 Dec.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Scarce migrant.

Spring: The first record was 3 Lossie estuary 29 Mar followed by 1 Findhorn Bay 30 Mar and 4 there on 1 Apr. Thirteen other records received from Findhorn Bay throughout Apr, May & Jun, nine of which were in single figures, but in May there were counts of 78 on 3rd, 33 on 4th, 44 on 5th and 16 on the 6th (RSC, GMcM). At Burghead there were 14 on 16 Apr (FA). A single bird was at Lossie estuary 19 Apr and another, breeding plumage, flew over Loch Spynie on 27 Apr.

Autumn (July-October):

Spey estuary: Two flocks of c.22 and c.35 in breeding plumage flew in from the north and settled on the estuary on 7 Jul (DAG). Seventeen other records were received during July-September, of which eleven were in single figures - larger counts were 12 on 11 Jul (MCoA), 11 on 28 Aug, 15 on 1 Sep, 16 on 4 Sep, 13 on 13 Sep and 14 on 19 Sep (MJHC). In October, 5 on 4th-6th, 1 on 14th-15th and 1 on 23rd.

Findhorn Bay: Thirty-two records received - twenty-nine were in single figures. Larger counts were 37 on 29 Aug (RHD), 25 on 20 Sep (GMcM) and c.30 on 21 Sep (SMc). Last were 1 on 7 Oct and 6 on 13 Oct.

Lossie estuary: Present on nine dates with a maximum of 6 on 21 Jul, and last being 1 on 6 Oct.

Nairn: 8 on 29 Aug and 6 on the east beach on 26 & 29 Sep.

Montgrew (Keith): Five birds during 31 Aug-2 Sep (WMM).

Loch Spynie: six flew over on 22 Aug (GBig).

Winter: 1 Findhorn Bay 10-14 Dec (RSC).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Common winter visitor and migrant. Small numbers in summer.

Monthly maxima at main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bar	38	61	nc	27	nc	90
Findhorn Bay	62	56	11	16	32	41
Burghead/Hopeman	32	52	10	4	nc	27
Lossiemouth	4	5	4	3	7	10

Elsewhere, flocks of 10 or more were only seen in Burghead Bay where 10 on 20 Oct and 25 on 7 Dec.

Another year of low numbers, the maximum of 90 at Culbin Bar on 15 Dec is down on the last three years. The table below shows the maximum annual count at any site since 2002:

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
255	265	420	215	300	436	198	75	107	204	150	90

The last count exceeding 1000 was back in winter 1996-97.

During spring, highest counts at Findhorn Bay in Mar were 14 on 1st, 26 on 11th, 24 on 12th and 22 on 13th. Very few seen there in April. Elsewhere, 60 at Burghead Bay 5 Mar, 10 Nairn pier 3 Apr and 13 Kingsteps 5 Apr.

The forty-one records, mainly in single figures, received from Findhorn Bay throughout May-August make pinpointing the last spring record and the first to return from breeding grounds rather difficult. The only sizable “gap” with no records was between 5-22 May. The first juvenile noted was at Lossie estuary on 7 Aug.

In summer a flock of c.60 flew west past Portknockie 24 Aug.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Common winter visitor, small numbers in summer.

Winter monthly maxima at main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Dec
Delnies-Nairn	3	18	23	10
Nairn/Culbin Bar	33	40	33	42
Findhorn	35	42	44	34
Burghead Bay	15	0	0	0
Burghead-Hopeman	57	10	28	39
Lossiemouth	8	7	43	43
Spey estuary	9	0	6	9
Portgordon-Strathlene	92	112	139	110

As usual the Portgordon-Strathlene rocky shore, counted during WeBS surveys, held the highest numbers. Other winter counts included 39 Findhorn 1 Mar, 23 Spey estuary 2 Mar, 40 Burghead 3 Mar and 29 Findhorn pier 18 Nov.

Spring: During April, counts of 10 or more were 33 Cullen 9th, 15 Spey estuary 11th & 24th, 13 Nairn 12th (and 12 on 18th) and c.50 Burghead 15 Apr. A flock of 38, mainly in breeding plumage, were in Portgordon harbour on 24 Apr. The only count in double figures in May was of 16 in breeding plumage at Lossiemouth

north pier on the 4th. The last to be reported prior to departing to breeding grounds was of a single on the east dunes at Findhorn 26 May. Two at Lossiemouth north pier on 30 Jun were probably remaining in Moray over the summer.

Very unusually, a single Turnstone was seen on the Cairngorm plateau on 1 Jun (MDa).

Summer-autumn: Only small numbers present during July with some evidence of a return late in the month when 6 Burghead 29th, 8 Lossie estuary 30th and 6 Nairn 31st. Numbers picked up in August with the highest counts being 20 Burghead 8th and 28 Findhorn Bay on 29th-30th. Highest September count was also at Findhorn where 44 at the south pier on 20th.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Very common migrant and winter visitor.

Winter maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	354	1120	5	nc	1500+
Findhorn Bay	58	c80	14	c.350	320
Lossiemouth	0	10	1	0	0

Near Nairn harbour a flock of c.1500-c.2500 was present between 24-31 Dec (SMc).

Highest counts during other months were 83 Findhorn Bay 3 Mar, 128 Findhorn Bay 13 Apr, 44 Lossie estuary 1 May, 66 Findhorn Bay 28 Jul, c.30 Tugnet 1 Aug and 20 Burghead 28 Sep.

The last spring record prior to leaving for the breeding grounds was 1 Findhorn east dunes on 27 May and the first assumed to have returned were 2 adults in breeding plumage at the Spey estuary on 7 Jul.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Scarce autumn migrant, rare in spring.

All records were in autumn.

Recorded mostly on the Lossie estuary, where the first was 1 juvenile on the 12 Aug (HF). Later there, in August, were 1 on 23rd, 2 (male & female) on 24th (DAG), 3 (male & 2 females) on 25th (DAG, HF, ABa) and 1 on 26th (DAG, DMai). In September, the Lossie estuary hosted 2 (male & female) on 7th (GB, DAG), 1 male on 9th, 1 on 21st and 2 (male & female) on 24th (DAG).

Elsewhere, a single bird was reported from the Spey estuary on eight days between 13-28 Aug (MJHC et al.) but it is uncertain whether the same individual was involved throughout. At Portknockie, two flew over the old railway line on 24 Aug (RP) and one was in Findhorn Bay on 11 Sep (AJL).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Scarce migrant.

Prior to this year there have only been eight spring records, so 2013 was unusual. First of the year was 1 Lossie estuary 25 Apr (DAG). This is the earliest record for Moray & Nairn. Prior to this, the earliest was in 2008, on 6 May - coincidentally the same date as the second bird of 2013, in breeding plumage at Kingston (DMP). All the other spring records were from Findhorn Bay where one was present between 10-16 May, with 2 on 15th (RSC, GMcM).



Curlew Sandpiper, Findhorn Bay 10 May 2013 (Photo: Richard Somers Cocks)

A good number of reports during late summer into autumn, but never more than three together. First were 2 adults, still showing traces of breeding plumage, at the Spey estuary on 25-27 Jul (DMP, MJHC, LSi). The only August record was 1 Lossie estuary on 24th (DPi). In September, 1 Spey estuary on 1st (MJHC) was the only autumn record there. At Lossie estuary during September the pattern of occurrence was 1 on 4th, 8th and 13th, 3 on 14th, 2 on 15th and 18th, 1 on 20th-21st, 2 on 22nd and 1 on 23rd-24th (DAG, HF et al.). It is very likely that a small number of lingering birds accounted for these records. In Findhorn Bay during September, 2 on 2nd, 7th and 16th, and 1 on 21st (DMP). On the 7th there were two individuals, one associating with Dunlin and the other with Redshank (GMcM, DMP). The last record of the year was 2 Lossie estuary 11 Oct (EH) - the latest since 2007 when there were records on 13 and 15 Oct.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Scarce migrant and fairly common but very localised winter visitor.

Monthly maxima at the three main sites were:

Winter-spring:

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
Nairn/Culbin Bars	102	207	nc	nc	nc	nc
Lossiemouth	56	33	nc	42	14	2
Findhorn Bay	1	5	0	0	2	0

Late summer-autumn:

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	nc	nc	nc	61	nc	40
Lossiemouth	c100	62	23	42	13	51
Findhorn Bay	7	9	10	6	15	12

The count of 207 on the Culbin Bar on 10 Feb (AY) is the highest since 226 during Dec 2008.

Unusually numerous at the Spey estuary in late July when 25 on 29th and 15 on 30th (MJHC). The last birds recorded prior to heading north to breeding grounds were 2 Lossiemouth east beach 1 Jun and the first returning birds were 3, still in breeding plumage, at the same location on 4 Jul.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Scarce breeder, very common migrant and winter visitor.

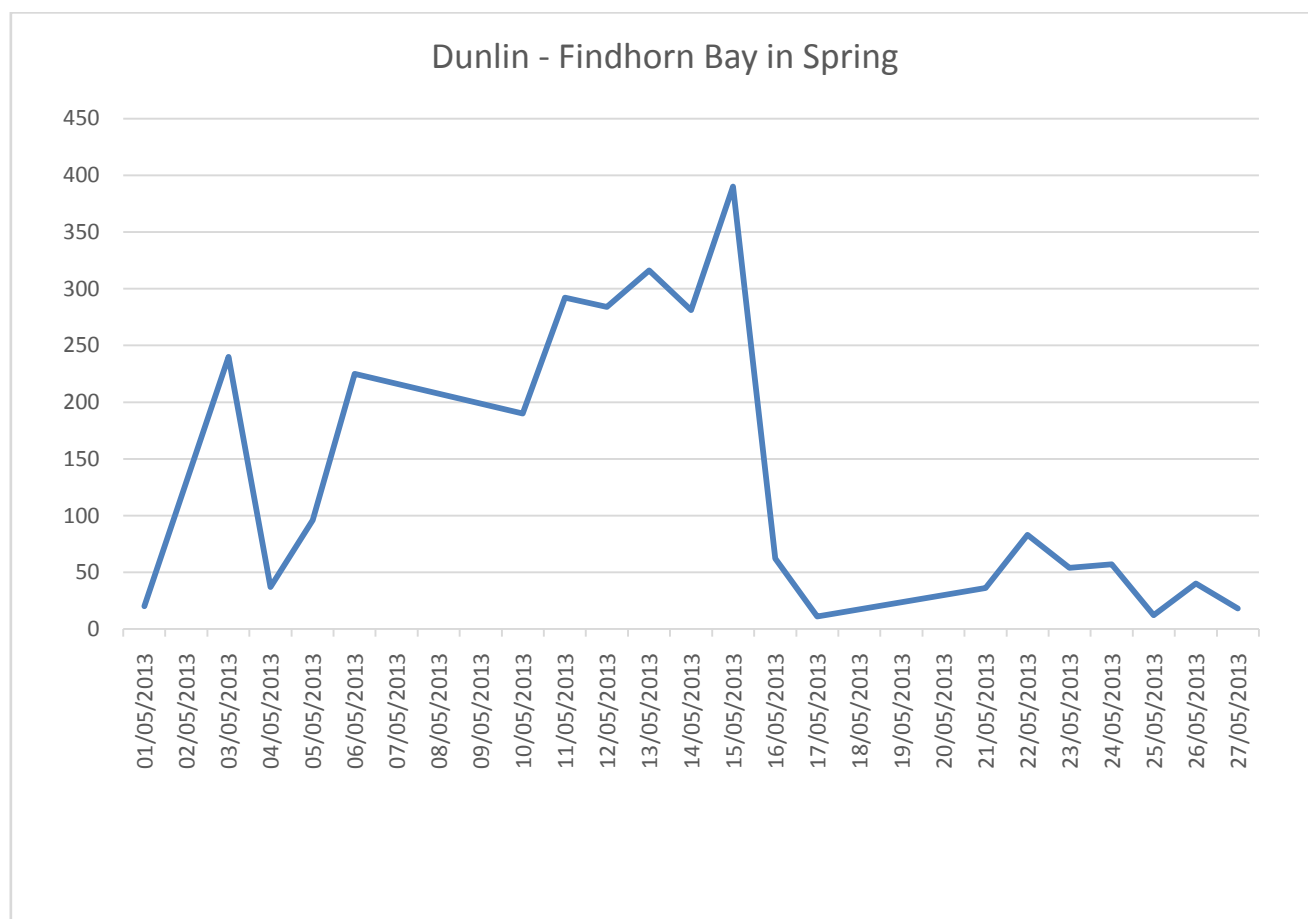
Breeding: Two records were received from potential breeding grounds in the Cairngorms - 1 Creag Mhor 16 Jun and 4 Beinn a' Chaorainn 22 Jun (GWi).

Winter monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	315	348	5	nc	600
Findhorn Bay	c.1300	1285	414	c.1500	940
Lossiemouth	130	50	7	106	31

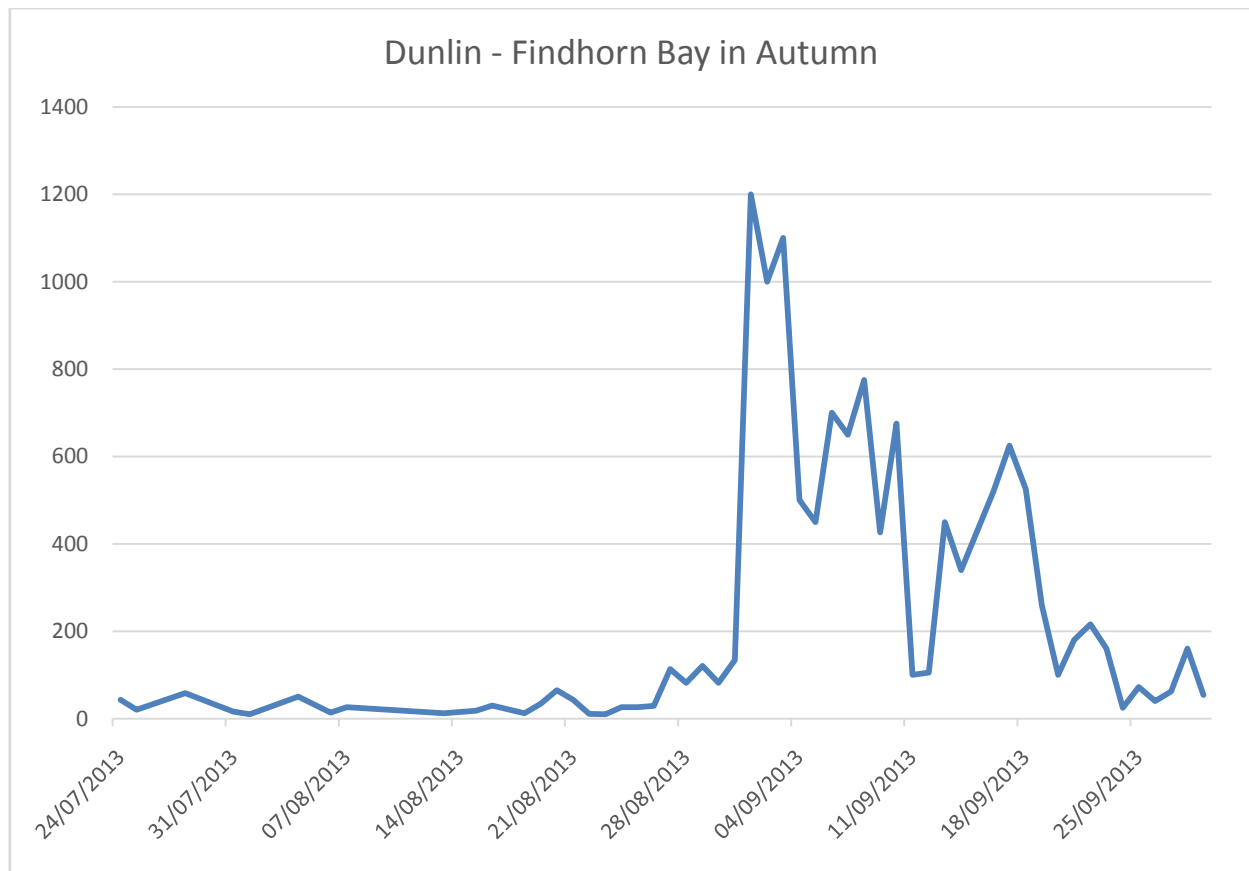
The highest count during March was of c.600 Findhorn Bay on 13th. Unusual high numbers in winter at the Spey estuary where 54 on 22 Feb and 69 on 31 Dec. Elsewhere, 35 Portgordon 20 Oct.

Spring passage: Counts in Findhorn Bay in May show the following pattern:



During May at Lossiemouth there was a peak of 79 on 1st and at the Spey estuary the highest count was 16 on the 15th the same day as the peak of c.390 at Findhorn. Unusually, two flew west over Loch Spynie on 26 May.

Autumn passage (July-September): Numerous counts from Findhorn Bay gave an indication of autumn migration as illustrated in the graph below:



The peak was 1200 on 1 Sep. At the Spey estuary, counts of 220 on 28 Aug, 225 on 1 Sep and reducing to 131 on 9 Sep were very much in line with the timing of movements through Findhorn Bay. No correlation from Lossiemouth with the maximum was 46 on 28 Jul.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Common winter visitor.

Main winter site maxima were:

	January-March	October-December
Burghead-Hopeman	27	17
Lossiemouth	45	64
Portgordon-Strathlene	38*	8*

* recorded only at Buckpool, where also 22 on 9 Apr.

In less usual sites, 12 Covesea 7 Dec, 4 Culbin Bar 15 Dec, 1 Cullen 9 & 24 Apr and, at Nairn, 2 on 13 Jan, 8 on 19 Nov and 9 on 6 Dec.

The last spring record was 24 Lossiemouth north pier 4 May and first to return were 3 Lossiemouth 9 Sep.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Very scarce migrant, mostly in autumn.

Spring: One in breeding plumage in Findhorn Bay 10-11 Jun (MJHC et al).

Autumn: Seen at the following localities:

Spey estuary: 3 on 28 Aug, 1 on 29 Aug, 2 on 30 Aug, 1 on 1 Sep, 1 on 9 Sep, 3 on 13 & 18 Sep (MJHC, CAG, HC).

Lossiemouth: 1 at west beach on 30 Aug (CAG) and 1 on Lossie estuary on 4-9 & 16 Oct (HF, DMai, FA et al.).

Nairn: 1 on 8 Sep (RW)



Little Stint, Findhorn Bay 11 June 2013 (Photo: Tony Backx)

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

Rare visitor.

An adult was found in Findhorn Bay on 10 Jun and remained until 14 Jun (RSC, MJHC, GMcM, ABa, RHD, RP et al.). This is only the second record of this North American species in Moray & Nairn - the first was in June 2011 at Hopeman.

More details of this record can be found on page 76 of this Report.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

Rare visitor.

An excellent year for this North American species with both spring and autumn records. One was at the Netherton pool on the south side of Findhorn Bay on 2 Jun (GMcM, RSC, DAG) and in autumn, one was on the Spey estuary on 18 Sep (MJHC). These represent the 12th & 13th records for Moray and Nairn.



Pectoral Sandpiper, Netherton 2 June 2013 (Photo: Gordon McMullins)

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Common summer visitor and breeder.

Arrival: First was 1 on the River Findhorn near Forres on 15 Apr. Five days later, the next were 1 Lossie estuary and 1 in Nairn on 20 Apr. On 21 Apr, 1 Cloddach quarry and 1 (well up country) in the Drynahan valley.

The first arrival dates since 2003 were:

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Date (April)	18 th	18 th	17 th	23 rd	15 th	20 th	9 th	17 th	12 th	10 th	15 th

Breeding: The only proved breeding record was of a nest with a clutch of four eggs at Cloddach quarry on 26 May (IFr). Up to 4 adults were seen at the quarry and the last record was of 1 on 28 Jul.

During late April-June, records from potential breeding sites near the coast included birds seen on the lower reaches of the Rivers Nairn and Findhorn, the Spey estuary, a gravel pool in Lossie Forest and at Loch Spynie. Further up country, May-June records came from the Drynahan valley, River Fiddich between Craigellachie and Balvenie distillery, Blacksboat, Loch Dallas and Creag Mhor.

The only post-breeding assemblages of 10 or more were 12 Spey estuary 7 Jul and 10 there on 19 Jul. Elsewhere, 5 approximately one mile up the River Lossie 4 Aug, and at the Mosset Burn (Findhorn Bay) there were 8 on 9 Aug.

Last inland was 1 Cloddach quarry 28 Jul, and at the coast, 2 Spey estuary 28 Aug.

Dates for 'last record of the year' have fluctuated greatly over recent years:

2003	*2004	*2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
25Aug	5 Sep	16 Oct	14 Sep	2 Sep	21 Sep	4 Sep	31 Jul	28 Sep	19Aug	28 Aug

* During November in 2004 and in 2005, on the Spey near Fochabers, there were records of what was presumed to be an over-wintering bird.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Very scarce migrant, rare in winter.

A good year with records received during the summer, autumn and winter.

First of the year was 1 Spey estuary 11 Jul (MJHC). At Montgrew (Keith) there were 2 on 28-29 Jul and 1 on 30 Jul (WMM, MJHC, GBig). One on 5 Aug (GBig) was perhaps a different bird.

In and around the southern area of Findhorn Bay, birds were recorded between August and November as follows: 3 on 6-10 Aug (GMcM, RSC), 1 on 11 & 13 Aug RSC, GMcM), 4 on 23 Aug (GMcM) and 1 on 24 Aug (RHD). In autumn, 1 between 12 Oct-1 Nov (RHD, RSC, AW).

Elsewhere in autumn, 1 Nether Birnie (Cloddach) 6-12 Oct (DAG) and 1 Loch Spynie 17 Oct (GBig).

The group of four at the Mosset Burn in Findhorn Bay in August is the most together since 4 at Fogwatt in September 1997.



Green Sandpipers, Montgrew 29 July 2013 (Photo: Gordon Biggs)

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Very scarce migrant.

A poor year with only one record, of a single bird on the Spey estuary on 28 Aug (MJHC).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Scarce migrant, very scarce in winter.

Spring (late March-June): Single birds in Findhorn Bay on 13 Mar, 31 Mar, 2, 3 & 8 Apr and 12 May. Elsewhere, 1 Loch Spynie 13 Apr, 1 Portgordon 18 Apr and 1 Spey estuary 27 Apr.

Late summer-autumn (July-October): First was 1 Spey estuary 22 Jul. Seventy-three others records were received during this period, of which 58 concerned 1-2 birds. The largest numbers were during August when there highest counts at various locations were 5 Lossie estuary on 4th, 4 Findhorn Bay on 10th and 7 at the Spey estuary on 23rd & 28th. The only inland record during this period was 1 Montgrew 27-29 Jul.

Winter: During the early winter period, 1 Findhorn Bay 8-24 Feb (GMcM et al.). During the second winter period, 5 Findhorn Bay 1 Nov (AW), and 1 there 3-5 Nov (GMcM), and 1 Lossie estuary 2 Nov (EH).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Very scarce migrant.

In spring, 2 Spey estuary 26 May (MJHC). In late summer, 1 Spey estuary 8-16 Aug (MJHC, ABa, KLG) is likely to refer to a single individual.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Scarce breeder, very common migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding: At Netherton pool on the south side of Findhorn Bay there was a pair with two chicks on 3 Jun (RSC). Although adults were noted in the same area until 24 Jun, when five were seen, no other records of chicks or juveniles were received. Only one record from up-coutry, of one bird at Tomintoul on 22 Jun (KR). The only other inland record was 2 Montgrew 17 Jul.

Spring (March-May)

Findhorn Bay: An excellent number of counts, showing large fluctuations in numbers. Weekly maximum counts were:

26/2- 4/3	5/3- 11/3	12/3- 18/3	19/3- 25/3	26/3- 1/4	2/4- 8/4	9/4- 15/4	16/4- 22/4	23/4- 29/4	30/4- 6/5	7/5- 13/5	14/5- 20/5	21/5- 27/5	28/5- 3/6
450	575	450	300	485	460	500	338	510	200	1	1	0	4

(RSC, GMcM)

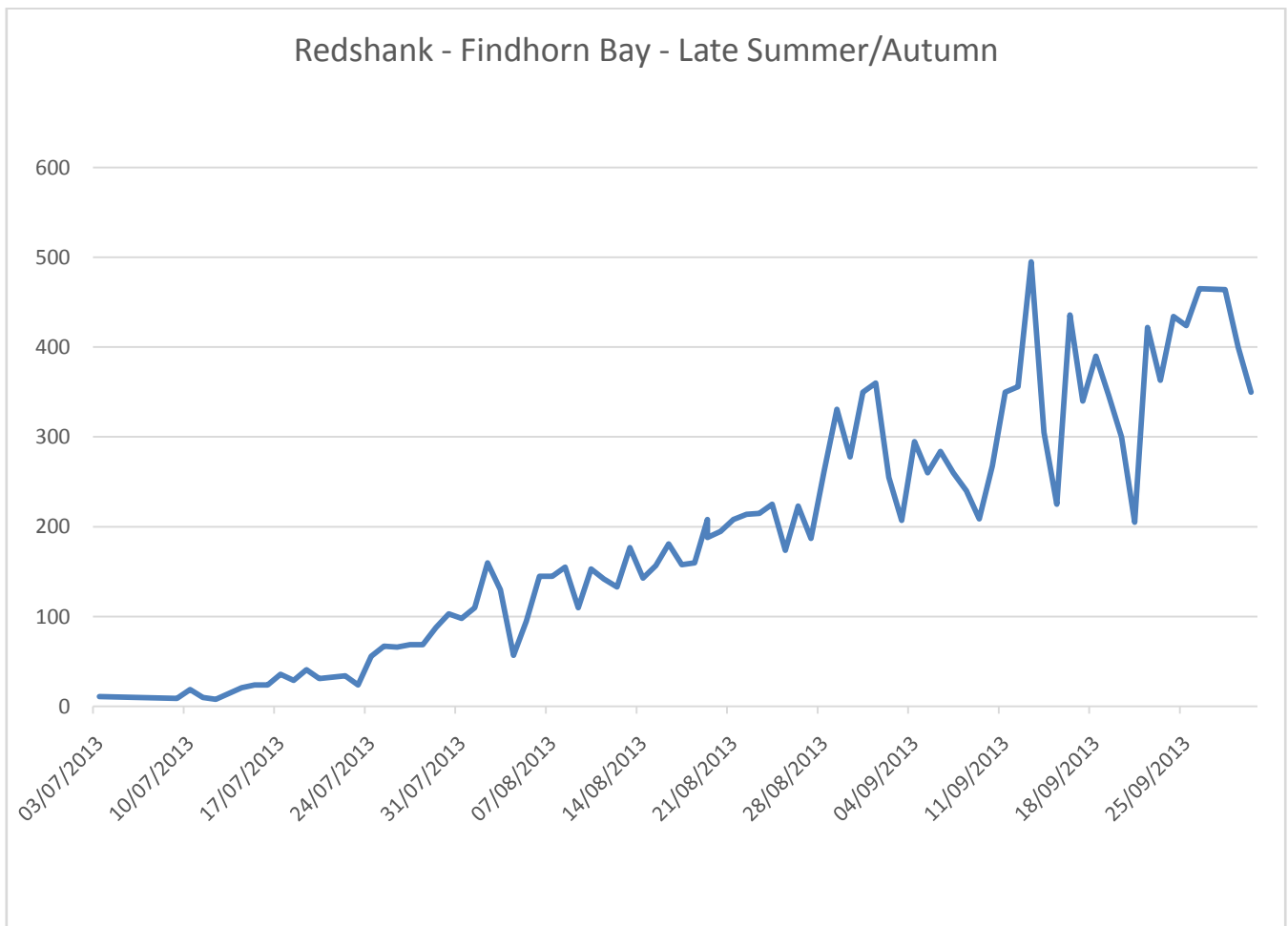
Lossie estuary: Monthly highest counts were 102 on 3 Mar, 86 on 21 Apr and 70 on 1 May.

Spey estuary: Throughout March and the first half of April there were never more than 4. A remarkable flock of 169 appeared on 21 Apr, and only 8 remained the following day. The only other day when more than 4 were present was 18 on 25 Apr (MJHC).

Elsewhere, c.70 Nairn on 1 May.

Late summer/autumn (July-September)

Findhorn Bay: The build-up of numbers is illustrated below:



Numbers peaked during mid September when 495 on 13th.

Lossie estuary: Monthly highest counts were 68 on 12 Jul, 39 on 22 Aug and 30 on 14 Sep.

Spey estuary: Monthly highest counts were 36 on 12 Jul, 29 on 13 Aug and 17 on 9 Sep.

Elsewhere, at Nairn harbour there were 36 on 23 Sep.

Winter: Monthly maxima at the coast were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	76	24	7	31
Findhorn Bay	392	c.310	545	530
Burghead-Hopeman	46	14	15	23
Lossiemouth	71	55	42	13
Portgordon-Strathlene	61	21	87	76

Also, in Findhorn Bay, the highest number reported in November, and indeed the highest count of the year, was of 592 on 11th.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Scarce migrant and winter visitor.

A slight improvement on the last four years. In the early winter period, 1 Kingsteps 13 Jan and 8 there on 10 Feb (GP). Also 1 Lethen Bar (Darnaway) on 20 Jan (SRee).

In summer, one flushed from the grass at the edge of Findhorn Bay on 4 Aug (RSC) was extremely unusual. This is the first bird ever recorded in the May-August summer period in Moray & Nairn.

On the south side of Findhorn Bay in October, 1 Netherton on 15th (AMca), 3 near the Mosset Burn on 17th (FA) and a single bird nearby (one of the three?) also on 17th (RHD). All other records were from Kingsteps, where 4 on 20 Oct (GP), 1 on 1 Nov (KLG), 1 on 26 Nov (DMP) and 2 on 15 Dec (GP).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Common resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor.

Early winter period: In January, single birds were reported in the coastal lowlands at Loch na Bo, Cooper Park (Elgin), Kinloss and Loch Spynie (2). Up-country, 1 Glen Rinnes 6 Jan and 1 Dufftown 18 Jan. Other lowland records of singles during February-March were from Mundole, Rafford, Culbin Forest, Forres, Loch Spynie and Cloddach, with 2 at Alves 18 Feb.

Breeding: Very little breeding information received. Roding was seen from Hamilton Crescent (Elgin) 1 May and at Loch Spynie 9 May. At Dava one showed distraction display 25 May. A single bird was reported in the Culbin Forest 5 May.

Autumn/winter: Up-country, 2 Dava 8 Nov, 1 there 11 Dec and 1 Monahoudie Moss (Archiestown) 6 Dec. In the coastal lowlands, one flew up the Lossie estuary 7 Dec, another was in the woods at Pitgaveny 12 Dec and one was on the road at Wellheads (Whiteash) 27 Dec.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Common breeder and migrant.

Breeding: No reports apart from 2 in breeding habitat at Lock Kirkaldy 28 Mar.

Winter-spring: In January, 3 Netherton farm 1st, 7 Dufftown 2nd (and 3 there on 19th) and 1 Kingsteps 13th. In February, 9 Kingsteps 10th and single birds at Netherton on several dates with 2 on 11th. In March, one in the south east of Findhorn Bay on 8th-9th and 5 on the banks of the Spynie canal near the Lossiemouth-Elgin road on 31 Mar.

Autumn-winter: Small numbers widely reported in the lowlands. Instances of three or more together included 3 Montgrew 20 Aug, 4 Kingston 18 Sep, 83 Kingsteps 20 Oct (GP) (and 12 there 1 Nov and 13 on 12 Dec), 6 Spey estuary 23 Nov, 6 Findhorn Bay 30 Nov and 13 Kingston (on the Lein) 21 Dec. Inland in winter was one beside the River Spey at Aberlour 7 Dec.

The record of 83 at Kingsteps is the largest congregation in Moray & Nairn since 134 were counted in Culbin in October 1995.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Very scarce migrant offshore in summer and autumn, rare in winter.

Another very poor year with only two records. One was seen off Burghead on 23 May (CSW) and one flew west in Burghead Bay on 21 Sep (DAG).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Fairly common migrant in summer and autumn.

Spring: Unusually frequent in May. First was 1 off Lossiemouth 27 Apr. Best count by far was of 21 past Burghead in 2 hours 30 minutes on 23 May (AMca). Small numbers were observed passing Burghead or Findhorn on most days in May, usually up to three daily but more on 8th (7), 15th (4), 22nd (4) and 24th (5). Passing Portknockie in May were 4 on 12th, 3 on 23rd, 7 on 24th and 7 on 28th.

Summer: The only records in June-July were at Lossiemouth (2 on 23 Jun, 1 on 2 Jul, 1 on 10 Jul, 1 on 22 Jul, 1 on 26 Jul and 5 on 27 Jul), Tugnet (1 on 30 Jun) and Burghead Bay/Findhorn (1 on 25 Jul).

Autumn: Recorded throughout August and September, with two October records (single birds off Tugnet on 4th and Lossiemouth on 24th) and the last of the year in November when one passed Lossiemouth on 3rd.

Numbers were generally low with five or more being seen on only two occasions, both off Lossiemouth, where 9 on 11 Aug and 13 on 1 Sep (RP). Often up to 3 in Burghead Bay in August, sometimes chasing the Sandwich Terns.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Fairly common migrant in summer and autumn.

Spring: First were 1 Portknockie 12 May and 1 Tugnet 15 May. Northerly winds late in May pushed birds close inshore, especially on 23rd (when 3 Burghead, 3 Lossiemouth and 2 Portknockie) and 24th (when 6 Lossiemouth (RP), 1 Findhorn and 1 Strathlene). Later, 7 past Portknockie in 2 hours on 28 May (LSi).

Summer: In June-July, 1-2 offshore on nine dates. The only significant passage was indicated on 23 Jun when 7 passed Lossiemouth in 2 hours (RP, DAG).

Autumn: Recorded offshore in small numbers on 20 dates in August-September and three dates in October, with the last being one past Burghead on 18th. All records were of 1-2 birds except off Lossiemouth where 3 passed in 40 minutes on 24 Aug, 16 in 2 hours on 6 Sep and 3 in 50 minutes on 7 Sep (DAG, RP).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Very scarce offshore.

A few more reports than in recent years: 1 Lossiemouth west beach 23 Mar (CAG), 5 Portknockie 28 May (LSi), 1 off Lossiemouth 6 Dec and 2 past Lossiemouth 28 Dec (RP).

In addition, two were found dead on Cullen beach on 9 Apr (MJHC).



Puffin passing Portknockie 28 May 2013 (Photo:Lenny Simpson)

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle**Scarce breeder and scarce offshore.*

Breeding: Highest counts of adults on the sea below breeding cliffs were 21 Portknockie 2 Apr (LSi) and 21 Tronach Head 13 Apr (MJHC). The combined total of 42 is fewer than the 53 counted in spring 2012. On 12 Jun, two nests were found at Portknockie and two at Tronach Head, where one chick was ringed in the usual crevice on 20 Jul (MJHC).

Storm-weakened birds from December 2012 continued to be found in Buckie and Burghead harbours in January e.g 4 dead in Buckie harbour on 13 Jan. This mortality may have contributed to the fall in the breeding population noted above.

Away from the east Moray breeding area, a remarkable passage took place past Lossiemouth on 11 Aug, when 69 passed (all but two flying west) in 2 hours (RP). Otherwise many sightings along the coast in autumn winter, notably 9 Lossiemouth 18 Aug, 8 Tugnet 11 Oct, 4 Burghead Bay 15 Oct and 5 Lossiemouth 29 Dec.

Razorbill *Alca torda**Scarce breeder, very common offshore.*

Breeding: At the Portknockie colony, 66 adults were at potential breeding sites on cliff ledges on 4 Jun (MJHC). Five were on ledges at Tronach Head on 12 Jun (MJHC).

Exceptional numbers offshore in spring and early summer. Off Burghead on 7 Apr, 2953 were counted on the sea with an estimated further 500 flying past (RP). Numbers here dropped to 400 by 14 Apr (RP) but there were 880 on 2 May (MJHC). At the west end of Burghead Bay, 300 were estimated on 8 & 17 Apr (RSC, GMcM). Later, at the end of May, another large congregation was found off Portknockie where 2000+ were counted on 28 May (LSi), and there were 760 off Buckpool on 29 May (MJHC). Counts of 100 or more at other localities were 169 in central Burghead Bay 7 Apr (RP), 110 Boar's Head Rock 26 May (MJHC), 264 off Tugnet on 28 May (MJHC) and 250 off Tronach Head on 29 May (MJHC). The majority of 650 auks off Tugnet on 19 Jun were Razorbills.

Notable autumn/winter counts were c.400 flying west past Burghead on 23 Oct (RP) and 473 flying west past Lossiemouth on 28 Dec (RP).

Little Auk *Alle alle**Very scarce visitor in autumn and winter. Occasionally more numerous.*

Typically scarce. The only records were 1 Burghead 27 Jan (CAG) and 3 Lossiemouth 5 Dec (RP).

Guillemot *Uria aalge**Very common offshore.*

Despite the huge numbers of Razorbills, very few Guillemots were off Burghead in spring/early summer. Up to 10 were seen regularly off Findhorn in the summer months. More were seen further east where 350+ were off Portknockie on 28 May (LSi). On 1-6 Jun up to 20 were ashore on sea-level rocks and, on 4 Jun, 4 out of 10 were 'bridled' birds (MJHC). Also at this time, c.50 on the sea off Tugnet 28 May.

Best counts at other times were 41 Culbin Bar 10 Feb, 41 Burghead Bay 9 Sep and c.120 Cullen Bay 12 Sep. Two adults off Portknockie on 8 Sep were each accompanying a juvenile, definitely not reared in Moray & Nairn.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons**Very scarce summer visitor and rare breeder.*

First of the year was one on Lossiemouth west beach 7 May (DAG). This was followed on 9 May by two on Lossiemouth east beach (MSh) and two at Tugnet (DMP). A pair was regularly seen on the shingle point at Findhorn between 10-23 May and although they were seen mating they did not breed at this location.

Breeding: The only recorded site was Lossiemouth east beach where three pairs were present with a chick on 26 & 30 Jun (DAG). A further nest site with a pair recorded on the shingle bordering Lossie Forest on 26 Jun (MJHC). There were also 6 other adults that few off on this occasion. Nothing was noted on the shingle at Garmouth this year.

In July on Lossiemouth east beach 23 were recorded on the 19th (MSh) and 16 adults and a juvenile on the 20th (RSC).



Little Terns on Lossiemouth east beach, 6 June 2013 (Photo: Margaret Sharpe)

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Very common summer visitor and occasional breeder.

Arrival: The first records of the year were sightings on 3 Apr of 24 on Nairn east beach and one on Findhorn Bay. First sightings at other locations in Apr included 1 at Tugnet 4th, 1 at Portknockie 6th, 2 at Lossie estuary 7th and 20 at Burghead Bay 12th. The main influx along the coast occurred during the 2nd week of Apr. First arrival dates in the last ten years have been as follows:

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
28 Mar	1 Apr	1 Apr	31 Mar	3 Apr	22 Mar	25 Mar	27 Mar	18 Mar	3 Apr

Breeding: No breeding in 2013. Breeding was last confirmed in Moray & Nairn in 2005.

First juveniles with adults from colonies outwith Moray & Nairn were noted from mid July. From the colour ringed birds observed at Findhorn, many of the juveniles had come from the Forvie NNR on the Ythan Estuary. Some had also arrived from breeding sites on the Farne Islands and a few from the Netherlands (RSC). Several counts over 300 were observed at Findhorn in late August and early September, with the maximum of c.425 on 9 Sep. Elsewhere, counts of over 200 included c.200 at Culbin foreshore on 16 Aug and 265 on the Spey estuary on 15 Aug.

Half-monthly maximum counts of flocks on the shore at Findhorn, Lossie estuary and Spey estuary in July-September were:

	Early Jul	Late Jul	Early Aug	Late Aug	Early Sep	Late Sep
Findhorn	29	84	400	410	425	130
Lossie estuary	0	7	100	26	38	2
Spey estuary	2	66	265	194	25	5

The best passage movements observed in autumn were 264 past Portknockie in 1 hour on 9 Sep and 32 past Lossiemouth in 1 hour on 18 Sep.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Summer visitor and fairly common breeder.

Arrival: One was at Burghead on 14 Apr, a typical date, and 13 at the Spey estuary on 25 Apr.

Breeding: At Loch Spynie, there were at least 24 apparently occupied nests on the platform on 25 Jun (MJHC). Juvenile counts were 8 large chicks on 25 Jun, 4 almost fledged or fledged chicks on 14 Jul, 5 on 20 Jul, 6 on 28 Jul and 10 on 12 Aug (MJHC, DAG, CRO). On the Spey river shingles at Garmouth, at least four pairs were nesting on 30 Jun and a few pairs were still there on 6 Jul, but no young were raised (MJHC). Inland, one pair had a nest on an island at Cloddach quarry pools on 29 Jun but the breeding attempt was unsuccessful (MJHC, DAG).

High counts at various sites included c.200 on Findhorn beach on 16 May (GMcM), 60+ at Loch Spynie on 11 Jul (CAG), 65 at Tugnet on 16 Aug (MJHC) and 24 at Lossie estuary on 18 & 27 Aug (RP). Two were also seen for the first time at Loch Oire on 19 Jul (MJHC). Last of the year were two on Findhorn beach with Sandwich Terns on 21 Sep (RSC).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Summer visitor and fairly common breeder.

Arrival: First returning birds were four in Burghead Bay on 15 Apr.

Breeding: The only record of nesting was on the shingles of the Spey estuary where there were five pairs with the Common Terns on the west side of the river mouth on 6 Jul (MJHC), but no young were raised. About 10 pairs were also seen on the shingle west of Boar's Head Rock at Lossie forest on 27 May (MJHC). No other nest sites were recorded in the area.

Large numbers of 'commic' (Common or Arctic) terns were present at the Spey estuary in July e.g. 135 on 9th, 155 on 12th, 72 on 16th and 110 on 29th - at least 70% of these were Arctic Terns. The last of the season was a late adult flying west past Lossiemouth on 24 Oct.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

Rare migrant.

An adult flew west past Lossiemouth on 24 Oct (RP). This is the 15th record for Moray & Nairn.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Very common breeder and migrant.

Breeding: A decrease in nests at both the Covesea and Portknockie colonies in 2013, which reversed the upward trend of apparently occupied nests (AON) at both of these sites in recent years. There were 425 AON at Covesea on 3 Jun (MJHC). Meanwhile at Portknockie there were 233 AON on 4 Jun (MJHC). Both these figures represent about 60-70% of the total AON seen in 2012.

Numbers of AON in the past 10 years at these colonies are as follows:

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Covesea	397	302	437	474	420	468	535	540	590	425
Portknockie	109	158	246	238	263	332	355	360	365	233

Peak passage counts offshore this year were in late summer/autumn as is typical for this species. Counts passing Lossiemouth included 60 on 8 Aug, 235 on 6 Sep, 70 on 18 Sep and even 73 on 25 Dec (RP). A count of 175 was also observed on the sea off Tugnet on 4 Oct.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Fairly common resident breeder and very common winter visitor

Breeding: Numbers were once again up at Loch Spynie, with 15 apparently occupied nests on the platform on 21 May (RP) and at least nine chicks seen between 21-23 May (RP). Elsewhere, about 50 active nests and 240 birds were seen at Loch Dallas on 9 Jun (IFr). Some breeding birds were also seen rising from Carex fen at Loch Noir on 9 Jun (IFr). Although Black-headed Gulls were seen widely throughout the area, no other nesting sites were reported in 2013.

Counts of 300 or more on Findhorn Bay included 320 on 10 Jul, 440 on 14 Jul, 320 on 22 Jul, 372 on 10 Aug and 415 on 13 Aug (RSC, GMcM). Elsewhere, high counts included 145 on 11 Jan at Nairn Bar, 128 on 15 Feb at Loch Spynie, 78 on 17 Feb at Cooper Park pond (Elgin) and 156 on 3 Sep at Lossie estuary.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Very scarce visitor.

Up to two 1st winters/juveniles were regularly seen at Lossie estuary from 26 Sep to 10 Oct (DAG, DMai, HF). Two had also been seen on Findhorn beach on 20 Aug (RSC) and on 6 Oct a 1st winter was sighted on Findhorn Bay (DAG).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Very scarce visitor.

The recent trend of increased records of this species continued in 2013 with three separate sightings. A 2nd winter bird was at Loch Oire on 28 Mar (DGD) and this was followed by a 1st summer at the Spey estuary on 21 Apr (MJHC). An adult was found on Lossiemouth west beach, before moving to the Lossie estuary, on 7 Oct (CAG, MJHC).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Very common resident breeder and winter visitor.

Breeding: The colony at Tips of Corsemaul held 220 birds on 7 May and 7 Jun (IFr). In Elgin, the old gas works breeding site at Tyock contained 150 birds on 5 Apr (RP). An estimated 20 adults were at the Elgin cemetery breeding site at Linkwood on 20 Apr with a nest seen at the site on the same day and a brood of two juveniles seen there on 31 May. On 1 Jun three nests and a brood of three were seen at the cemetery (RP). Elsewhere, at Christies nursery (Forres) a minimum of 42 apparently occupied nests and some chicks were observed on 7 Jun (RP). At Lossiemouth cemetery there was a brood of two on 21 Jun (RP). At Garmouth 20 birds were seen on 29 May on an island by the golf course (MJHC).

Flock counts in excess of 400 away from breeding areas included 400 at Corskie Farm, Garmouth on 23 Oct. At Findhorn 630 were seen on the beach on 11 Mar and 550 on the bay on 29 Aug. Tugnet counts included 460 on 13 Sep, 670 on 27 Sep and 460 on 4 Oct. The highest count of the year was 780 at Loch Oire on 10 Feb.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder. Very scarce in winter.

Wintering: Recorded in both winter periods. In the first winter period, an adult was at Nairn west beach on 5 Jan (DAG). An adult was also at Lossie estuary on 19 Jan (DAG). This is a location where an adult has been seen over winter months in recent years and one was last seen at the estuary on 16 Nov (DAG) which suggests that it may have been over-wintering again.

Arrival: Assuming that the birds mentioned above were over-wintering then the first arrivals were noted in early March with 3 at Lossie estuary 6th, 1 Tugnet 7th, 2 Loch Oire 8th and 1 Cooper Park (Elgin) 9th.

Breeding: About 13 apparently occupied nests were found around the Moycroft industrial estate (Elgin) on 1 Jun (RP). Two pairs, including one with a nest, were at Bow Fiddle Rock (Portknockie) on 4 Jun (MJHC). High counts of the year at Cooper Park pond (Elgin) were 11 on 19 Apr, 12 on 29 Jun and 10 on 18 Aug. Elsewhere, 11 Loch Oire 29 Jun and 9 Spey estuary 5 May.

Presumed Lesser Black-backed x Herring Gull hybrids at the Lossie estuary included one adult on 23 Mar and 2 adults on 24 Aug which included the returning bird from previous years with a twisted right leg (RP).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Very common resident breeder and winter visitor.

Breeding: 75 apparently occupied nests were found around the Moycroft industrial estate (Elgin) on 1 Jun (RP), and a pair had a brood of two at Blane Place (Elgin) on 3 Jul (RP).

Monthly maximum counts on the Lossie and Spey estuaries and at Cooper Park pond (Elgin) were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Lossie estuary	58	200	85	622	74	530	1052	144	24	175	88	149
Spey estuary	290	nc	nc	260	200	850	575	660	560	290	nc	nc
Cooper Park	81	75	103	113	64	60	29	129	40	112	68	124

Elsewhere, counts over 500 were 552 Loch Oire 27 Feb, 540 Loch Spynie 8 Mar and about 1000 Sherrifston Farm (Llanbryde) 1 Jan.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

Very scarce winter visitor.

As always with this species, duplication is impossible to discount fully as mobile individuals around the coastal strip may relate to more than one sighting. Observers are requested to note the ages of individuals involved, and whether birds are considered the same or different to any others seen around the same period to assist in obtaining a full picture of the number of individuals seen.

A good year, difficult to ascertain the exact number of birds but probably a similar number to 2012 with 15-18 individuals involved.

Brodie Castle: A 2nd winter bird 8 Apr (LSi).

Burghead: A 1st year 7 Apr (RP, DAG).

Kinloss airfield: An adult 29-30 Apr (AJL).

Llanbryde: A 2nd winter bird 30 Jan (DGD).

Sheriffston: A probable 3rd winter bird 1 Jan (JDL).

Loch Oire/Urquhart: An adult was present from mid Jan until mid Apr (many obs). Another adult was present on 9 Feb and from 21-29 Mar (RP, MJHC, ABa). A different adult with more buff plumage was present 10 Feb (RP). At Urquhart an adult was present between 5 Feb and 5 Apr, which was joined by a second on 26 Feb, 4 & 12 Mar (EH). Given the similarity to the sightings at Loch Oire these may have been the same. A different, immature bird was seen on 16 May (EH).

Loch Spynie: A 1st winter bird was present 5 Mar (DAG), a 2nd winter bird on 18 Apr (HF), and a 3rd winter bird on 27 Apr (DAG). An adult was also reported on 28 Apr (CAG).

Lossie estuary: A very 'clean' adult was reported 2 Jan to 3 Mar (DAG). A different adult was seen 20 Jan and 9 Feb (RP, DAG). Another, possibly different, bird was present 5 May (DMai). At the end of the year an adult was present 15-27 Dec (DAG).

Spey estuary: A 2nd winter bird on sea 28 Mar and an immature bird 19 Apr (MJHC).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus**Very scarce winter visitor.*

A slightly higher count than last year with around seven seen in 2013.

A juvenile was at Burghead 10 Jan (DMai) and a 1st winter bird was present at Lossie estuary 3 & 10 Jan (DAG, CAG). Also at Lossie estuary an adult feeding on the sea 3 Apr (DAG), a 2nd summer bird 19 Jun (DAG), and later a bird was reported 1 & 3 Oct (GBig, DMai). Around the Spey estuary one 1st winter present 19 Feb (MJHC) and possibly the same bird on 16 Apr (DAG). An immature flew past Tugnet on 24 Apr (MJHC).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus**Scarce resident breeder and common visitor.*

Breeding: The only reports of breeding were two pairs on the cliffs at Portknockie 4 & 12 Jun (one of which had a chick and another was on a nest) and three pairs with nests at Tronach Head 21 May (MJHC).

Numbers slightly down this year but still reasonable, especially at the Lossie and Spey estuaries in late summer/autumn. On the Lossie estuary numbers peaked at 425 on 1 Aug (RP) whilst at the Spey, numbers peaked at 466 on 16 Oct (MJHC). These estuaries are only about 10 km apart and the extent of interchange between these two flocks is uncertain. Lesser numbers were also present at Findhorn which peaked at 72 on 25 Sep (RSC, GMcM).

Maximum monthly counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Lossie estuary	3	20	14	20	20	86	133	425	400	243	22	26
Spey estuary	44	40	77	42	24	54	121	160	340	466	79	nc
Findhorn	2	nc	28	nc	nc	16	14	52	72	nc	nc	32

The only other coastal count to exceed 50 was 120 Strathlene 10 Oct (MJHC).

Loch Spynie had reasonable numbers in the winter months with 37 on 2 Jan, 42 on 24 Jan and 21 on 26 Dec (MJHC, RP).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia**Very common resident breeder.*

Largest flocks reported were 224 Buckie shipyard 15 Dec. Flocks estimated at 150 were counted at Barmuckity, Lossiemouth and Nairn.

Breeding behaviour still in November when birds were copulating in Burghead on 23rd.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas**Scarce resident breeder.*

Breeding season: Two pairs bred in nest boxes at Loch Spynie (CAG). Other records in the period late March-July included 1 Succoth (Cabrach) 18 Jul, 1 Kingsteps 8 Jul, 2 Milton Brodie 27 Apr and pairs in the dunes bordering Lossie Forest on 25 Jun and 19 Jul.

Autumn/winter records from additional localities were 1 Darkland 24 Nov and 6 Lesmurdie (Elgin) 21 Nov.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus**Very common resident breeder.*

Very few records - the largest flock reported was 200 Loch Spynie 21 Feb. Full song at Kingston on 5 Jan. Late breeding indicated by display at Bishopmill (Elgin) on Sep 29, and a freshly hatched egg shell found here on 1 Oct. Sometimes flushed from the Spey estuary where 4 on 5 May - also 1 Lossie estuary 29 Jul.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto**Very common resident breeder.*

The only flocks of 10 or more were 16 Lhanbryde 7 Feb, 14 Clochan 26 Oct and 11 Scarffbanks 29 Dec. Maximum counts each year since 1986 have been:

1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
35	26	41	35	22	38	52	66	25	100
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
22	24	26	17	31	32	17	19	20	22
2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013		
16	11	14	11	22	20	14	16		

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus**Summer visitor and fairly common breeder.*

Arrival: First heard at Findrassie on 30 Apr. Subsequently, in early May, 1 Dulsie 5th, 2 Lossie estuary 6th and 1 Kinloss 7th.

Subsequently seen or heard at Balnught (May), Blacksboat (May), Carn Liath (Jun), Dava (Jun), Drummuir (May), Forres (May), Glenlivet (Jun), Highland Boath (May), Kinloss (Jun), Lower Auchenreath (May), Manachie (May), Maviston (May), Spynie canal (Jun), Tomintoul (Jun) and Wardend (May).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba**Scarce resident breeder.*

A disappointingly small number of sightings reported, especially during the breeding season when the only records came from Alves, Cullen, Elchies, Sheals (fresh pellets) and Wellheads.

The number of occupied breeding-season localities reported in each of the past 10 years has been:

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
15	11	13	21	10	9	5	0	1	9	5

At other times of year, reports came from the following additional sites: Auldearn (Jan), Clashdon (Nov), Darkland (Nov), Dava (Dec), Duffus, Marcassie (Nov) and Tomhommie (Oct).

The total number of localities from which Barn Owls were reported (at any time of year) since 2003 is:

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
33	31	27	31	21	40	20	11	13	21	12

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus**Very scarce visitor.*

A male found in the Ben Macdui area of the Cairngorms plateau on 18 Feb remained there until last seen on 5 Apr (SA, PG, DMP, MJHC et al.).

This is the first record since one was photographed in the same area on 16 Feb 2008. Prior to that, the most recent was in 1998.



Snowy Owl near Ben Macdui, 1 March 2013 (Photo: Martin Cook)

A total of c.37 Moray & Nairn records has now accumulated of which 21 were on the Cairngorms plateau. The distribution of records by decade is as follows:

Pre 1940s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
4	1	3	14	2	6	5	1	1

The 1960s were clearly an exciting time for Snowy Owl enthusiasts with records from the Cairngorms plateau, the Archiestown area, Roy's Hill, Loch Noir and the Cabrach. How many different birds were involved in these records is impossible to be certain but in all probability the same roaming bird(s) accounted for many of them.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Common resident breeder.

Records received from 11 localities. The furthest up country was at Lochan Tutach on 7 Jun.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Scarce resident breeder.

Only two reports of this greatly under-recorded species: 1 Grange (Forres) 26 Jan (RJ) and 1 Muiry Wood (Forres) 17 Apr (ISS).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Rare breeder and very scarce migrant.

Breeding: Present in summer in breeding habitat were 1 Carn nan Clach Garbha 6 May (PH), 1 Dava 17 Jul (AJL), 2 Dunearn 3 Apr (PSw), near Tomintoul 1 & 29 May (MSo) and 1 carrying food Inchrory 5 Aug (AGK). Coastally, on the southern side of Findhorn Bay, single birds were seen on 17 Apr (RHD), 31 May (MFr) and 3 Aug (GMcM).

Elsewhere, at other times, single birds were seen at Cabrach 10 Jan (IFr), Findhorn Bay 12 Jan (DPi), Kinloss 3 Jan & 5 Mar (AJL) and Lossiemouth 20 Oct (flew in off the sea) (DAG).

Swift *Apus apus*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Arrival: No April records. First reports, in May, were 10 Loch Spynie and 3 Elgin 9th and 1 Forres 11th when numbers at Loch Spynie had risen to 50.

As usual, large numbers gathered to feed around Loch Spynie in adverse weather - c.100 on 12 Jun and c.250 on 25 Jun. Peak count at Burghead, where Swifts breed beside the harbour, was 18 on 31 Jul. Up to seven were regular around Findhorn and 18 were over Lossiemouth on 21 Jul. Small numbers (less than 10) also reported from Ardivot, Forres, Keith, Kinloss, Montgrew and Nairn.

Still 25 over Kinloss on 8 Aug and numerous over Keith on 9 Aug. Last reports were 3 Loch Spynie 12 Aug, birds heard over Lossiemouth on 15 Aug and 1 Burghead 23 Aug.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Very scarce visitor and occasional breeder.

Two pairs bred successfully on the River Spey - one pair at Arndilly near Rothes (EMit) and the other at Carron, where an adult was watched feeding a juvenile on 18 Aug (PC).

Other records involved single birds at Cooper Park (Elgin) on 14 Sep (MRa), Findhorn Bay on 28 Oct (RSC), Garmouth viaduct on 11 Aug (ISS), Tugnet on 17 Sep (MColl), River Findhorn near Randolph's Leap on 14 Aug (LSi) and at Loch Spynie on many dates between 15 Aug-11 Oct (CAG et al.).



Kingfisher, Loch Spynie 21 August 2013 (Photo: Gordon Biggs)

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Very scarce visitor.

One was reported near Tomintoul on 22 Jun (KR).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major**Common resident breeder.*

Very common in the woodlands around Loch Spynie where drumming heard from 23 Jan, and five counted on 3 May. Widely reported visiting garden feeding stations, and not only in the proximity of woodlands.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus**Scarce resident breeder.*

Breeding season (April-July) records included birds/pairs at Burghead, Covesea, Cullen, Dulsie Bridge (nest with 6 eggs), Findhorn, Kinloss, Lossiemouth east beach, Tomintoul, Tronach Head (nest with two chicks), Forres and Carse of Delnies.

Merlin *Falco columbarius**Scarce resident breeder and migrant.*

Breeding: 49 sites were checked and 15 of these were found to be occupied by pairs. Clutches were laid by 13-14 pairs and the clutch size from four known clutches was 5.0. Twelve pairs were successful, and these raised 41 young between them. Mean brood size (fledged young) in east and west Moray was only 2.2 per pair, but much better in Nairn at 4.3 young per pair (BCo, JKC, DGD, AFr). In relation to Moray east of the Spey, Brian Cosnette commented: "The weather in March and early April was OK but, as in several years recently, by the start of May conditions were at times appalling with late snowfall and record low temperatures. This affected all the bird species in the uplands. In particular, small passerine breeding populations were decimated on some of the moors. Early site checks for Merlins showed a low degree of occupancy by birds across some of the known sites. The weather by the end of May had still not improved. When things did improve some bird species did have a degree of success with many late broods of pipits, wagtails and warblers for instance, but by this time many other birds had failed and vacated the moors. Considering this, the eventual breeding success of Merlins in Moray was surprisingly good."

Outside the breeding season, single birds were seen in the lowlands at Hopeman 13 Feb, Kinloss 9 Feb and 4 Sep, Loch Spynie 27 Nov, Lossiemouth 15 Dec and Portknockie 10 Nov.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus**Rare resident breeder.*

Breeding: At least five pairs bred successfully in lowland Moray, raising 13 young between them. One other site was occupied by a single male and five sites were unoccupied (JKC, MJHC).

In late summer-winter, single birds were reported from Auchintae (Jan), Carse of Delnies (Aug), Clochan (Dec), Dallas Dhu (Jan), Findhorn Bay (Jan, Feb, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec), Forres (Jan), Keith (Oct), Kinloss (Oct), Loch Spynie (Aug), Lossie estuary (Aug, Sep, Nov, Dec) and Nairn Bar (Jan, Feb, Dec).

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio**Occasional breeder and rare migrant.*

A pair bred in central Moray, raising two young (JKC, MJHC, IFr). A fuller account can be found on page 72 of this Report.



Red-backed Shrike, Moray 26 July 2013 (Photo: Ian Francis)

Magpie *Pica pica*

Common resident breeder.

Recorded at Achavraat (near Cawdor), Auchroisk, Bishopmill, Broadley, Bridge of Maislie, Redmoss/Shielburn (Buckie), Burghead, Clochan, Coltfeld, Covesea, Cummington, Delnies, Dufftown, Essil Cemetery, Findhorn (Bay, village and dunes), Forres, Inchberry, Kingsteps, Kinloss, Lossiemouth, Milton Brodie, Muirton (Lossiemouth), Orbliston, Rafford, Nairn, Nairn Bar, Nether Dallachy, Roseisle, Tomintoul, Wester Bauds (near Lhanbryde) and Windyridge. (near Loch Spynie). Largest groups were 6 Clochan 31 Mar, 5 Dufftown 12 Jan and 5 Minton point (Findhorn) 18 Sep.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Fairly common resident breeder.

Breeding season: April-August reports came from Ardyge House, Binsness, Coltfeld, Craighead Wood, Fochabers, Kintessack, Loch na Bo, Loch Spynie, Logie woods, Lossie Forest, Maryfield, Roseisle Forest, Scarffbanks farm and Wellheads (Clochan).

At other seasons, Jays were seen at Auldearn (Oct), Brodie Castle (Nov), Burghead (Jan), Burn of Rothes (Sep), Aberlour (Oct, Nov)), Clochan (Oct), Cloddach Quarry (Feb, Mar), Coulmony (Nov), Culbin Forest (Jan, Feb), Dava Moor (Nov), Dallachy (Mar), Dunphail (Oct), Findrassie (Dec), Forres (Nov), Fochabers (Jan), Inshoch Wood (Oct), Lake of Moy (Oct), Lhanbryde (Nov), Loch Dallas (Jan), Loch Loy (Sep), Loch na Bo (Jan, Feb, Oct, Nov), Loch Oire (Nov, Dec), Loch Spynie (Jan, Feb, Sep, Oct, Nov), Lossie (Feb), Machattie's Cairn (Drummuir) (Oct), Mosstodloch (Feb), Old Newton of Budgate (Oct), Orton (Sep), Rafford (Nov), Roseisle (Mar, Dec), Sanquhar Loch (Forres) (Feb, Mar, Dec), Scarffbanks (Sep, Oct, Dec), Spynie Hospital (Jan), The Lein (Kingston) (Oct), Upper Dallachy (Nov), Upper Lyne (Ben Rinnes) (Nov). Largest groups were 10 Loch Spynie 9 Nov, 9 Cloddymoss (Culbin Forest) 10 Feb, 7 Roseisle Forest (where the FC carpark access road enters the forest) 7 Dec. They were noted to be carrying acorns in the Forres/Dunphail area on the 10 Oct, presumably stocking up for the winter. Noted as being scarcer than usual around Loch Spynie.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula**Very common resident breeder.*

The only breeding report was of a pair collecting nesting material at Bishopmill on 7 Apr. Counts included 50 Wester Bauds (Lhanbryde) 21 Feb, 50 Tomintoul 27 Jul and 81 on the Spey estuary 24 Sep. A roost flight of 50 flying west over Elgin 21 Feb were presumably heading for the roost at Mosstodloch.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus**Very common resident breeder.*

On 26 Jan, c.2000 flew east across Loch Spynie at 16:00 hrs, presumably heading from a pre-roost towards the roost at Mosstodloch. Other counts included 50 Auchinhove and 50 Buckie 18 Jul, 100 Roseisle 10 Oct and 150 flying east over Linkwood (Elgin) 30 Oct. Sometimes numerous on the Spey estuary in autumn e.g. 36 on 9 Sep and 43 on 24 Sep.

For an obvious colony nesting species, it is disappointing that no rookery counts were received.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone**Very common resident breeder.*

Good numbers all year at the Lossie estuary where maximum monthly counts were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
nc	nc	17	22	33	69	64	72	54	nc	nc	nc

The great majority of a flock of 90 crows on the estuary on 26 Jul would have been Carrion though with a small but unknown number of Hooded and hybrid crows.

Elsewhere, counts exceeding 20 were 30 Nairn 4 Mar, 26 Spey estuary 16 Apr (29 on 2 Apr, 25 on 18 Apr), 52 Findhorn Bay 20 Jun, 37 Findhorn Bay (nr Kinloss) 19 Jul, 50 in flight over Findhorn Point 1 Sep, 41 Netherton Farm (Findhorn Bay) 2 Nov and 87 Scarffbanks farm (Loch Spynie) 26 Dec.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix**Scarce visitor and rare breeder.*

Pure Hooded Crows (or Carrion x Hooded hybrids very closely resembling Hooded) included 2 near Burghead 16 Feb, 1 Culbin Sands 8 May, 2 Findhorn Bay 10 Jun (1 on 27 Jun), 2 Kingsteps (Nairn) 5 May, 1 Loch Flemington 5 May, 2 Loch Oire 23 Jul, 8 & 14 Aug (with a single on 14 dates between 14 Mar and 16 Sep, 15 Nov and 11 Dec), 2 Lossie estuary 5 & 29 Aug (with singles on 19 Jul, 2 & 7 Aug) and 1 Muirhead (Kinloss) 2 Feb. There were several records from east Nairn where 2 on 4 Mar, 2 on 20 Apr, 4 on 20 Apr, 2 on 30 Apr, 2 on 4 May, 1 on 16 May, 3 on 20 May and 1 on 29 Aug, 1 Nairn Bar 26 Mar, 3 Carse of Delnies 12 Apr (and 1 on 20 May, 2 on 10 Jun & 6 Aug) and 1 Wood of Ordiequish 8 Sep.

Hybrids were often seen in the crow flock on the Lossie estuary. Monthly maxima here were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
nc	nc	nc	3	nc	5	6	6	7	nc	nc	nc

Other sightings of hybrids included 2 Culbin Bar 13 Jan & 10 Feb, 6 Findhorn Bay (near Kinloss) 15 Nov, 1 Forres 23 Jul (2 on 13 Aug), 1 Spey estuary 21 Mar & 24 Sep (and 2 on 16 Apr), 1 Netherton Farm (Findhorn Bay) 15 Nov and 2 Scarffbanks farm (Loch Spynie) 26 Dec.

Raven *Corvus corax**Scarce visitor and rare breeder.*

Breeding: A pair was again present at Tronach Head but they either failed or did not breed this year. The pair was present in February-early April but only one adult thereafter until two again on 12 Jun (MJHC, LSi, ASst).

Single birds were recorded in early May at two sites around Tomintoul with a flock of 10 in the area on 29 May. There were several records at other times of the year with 4 Tomintoul 9 Jun (1 on 24-26 Jun), 1 Carn Daimh (Glenlivet) 9 Jun, 1 Well of Lecht 20 Jun (3 on 29 Sep), 2 Cairn Lochan (Cairngorm plateau) 25 Jun, a flock of 8 Loch Builg (near Ben Avon) 5 Jul, 1 Findhorn 13 Jul, 1 Portknockie 10 Sep, 2 Dava Moor 18 Nov and 1 Ben Rinnes 29 Dec.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus**Very common resident breeder and scarce migrant.*

Two on Culbin Bar on 10 Feb and 2 in the Findhorn dunes on 28 Feb were the only notable records.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus**Very common resident breeder.*

First song Linkwood (Elgin) 24 Jan. A pair was repeatedly visiting a nest box at Loch Spynie on 23 Jan. A remarkably early breeding attempt at Birkenhill where an adult was incubating four eggs in a nest box on 5 Mar (CAG).

Nest boxes:

	Pairs	Mean clutch	Mean fledged brood (all pairs)	Mean fledged brood (successful pairs only)
Loch Spynie	26	7.5	4.9	6.1 (n=21)
(RP, CAG)				

Clutch size and fledging success were both a little lower than in 2011 and 2012. The proportion of juveniles caught per adult for ringing at the 'Constant Effort Site' was 2.9:1, up a little on 1.9:1 in 2012 but still well down from 6.3 in 2011 and suggesting another year of poor post-fledging chick survival (RP).

Great Tit *Parus major**Very common resident breeder.*

First song Upper Dallachy 9 Jan, Loch Spynie 23 Jan, Loch na Bo 24 Jan and Linkwood (Elgin) 29 Jan.

Nest boxes:

	Pairs	Mean clutch	Mean fledged brood (all pairs)	Mean fledged brood (successful pairs only)
Loch Spynie	15	5.3	5.2	5.2 (n=15)
(RP, CAG)				

Clutch size was lower than in 2012 (7.0) as was the average brood size of successful pairs (6.3 in 2012). Productivity, as assessed by ringing at the 'Constant Effort Site', was 1.0 juveniles caught per adult, up from 0.5 in 2012 (RP).

Crested Tit *Lophophanes cristatus**Common resident breeder.*

Breeding: Only one nest box was occupied in Lossie Forest, from which 6 young fledged successfully from a clutch of 6 eggs (MJHC). One box was occupied in Whiteash Hill Wood, and here 3 young fledged from a clutch of 6 eggs (MJHC).

Away from the coastal forests, reports from other areas included 1 Loch Stuart (Dava) 25 May (MJHC), 2 Hill of Mulundy 12 Sep (MJHC), 1 Loch Kirkaldy 28 Mar (MCoa) and 1 Newtyle 5 Jan (AY).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Very common resident breeder.

First song Linkwood (Elgin) 3 Jan, and Auchenthalrig and Nether Dallachy 9 Jan.

On 7 Jun, a pair was feeding young in a hole in a stone wall at Anderson's Care Home in Elgin.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Very common breeder and migrant.

First song Bogmoor 14 Feb, Muirton 17 Feb and Netherton (Findhorn Bay) 21 Feb.

Largest flock was 35+ Lossiemouth east beach 23 Oct - otherwise not more than 10 together. Unusually, none seen or heard on the Lein at Kingston (PGS).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Summer visitor and very common breeder.

Arrival: Several records on 14 Apr with 4 Mondole (near Forres), 15 Loch Spynie and 20 Nairn. Over 500 were hawking insects in poor weather at Loch Spynie on 18 Apr. The first upcountry record was on 20 Apr at Auchinhandoch (Dufftown).

Other large counts were on 18 May with over 200 at Loch Spynie and 200 at Mossat Burn (Findhorn Bay).

The only colony count submitted was 10 burrows at Clashach Quarry but mention was made of occupied sites at Findhorn East dunes and Drynahan valley.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Summer visitor and very common breeder.

Arrival: The first was 1 at Portknockie 14 Apr, then 2 on 15 Apr at Buckie and 3 at Findhorn. There were several other records of 1-3 birds in the following week culminating with ca 175 at Loch Spynie on 18 Apr.

No breeding records were submitted.

The largest flock reported was over 200 at Loch Spynie on 18 May.

October records were 1 on 3rd at Burghead, 1 on 11th at Loch Oire and 2 on 12th at Forres.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Arrival: Several reports on 17 Apr: 1 at Bishopmill (Elgin), 2 at Loch Spynie, 3 at Burghead and 5 at Kingston. On 20 Apr, 33 were seen at Nairn.

Breeding: A long standing site at Buckie High School only had three nests on 11 Aug. Other reported sites were 3 nests in Montgomery Drive and 1 at Old Bar Road, Nairn and 6 at 170 Findhorn.

On 3 July, several were seen skimming the summit of Ben Aigan (471m). Over 100 were at Kinloss on 22 Aug, 28 Aug and 9 Sep. The last record was of several still in Lossiemouth on 27 Sep.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Very common resident breeder.

The largest flock reported was of c.25 at Bridgehaugh near Dufftown on 17 Feb. Other reports of 10 or more together were 16 Spey Bay 2 Jan, 14 Tugnet 16 Oct, 12 Loch Spynie in January, February and December, and 10 Fochabers 19 Jan.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Summer visitor and rare breeder.

One singing Loch Oire 14-16 May (EH); following no records in 2012, one in 2011 and none in 2010. As a regular breeder, at least, the species has been lost in Moray & Nairn.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Summer visitor and fairly common breeder. Scarce migrant and rare winter visitor.

Arrival: Unusually, no March records. First arrivals in April: single singing birds at Spynie Palace on 11th, Loch Spynie on 12th and Nether Dallachy on 13th.

Subsequently singers were found at Dava Way (Rafford), Loch na Bo (5), Mundole (2), Quarrelwood (Elgin), Ramphat, Mannachie Wood (Forres), The Lein (Kingston) (2), Spynie canal, lower River Findhorn (2), Kingsteps, Tugnet (2), Cullen (4), Lossie Forest, Waterford, Nairn, Loch Oire, Loch of Blairs (3), Clochan, Garmouth, Nether Dallachy (2), Binsness and Ben Aigan (5).

Autumn: 1 Clochan 22 Sep and 6 Oct, 1 Easter Balcroy 23 Sep, 2 Kingston 26 Sep (and 1 on 29 Sep), 1 Tugnet 3 Oct, 1 Half Davoch 11 Oct and 1 Binn Hill 9 Nov.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Summer visitor and very common breeder.

Arrival: As in 2012, rather late with no records before 17 Apr when 1 Kinloss, then, on 19th, 1 Nether Buinach, 1 Spynie Canal and 1 Elgin (The Wards). Widespread from 20 Apr.

On 2 May, 13 were singing in woodland around Palace reedbed at Loch Spynie (MJHC). Along the 5.5km stretch of the old railway line between Craigellachie and Balvenie (Dufftown), there were 18 singing birds on 12 May (DAG). This is fewer than in 2012, when 31 were counted on a later date in May, and significantly fewer than in 2011, when 58 were counted, but on an earlier date in May.

Productivity, as measured by ringing at the 'Constant Effort Site' at Loch Spynie, was 0.9 juveniles caught per adult – a slight increase from 0.6 in 2012 but significantly below the figure of 2.2 in 2011 (RP).

No reports after 1 Portknockie 24 Aug.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Summer visitor and common breeder. Scarce migrant and winter visitor.

January-March: One female Lossiemouth 3 Jan, 1 male and 1 female Bishopmill (Elgin) 13 Jan and 1 M and 1 F Forres 24 Jan. One male reported in Fochabers 28 Jan may have been present since Christmas 2012. Also single females Forres 24 Feb and regularly between 7 Mar-5 Apr in Bishopmill (Elgin).

Spring/summer: Records, usually of singing birds (and singles unless stated) came from Bishopmill, Blacksboat (2), Cawdor, Craigellachie-Balvenie old railway line (10 on 12 May (DAG)), Dyke, Elgin, Forres, Kingsteps (Nairn) (2), Kinloss, Loch na Bo (2), Loch of Blairs, Loch Spynie (9), Nairn, Old Newton of Budgate (Nairn), Portknockie, Rafford, lower River Findhorn (3), Rothes along the Spey (5), Sanquhar Loch (Forres), Tugnet (5), Urquhart, Waterford (Forres)

Breeding confirmed at Bishopmill (adults with food) and near the River Lossie in Cooper Park Elgin (newly fledged young).

Autumn: On 17 Oct, 1 male Forres, 1 female Portknockie and 1 female Tugnet.

Late November/December: 1 female in a Nairn garden 30 Nov and 1 Forres 28 Dec. Two (male and female) in Fochabers 31 Dec were recorded as "regular this winter".



Blackcap, Bishopmill (Elgin) 13 January 2013 (Photo: David Main)

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder.

Only three reports: 1 east Nairn 5 May (CSE), 1 along the old railway line east of Portknockie 15 May (LSi) and 1 caught and ringed Clochan 2 Aug (MJHC).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Summer visitor and very common breeder.

Arrival: First was 1 Hopeman 26 Apr. Subsequently, in May, were 1 Spynie Canal 5th, 1 Findhorn 6th, 1 Kinloss 7th, 1 Elgin 7th, 1 Waterford (Forres) 7th and 3 Loch Spynie 9th.

Confirmed breeding: A pair with 2 juveniles Findhorn 13-14 Aug and a family party at Portknockie 24 Aug.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder.

Arrival: First heard Spynie canal 27 Apr.

Singing birds (singles unless stated) were found at Cullen, Portknockie, Loch Flemington, Spynie canal north west of A941 bridge (up to 3) and Loch Spynie north-east fen.

Confirmed breeding: In Loch Spynie north-east fen, a newly-fledged juvenile was seen on 27 Jun (caught and ringed) and 4 Jul (with an adult) (RP).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Arrival: First was 1 Spynie canal on 30 Apr, followed by 1 Kinloss and 2 Loch Spynie on 2 May.

On 26 May, 25 were singing in the Palace reedbed (Loch Spynie) with 9 there on 7 Jun (MJHC).

At the 'Constant Effort' ringing site in the north-east fen at Loch Spynie, the number of juveniles caught per adult was 0.4:1, down from 0.6:1 in 2012, 1.3:1 in 2011 and 1.9:1 in 2010 (RP). The first juvenile was trapped on 4 Jul and a recently fledged juvenile was recorded on 15 Aug.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Irruptive winter visitor, scarce in most years but occasionally common.

Winter-spring: Following the large arrival in November-December 2012, good numbers remained in Moray & Nairn in the first winter period of 2013. The pattern of occurrence in weekly intervals was as follows:

1-7 Jan: 3 Achareidh (Nairn) 2nd, 23 Burghead 1st, 3 Earnhill (Forres) 1st, c.50 Elgin 6th, 7 Findhorn 4th, 25 Forres 4th, 18 Half Davoch 1st, 8 Kinloss 4th, 18 Lossiemouth 7th and 2 Portknockie 6th.

8-14 Jan: 18 Findhorn 11th (and 29 on 13th), 6 Mosstodloch 10th, 38 Marcassie Farm (Rafford) 14th and 30 Roseisle maltings 12th.

15-21 Jan: 1 Alves 19th, 6 Brodie 20th, 23 Buckie 20th, 22 Burghead 16th, 3 Elgin 16th, 22 Findhorn 15th, 6 Kinloss 15th, 20+ Mundole 19th and 5 Portknockie 15th.

22-28 Jan: 60 Burghead 26th, 30+ Cummington 23rd, 12 Easter Colfield 21st, 20 Elgin 24th (and 27 on 28th), 7 Forres 22nd and 8 Portknockie 28th.

29 Jan-4 Feb: 45 Forres 29th.

5-11 Feb: 10 Auldearn 11th, 13 Clochan 10th, 13 Elgin 7th (and 30+ on 8th-9th), 10 Fochabers 11th and 5 Lossiemouth 8 Feb.

12-18 Feb: 3 Bogmoor 13th, 18 Elgin 16th, 30 Fochabers 17th, c.60 Forres 16th, 30 Half Davoch 17th, 25 Marcassie Farm (Rafford) 17th and 35 Nairn 13th.

19-25 Feb: 6 Elgin 20th (and 12 on 21st), 50 Forres 22nd (and 30+ on 24th) and 20 Kingston 22nd.

26 Feb-4 Mar: 1 Duffus 1st, 12 Elgin 28th (and 16 on 3rd), 9 Forres 1st, 54 Nairn 4th and 1 Scarffbanks 3rd.

5-11 Mar: 13 Duffus 8th, 34 Elgin 7th, 6 Loch Flemington 5th (and 11 on 6th), 2 Scarffbanks 6th (and 9 on 7th, 20 on 9th) and 5 Lossiemouth 5th (and 26 on 6th, 26 on 9th, 38 on 10th).

12-18 Mar: c.50 Elgin 15th (and 43 on 17th) and c.20 Hopeman 15th.

19-25 Mar: 18 Bishopmill (Elgin) 21st (and 58 on 22nd, 32 on 24th) and 20 Lossiemouth 22nd.

26 Mar-1 Apr: 32 Bishopmill (Elgin) 26th (and 34 on 30th).

2-8 Apr: 33 Bishopmill (Elgin) 2nd (and 29 on 7th) and 13 Buckie 5th.

9-15 Apr: 25 Bishopmill (Elgin) 9th (and 22 on 13th) and 20 Cummington 9th.

16-22 Apr: 18 Bishopmill (Elgin) 17th (and 37 on 19th).

23-29 Apr: 28 Bishopmill (Elgin) 23rd (and 24 on 29th).

30 Apr-6 May: 9 Achareidh (Nairn) 2nd and 24 Bishopmill (Elgin) 30th (and 16 on 5th).

7-13 May: 13 Bishopmill (Elgin) 7th (and 9 on 12th) and 11 Nairn 8th-9th.

14-20 May: 1 Bishopmill (Elgin) 14th-17th.

21-27 May: 2 Bishopmill (Elgin) 21st-22nd.



Waxwings, Cummington 23 January 2013 (Photo: Tony Backx)

Autumn-winter: A moderate arrival, again summarised in weekly intervals:

5-11 Nov: 5 Elgin 5th (and 36 on 7th) and 14 Lossiemouth 5th (and 22 on 6th).

12-18 Nov: 10 Elgin 14th (and 30 on 15th), 25 Fochabers 15th and 4 Torrieston 14th.

19-25 Nov: 2 Bishopmill (Elgin) 21st-22nd, 40+ Elgin 20th-21st and 40 Forres 23rd (and 16 on 25th).

26 Nov-2 Dec: 7 Elgin 29th.

3-9 Dec: c.50 Elgin 8th.

10-16 Dec: 40 Elgin 11th.

17-23 Dec: 14 Elgin 18th.

24-31 Dec: no reports

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Very common resident breeder.

One in a pine tree in the east dunes at Findhorn on 21 Jul was notable.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Very common resident breeder.

First song Linkwood (Elgin) 27 Mar.

Breeding season counts included 16 singing along the old railway line between Craigellachie and Balvenie on 12 May (DAG), 12 along the River Nairn between Nairn and Howford Bridge on 20 Apr and 8 along the River Findhorn north of Mundole on 14 Apr (AET).

At Loch Spynie Constant Effort ringing site, the ratio of juveniles to adults was 5.3:1 (RP).

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Very common resident breeder and winter visitor.

Estimates of pre-roost gatherings included 600 over Ashgrove (Elgin) on 7 Jan and 11 Jan, 500 Buckie harbour 10 Nov, 300 over Elgin High St on 28 Dec and 1000-1500 Loch Spynie in September-October.

Highest counts elsewhere were 670 on Portknockie rooftops on 20 Jul, 140 Auchnarrow 29 Sep and 130 Kinloss 2 Oct.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Common resident breeder.

Breeding season: Reported at Ballenish (5 on 10 May), Cawdor Castle 16 Jul, Cloddach (pair nest building on River Lossie 25 Mar), Cullen (4 on 1 May), Delnabo 27 Jul, Drumin Castle 30 Mar, Drynachan 5 May, Dulsie Bridge 21 Apr & 5 May, River Lossie at Cooper Park (Elgin) (pair on 4 Mar-25 Jun), Dufftown (pair on 2 Jan), Linkwood (Elgin) (pair on 1 Jan), River Nairn in Nairn (pair on 4 Mar), and near Pluscarden church (pair nest building on 5 Apr).

Additional localities holding Dippers at other seasons were Carron, Craigellachie-Dufftown (7 along River Fiddich on 4 Jan), Dufftown, Fochabers, Forres (Mosset Burn) and Sanquhar Loch (Forres).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder

In the Cairngorms, two were seen near The Saddle below Cairn Gorm on 29 Apr (MNG), and five were in this area on 19 Jun (JBu). To the west, one was on Cairn Lochan on 25 Jun (DA).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Very common resident breeder, winter visitor and migrant.

Breeding: First song Loch Spynie 25 Jan. Nest building 16 Mar at Clochan.

Counts of 10 or more included 10 Fochabers 19 Jan, 12 Fochabers 19 Mar, 13 lower River Findhorn 3 Apr, 10 Forres duck pond 10 Apr, 11 Scarffbanks Farm access 26 Dec.

Best autumn count was 18 along 150m of hedgerow at Logie Steading on 8 Nov.

One light tan coloured bird was seen in New Elgin on 1 Jul.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Very common migrant and winter visitor.

Winter-spring: Flocks of 20 or more were 22 Portgordon 18 Jan, 75 Lossiemouth 20 Jan, 150 Lintmill 20 Coltfoot 8 Feb, 90 Bogmoor 14 Feb, 70 Wellheads (Clochan) 15 Feb, 100 Pitairlie 16 Feb, 27 Westerbauds and 30 Loch Spynie 21 Feb, 53 Cloddach Quarry 8 Mar, 30 Loch Spynie and 30 Scarffbanks 11 Mar, 60 North Alves 25 Mar, 100 River Nairn (Househill) 9 Apr, 30 Muir of Linksfield 16 Apr. Last in spring were 15 at Howford 22 Apr.

Arrival: First birds of the autumn, in mid October, were 20 flying south at Alves 11 Oct, 40 Muirton, 12 Half Davoch, 40 Rehiron and 100 Kirkton of Barevan on 14 Oct. "Hundreds" Lynes (Archiestown) 20 Oct.

Autumn-winter: Largest flocks were in November with 40 Kinloss 1st, 50 Kinloss 5th, 100 Torrieston Wood 14th, 100 Pitairlie 21st and 22nd, hundreds at Pitgaveny 23rd, and a large flock near Findhorn Bridge 25th. Fewer flocks reported in December, though more than in recent years, with 60 Dava Moor 2nd, 200 at Coltfoot 4th, 125 River Nairn (Nairn) 6th, 50 Dunnyduff Wood (Keith) 11th and 70 Dava 29th.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Very common breeder and migrant. Scarce in winter

Mid winter: In January, 1 Nether Dallachy and 1 Auchenhalrig 9th, 1 Clochan 23rd. In December, 1 Loch Oire 9th (and 23rd and 29th) and 1 Findochty 29th.

First song of the year, in mid February, at The Lein (Kingston) on 16th. Other singing birds in February included 1 Laggan Farm 17th, 1 at Auchnahandoch (Dufftown) and 1 Clochan 18th, and 1 (Nairn) 28th.

Nine were feeding in a mixed flock of thrushes near Fochabers on 19 Mar.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Very common migrant and winter visitor.

Winter-spring: Few large flocks reported. In January, 21 Clochan 4th, 19 Loch of Blairs 6th, 42 Clochan 12th, 50 Portgordon 18th and 18 Kinloss 28th. Only one report in February, 30 at Upper Knockando on 21st.

Arrival: First, in October, were 5 Half Davoch 10th (also 14 there on 12th and 55 on 14th), 3 Clochan 12th and 20 Machatties Cairn 15th.

Summer: One was singing in the woods near Inchnacape (Tomintoul) on 1 & 31 May (MSO).



Redwing singing near Tomintoul, 31 May 2013 (Photo: Moray Souter)

Autumn-winter: Flocks of more than 20 were 50 Kinloss 5 Nov and, around Nairn, 70 on 11 Nov, 30 on 13 Nov, 40 on 21 Nov and 75 on 6 Dec.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Very common resident breeder and migrant

Mainly singles or small groups of birds. The only flock of more than 10 was 20 Edinkillie 5 Aug.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Summer visitor and common breeder

Arrival: First of the year were 1 near Lochan Tutach (Dava) 25 May and 1 Pitgaveny (Elgin) 26 May.

Breeding was confirmed at Aberlour and Marcassie Farm (Rafford). Summer reports elsewhere came from Ardwell, Blacksboat, Budgate, Cawdor Castle, Cooper Park (Elgin), Dava Way, Drummuir, Dulsie Bridge, Forres, Glenlivet, Loch Oire, lower River Findhorn and Tomintoul.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Very common resident breeder and migrant

First full song at Linkwood 9 & 11 Jan and Bishopmill (Elgin) 10 Jan

Counts included 7 Lossie Forest feeding station 11 Mar, 10 Sanquhar Loch/wood 31 Mar, 10 lower River Findhorn 3 Apr, 9 Kingsteps 5 Apr and 10 singing birds along the old railway line between Craigellachie-Balvenie on 12 May.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder. Very scarce migrant

Breeding season: Along the upper Findhorn on 5 May, 1 singing near Banchor (DAG) and another singing Dulsie where adults were feeding a newly-fledged juvenile on 17 Jun (DAG, JBu). Elsewhere, 1 singing Dallaschyle 22 May (GAa) and 1 Logie woods 21 Jul (SPM). A pair bred in a nest box in Tearie Woods (Darnaway) and the young were close to fledging on 10 Jun (A&FR, MJHC).



Redstart, Tearie 8 June 2013 (Photo: Alison Ritchie)

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder. Very scarce migrant.

Only two records of migrants, and none in breeding habitat: 3 Burghead Bay 9 May (JPoy) and 1 Findhorn Bay 26 May (AJL).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Scarce resident breeder and migrant

Breeding season: In coastal areas, birds were seen at six sites, with 7-8 pairs recorded of which at least three bred successfully. Birds were found between Kingston and the rifle range (3-4 pairs of which at least two raised young), at the west end of Lossie Forest (1 pair was successful), Kinloss (1 on 3 May and a pair on 23 May) and Lossie estuary (1 on 7 May and a pair on 1 Jul). Inland, 1 male Newton (Elgin) 17 May and 1 Aitnoch (Dava).

Additional localities holding Stonechats in autumn/winter were Portknockie (1 female on 22 & 25 Feb), Findhorn (a pair in dunes near north-west corner of the airfield 26 Feb and 9 Nov, and 1 near the marina on 1 Dec), Strathlene (1 on 25 Sept) and Culbin Bar (1 on 20 Oct).

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Summer visitor and fairly common breeder and migrant.

Arrival: Quite late again with no March or early April records. First in April were 1 Burghead 14 April, then all of the following on 17 Apr - 15 Lossie estuary, 2 Burghead, 1 Lossiemouth west beach, 2 Kingston, 4 in the dunes at Findhorn and 1 Kinloss. Other coastal spring counts of 5 or more were 5 Lossie estuary 21 Apr, 8 Spynie railway line 23 Apr, and 7 Findhorn dunes 6 May.

In breeding areas upcountry were 1 Barns of Bynack 12 Sep, 2 below A' Choinneach 3 Sep, 1 Cabrach 18 Jul, 1 Cairn Lochan 25 Jun and 1 on northern slope of Ben Macdui 9 Jun.

First back at the coast was 1 Findhorn Bay 10 July, followed by 1 Lossiemouth west beach 13 Jul, 3 Kinloss 8 Aug, 1 Burghead 12 Aug, 1 Findhorn east dunes 13 Aug and 1 Scarffbanks 22 Aug. Largest groups subsequently were 5 Lossiemouth harbour 23 Sep and 7 Portknockie 3 Sep.

Last records in autumn were 2 Lossiemouth west beach 7-8 Oct, 1 west of Gilston 10 Oct and 1 male Nairn harbour 12 Oct.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Very common resident breeder.

First song, in February, at Linkwood (Elgin) on 8th, Nairn on 10th and Kingston on 19th.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Very common resident breeder.

Largest flocks reported were 68 Clochan 5 Sep, c.50 Forres 30 Jul and 45 Loch Flemington 8 Jul.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Common resident breeder.

Breeding: At Clochan, eight nestboxes were occupied:

	Pairs	Mean clutch	Mean fledged brood (all pairs)	Mean fledged brood (successful pairs only)
First broods	8	4.4	3.3	3.3 (n=8)
Second broods	7	4.5	3.9	3.9 (n=7)
Third broods	6	4.7	3.2	3.2 (n=6)

(MJHC)

Elsewhere in the breeding season, 4 (including 2 juveniles) Bishopmill (Elgin) 24 May, 2 Milntown 21 Apr, 2 Montgrew 30 Jul and 1 Netherton Farm 3 Jun.

At other times, 60 near Urquhart 3 Oct (and 5 on 17 Oct), 25 Auchintae 15 Jan, 20 South Darkland 1 Jan, 15 Dallas Dhu 17 Nov, 16 Seafield (Findhorn Bay) 17 Feb (and 14 on 19 Feb, 10 on 22 Feb), 12 Bogmoor 21 Feb, 7 Jointure (Lhanbryde) 8 Dec, 6 Scarffbanks 8 Mar, 5 Muirton (Buckie) 15 Jan, 5 Tugnet 3 Oct, 4 Marcassie (Rafford) 12 Dec (and 2 on 1 Jan), 4 Milntown 26 Jan, 3 Netherton 24 Sep, 2 Auchenthalrig 9 Jan, 2 Easter Greens 14 Sep, 1 Upper Dallachy 9 Jan, 1 Forres 22 Oct and 1 Kingston 9 Nov.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Summer visitor and common breeder. Very scarce in winter.

Several records of wintering birds included 1 Elgin 12 Jan and 2 Feb, 1 Nairn 14 Jan and 14 Feb, 1 Findhorn Bay (Mosset Burn) 2 Feb, 1 Mosstodloch 8 Feb, 1 South Darkland 18 Feb and 2 Cullen 17 Feb. In the second winter period, 1 Nairn 26 Nov, 1 Sanquhar Loch (Forres) 27 & 29 Nov and 1 Buckie shipyard 15 Dec.

Breeding season records were received from 17 localities.

In autumn, 1 Burghead 19 Sep.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Very common breeder and migrant.

Passage: 'White Wagtails' *M.a.alba* were seen in spring between 6 Apr (1 at Findhorn) and 6 May. Best sites were Spey estuary (15 on 24 Apr, 9 on 27 Apr and 14 on 30 Apr) and Lossie estuary (7 on 1 May, 6 on 2 May). In autumn, at the Spey estuary, were 1 on 30 Jul and 6 Aug, and 2 on 10 Aug. Elsewhere, 4 Burghead 9 Sep, 1 Lossiemouth 7 Sep and 1 Findhorn Bay 20 Oct.



White Wagtail, Findhorn Bay 6 May 2013 (Photo: Richard Somers Cocks)

Pied Wagtails *M.a.yarellii* were reported throughout the year with peaks of 38 on 4 Mar beside the old Elgin-Lossiemouth railway line, 24 Kinloss 19 Sep, 18 Spey estuary 11 Jul and 17 Netherton (Findhorn Bay) 11 Aug.

Return to inland breeding areas noted at Half Davoch on 19 Feb and Aberlour on 24 Feb.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Arrival: 1 Drynachan valley and 1 Dulsie 21 Apr, both displaying, and 1 (also displaying) Mulben 25 Apr. Singing birds were reported in May, June and July at Ben Aigan, Dava and Lossie Forest.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Very common breeder and migrant.

The only winter records were 1 Netherton (Findhorn Bay) 1 Jan and 4 Culbin Bar 10 Feb.

Spring passage: At Kinloss in April, 27 on 8th, 42 on 15th and 48 on 24th.

In the autumn, 9 Netherton on 20 Sep and 1 Machattie's Cairn 15 Oct.

The only other inland records were of 10 Creag Mhor 16 Jun and 20 Malcolmburn (Mulben) on 8 Sep.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Scarce breeder, fairly common in winter.

Few records were received from the breeding season: 1 Portknockie 13 Apr, 3 Lossiemouth 19 Apr and 1 Findhorn Bay 5 May.

Counts between Portgordon and Strathlene were 5 on 13 Jan, 54 on 20 Oct and 14 on 15 Dec (MJHC).

Between 1 and 3 were reported during the winter from Burghhead, Culbin Bar, Hopeman and Lossiemouth.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Fairly common winter visitor and migrant.

Good numbers in the early winter period when flocks included c.200 with Chaffinches at Auchanhandoch 23 Jan, 54 Clochan and c.75 Dufftown on 25 Jan, c.60 in stubble at Burnside of Tynet and c.300 Gallow's Hill (Fochabers) 27 Jan and 150 with Chaffinches at Upper Knockando 21 Feb. Elsewhere, a few birds were reported widely: 5 Aberlour 26 Feb, 1 Bishopmill 10 Jan and daily in late April, 3 Craigellachie 28 Jan, 2 Drummuir 26 Feb, 2 Duffus 19 Apr, 2 Fochabers 19 Jan, 2 Forres 21 Apr, 1 Loch Oire 19 Mar (and 9 Apr), 3 Marcassie Farm (Rafford) 8 Jan, 1 Sheriffston 24 Jan, 1 South Darkland 19 & 24 Jan (and 23 Mar) and 1 Urquhart 11 Mar and 9 Apr.

Last in spring were 1 Bishopmill (Elgin) 29 Apr and 1 Lossiemouth 30 Apr.

In the second winter period, very few were reported: c.15 Ladyscroft (Archie's town) 21 Oct, 4 Lynes (Archie's town) 21 Oct, 1 Logie steading 24 Nov and 4 Scarffbanks 21 Dec.



Bramblings below a garden Niger feeder, Clochan 22 March 2013 (Photo: Martin Cook)

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Very common resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor.

First song, in February, at The Lein (Kingston) 7th, Loch Oire 9th and Linkwood (Elgin) 11th.

Flocks of 30 or more included 300+ Aberlour 26 Feb, 50 Fochabers 19 Jan, 50 Upper Knockando 21 Feb, 50 Pitairlie 12 Oct, 37 Forres 10 Mar and 30 Loch Spynie 2 Feb.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Very common resident breeder.

Good numbers at Muldearie where 18 on 19 Nov and 21 on 2 Dec (WMM). Elsewhere, 10 Torrieston Wood 14 Nov, 6 Scarffbanks 7 Dec, 5 Knock of Braemoray 1 Jan and 5 Kingston 19 Feb (and 7 there on 22 Feb).

Productivity at Loch Spynie, as measured by ringing at the Constant Effort Site, was 2.0 juveniles per adult - up from 1.0 in 2012 (RP).

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Very common resident breeder.

Early song, in January, at Bogmoor on 9th, Kingston on 16th, Linkwood (Elgin) on 29th and Clochan on 29th.

Flocks of 10 or more: 50 Tugnet 8 Sep, 25 Fochabers 19 Jan, 12 Clochan 7 Jan and 10 Scarffbanks 23 Jan.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

Very common resident breeder.

Flock counts of 50 or more were c.400 near Loch Oire 1 Oct, c.300 Cruats Farm (Portknockie) 23 Jan, c.300 Spey Bay 5-8 Sep (and 144 there 15 Sep), 280 Mains of Gollachy 15 Jan, c.250 Whitemire (Conicavel) 24 Jan, 220 Auchintae 15 Jan, 220 Mains of Tannachy 18 Jan, c.200 Lesmurdie House (Elgin) 22 Nov & 26 Dec, 110 Muirton Farm (Buckie) 15 Jan, 100 Fogwatt 31 Oct, 100 Pitairlie 21 Nov, 100 South Darkland 23 Dec, 80 Househill (Nairn) 10 Oct, 75 Urquhart 17 Oct, 65 Carse of Delnies 6 Aug, 61 Muirton 23 Jan, 60 Bogmoor 14 Feb, 60 Portgordon harbour 22 Feb, 58 Netherton Farm 24 Sep and 50 Myreside 24 Dec.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

Scarce resident breeder and winter visitor.

A flock was present on the saltmarsh in the south of Findhorn Bay (near Netherton) in both winter periods. Monthly maximum counts of this flock were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
nc	135 (22 nd)	110 (8 th)	5 (24 th)	0	0	0	0	110 (26 th)	30+ (15 th)	88 (30 th)	102 (2 nd)

(RSC et al.)

Up-country, c.15 flew north-east over the Water of Ailnack gorge on 13 Sep (MKe).



Twite, Netherton 20 March 2013 (Photo: Gordon Biggs)

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*

Common resident breeder and migrant.

In the breeding season, 3 Clochan 2 May, 1 Drummuir 26 May, 8 Forres 13 May, 1 Loch Kirkaldy 3 Jul, 2 Nairn 11 May, heard Lossie Forest 25 Jun and present Quarrel Wood (Elgin) 11 May.

At other times, largest flocks were 76 East Grange 6 Feb, 40 Aitnoch (Dava) 8 Nov and 25 Scarffbanks 25 Aug. No other winter count exceeded 5 birds.

Increasingly regular at garden Niger seed feeders - reports from Clochan, Elgin, Forres and Nairn.

Common (Mealy) Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

Rare winter visitor and migrant.

One report, of 3 at Half Davoch on 14 Jan (RHD).

This is only the 14th record of Common Redpoll in Moray & Nairn although it is highly likely that an unknown number is overlooked in flocks of Lesser Redpolls.

Two-barred Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera*

Rare visitor.

A single report of 1 in Roseisle Forest on 6 Aug (JSi). This record is still under consideration by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Common resident and irruptive migrant breeder.

Scottish Crossbill *Loxia scotica*

Probable common resident breeder.

In view of the virtual impossibility of separating these species in the field without recording the calls, all crossbill records are combined.

Flocks of 5 or more were 50+ Morinsh Forest 8 Oct, 30 Braidbog 20 Jun, c.20 Culbin Forest gravel pit pond 8 May, 15 Lossie Forest 25 Jun, 5 Cloddach quarry 24 Feb and 5 Culbin Forest 16 Jan.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Very common resident breeder.

Flocks of 10 or more included c.75 Netherton (Findhorn Bay) 4 Nov (and 15 on 22 Feb, 30 on 8 Mar, 40 on 1 Nov and 42 on 15 Dec), 70+ Roseisle 17 Oct, 70 Darkland 8 Sep, 68 Kinloss 9 Sept (and 45 on 26 Nov), 60 (in 2 flocks) Dallas Dhu 5 Jan, 53 Lossiemouth 3 Jan (in a garden), 40 Mains of Tannachy 18 Jan, 40 Barmuckity 10-15 Dec, 32 Kingston 26 Sep, c.30 Findhorn shoreline 20 Jan (and 14 on 4 Oct), 25 Fochabers 19 Jan, 19 Glen Rinnes 6 Jan, 13 Clochan 26 Jan, 12 Nairn 20 Apr, 12 Portknockie 24 Aug, 10 Muirton Farm (Buckie) 15 Jan, 10 Chapelton (Forres) 11 Dec,

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

Very common resident breeder and migrant.

Flocks of 20 or more were c.100+ feeding on Alders at Dufftown 23 Jan, 50+ in garden at Lossiemouth 24 Apr, 50 Fochabers 19 Jan, 32 Nairn 14 Jan, c.35 Findhorn 11 Apr (also 23 there on 24 Feb and c.30 on 25 Apr) and 24 Clochan 5 Feb. High turnover at garden feeders indicated by the ringing of 93 Siskins in a Clochan garden on 19 May (MJHC)

One was singing at Marcassie Farm (Rafford) on the early date of 8 Jan.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Common winter visitor and rare breeder.

Summer: On the Cairngorms plateau, 2 pairs and another 3 males on 25 May (DPi), 15 at various locations on 9 Jun (RSC) and 2 on 25 Jun (DA).

First coastal records in autumn were 2 Findhorn 27 Sep and 2 Lossiemouth 28 Sep.

Winter: Sizeable flocks were regular at two sites, where monthly maximum counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars (& E.Nairn)	c.40 (9 th)	84 (10 th)	30 (26 th)	10 (20 th)	nc	105 (15 th)
Lossiemouth east beach	16 (4 th)	12 (15 th)	nc	40 (26 th)	40 (7 th)	37 (30 th)

More reports than usual from other areas: 9 Muirton (Buckie) 15 Jan, 1 Burghead 26 Oct, 3 Burghead Bay 30 Oct (and 12 on 13 Nov), up to 10 regularly at Findhorn in October-December (and a larger flock of 56 in the dunes on 10 Nov), 1 Portknockie 5 Nov, 15 Scarffbanks 4 Nov, 1 Spey Bay (opposite Boar's Head Rock) 14 Dec, 1 Tronach Head 5 Nov and 18 flying esat over Tugnet on 28 Oct.

The only inland report in winter was 6 Roy's Hill 10 Jan.

Last at the coast in spring were 2 Lossie estuary 9-12 Apr and still 1 there on 19 Apr. Also 1 Nairn 10 Apr. Very unusual late May records in east Moray were 1 Cullen 26 May (JMair) and 2 Tronach Head 31 May (LSi).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Very common resident breeder.

First song heard at Nairn 14 Feb.

Flocks of ten or more were c.33 Dufftown 23 Jan, 29 Sourbank (Rafford) 21 Dec, 25 Pitairlie 2 Feb (and 20 there 21 Nov), 21 Sherrifston 19 Jan, 20 Scarffbanks 23 Jan, 20 Darkland 30 Mar, 15 Rafford 22 Mar, 15 Urquhart 17 Oct, 14 Forres 10 Mar, 12 Loanhead 19 Nov, 12 Seafeld 8 Feb, 10 Muirton Farm (Buckie) 15 Jan, 10 Kinloss 20 Dec and 10 Netherton Farm 23 Jan.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Very common resident breeder.

Present in the breeding season at Birnie Pool (5 singing males on 9 Jun), Dava (Loch Allan and Lochan Tutach), Netherton (Findhorn), Kinloss, Loch of Blairs, Loch Spynie, Mains of Glengerrack, Tomintoul and Tugnet.

The proportion of juveniles to adults trapped for ringing at Loch Spynie 'Constant Effort Site' was 0.7:1.0, the same as 2012.

Largest winter flock was 16 Netherton Farm 23 Jan.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Scarce resident breeder.

Breeding: The coastal lowlands between Buckie and the River Spey remain the stronghold for this species in Moray & Nairn. A summer breeding survey in this area located 25 singing birds in mid May, 22 in mid June and 20 in mid July (MJHC). Mains of Tannachy (west of Portgordon) held the highest density with 5 singing birds. The only singing Corn Buntings reported in other areas were 1 Urquhart 26 Jun (EH) and, well away from the 'core' area, 1 Kinchyle (between Nairn and Cawdor) (GAa).

In winter, 18 Lochhills 10 Dec (HF), 17 Nether Dallachy 10 Nov (RP), 8 Auchintae 15 Jan (MJHC), 5 Muirton Farm (Buckie) 15 Jan (MJHC).

ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS TO 2012 REPORT**Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena***

1 Lossie estuary 15 Dec (RP) is the first for that site. (not 15-16 Dec as stated)

RED-BACKED SHRIKES BREEDING IN MORAY IN 2013***MARTIN COOK***

On 10 July 2013, Jim Craib was returning from a day in the hills along a footpath through moorland in central Moray. Shortly after passing some ruined buildings he encountered a male Red-backed Shrike. He watched the bird for a while and, assuming it to be a late migrant, moved on.

On my return from holiday ten days later I found Jim's e-mail, which was intriguing - it did seem a very late (or early) date, and unusual locality, for a migrant Red-backed Shrike. On 21 July I visited the area and immediately heard an unfamiliar alarm call coming from a small patch of willow scrub. A fine adult male Red-backed Shrike was perched prominently above the foliage. It wasn't long before an adult female flew into view and I then located two juveniles perched quietly in some gorse. When these did fly for short distances they did so strongly and appeared to have fledged several days previously. The female bore a ring - but, frustratingly, it would of course have been inappropriate to attempt to re-capture her. The pair and their two young were still present when Ian Francis visited the site on 26 July.



Male Red-backed Shrike, Moray 21 July 2013 (Photo: Martin Cook)



Female Red-backed Shrike (bearing a ring), Moray 21 July 2013 (Photo: Martin Cook)



Juvenile Red-backed Shrike, Moray 21 July 2013 (Photo: Martin Cook)

The breeding area was located on the edge of open moorland in central Moray at an altitude of 220m. The exact nest site is unknown but the family group showed a close affinity for a steep grassy bank with scattered broom and gorse, and large stands of bracken. The bank was curved in such a way as to provide a sheltered south-facing bowl. Near the top of the bank was a small rowan surrounded by a dense thicket of gorse and broom - this was the focus of the male's activity and seems likely to have been where the nest was located. Below the bank was wet acid grassland leading down to a burn.



Red-backed Shrike breeding site in Moray, occupied in 2013 (Photo: Martin Cook)

The weather in the area in June and July 2013 was largely settled, dry and warm with only brief periods of cool, wet conditions. This is likely to have increased the availability of the large insects on which the adults feed their brood.

This is the first confirmed breeding by Red-backed Shrikes in Moray & Nairn.

MONGOLIAN (LESSER SAND) PLOVER AT LOSSIEMOUTH - NEW TO MORAY & NAIRN

MARGARET SHARPE

The east beach at Lossiemouth is one of my most favourite wildlife haunts, and I have walked it for years, three times a week or sometimes every day (actually sometimes twice a day!). It's a glorious three mile sandy stretch, merging into a long shingle bank that stretches round a bay, backed by conifer plantations. I find it a good place to watch a host of sea and shorebirds, glimpse a cetacean fin or two, and watch the odd seal that comes ashore.

Summer 2013 was particularly fine, and in the last weeks of June I had been beach walking most days, hoping to observe the start of the autumnal migration. Sure enough, on 4 July three adult Sanderlings in full breeding plumage had appeared, and over the next few days their numbers rose steadily. The weather remained warm with light winds, and the Sanderling kept pouring in, swelling to a flock of 80+. By 14 July I had noted two colour-ringed individuals, and I thought I had caught sight of a possible third in amongst the blur of running legs.

So, on the evening of the 16th I found myself walking up the beach, with the tide falling, and sun on my back, hoping to secure that third elusive Sanderling. I caught up with the flock at the far end as usual, and they were in small loose groups feeding on the tide line as it receded. I could see that although they were spread out, they were generally heading towards me, so I sat on the sand and waited for them to pass, making it much easier to observe their legs. Meanwhile, I had a quick usual scan along the shingle with the binoculars, and wham...there it was - a plover with red chest feathers! What is that?? I have to confess I wasn't sure, other than it ran and bobbed like a plover, and I knew it was something unusual, but not to what degree. I had a distant memory from books, and knew I had to get in closer with my camera for at least a record shot.

I inched forward, prone on the sand, taking blurry grab shots as I was still too far away, holding my breath and hoping to get closer. The Sanderlings had now reached my position and were beginning to stream past

me. With one eye on the plover, and one eye scanning legs, I kept working my way forward on my elbows. Then I couldn't believe it, a Sanderling streaked past resplendent with colour-rings! Argh dilemma, where to look first? I hurriedly took snaps of the Sanderling hoping to get another better chance later. The plover was now about 40m away, and I felt I could not dare chance going any closer. A quick look over my shoulder and thankfully there were no approaching dog walkers or joggers to disturb the birds. I noted that the plover stood slightly taller than the nearby Ringed Plovers, it had a gorgeous brick red chest, striking black and white face markings and fawn head and back, overall a beautiful and pretty bird.



Mongolian Plover, with Ringed Plover, on Lossiemouth east beach, 16 July 2013 (Photo: Margaret Sharpe)

There was a brief moment long enough to take some record shots but all too soon the plover was flitting around again, unsettled by the Ringed Plovers chasing one another. Finally, it banked round and headed eastward along the bay and was all too quickly out of sight. Not keen to chase it along the shingle, I waited nearly an hour, hoping it would return. The sun was still warm, the tide was near full out and people had started to appear on the beach. I started to feel that the window of opportunity had now closed. So, catching up with the colour-ringed Sanderling now feeding on a sand bar, I noted its colour combination, and headed for home.

Once home, it was a mad rush to fire up the computer, download the images and compare them with the book photographs and illustrations. A thin black line trimming the edge of the red chest feathers seemed to confirm it was a male Mongolian Plover, one of the forms of Lesser Sand Plover, but I still couldn't quite believe it. Not trusting my identification, I dashed off emails for second and third opinions. In the morning I was back on the beach at first light at the same spot, and scanned the bay for hours but with no luck.

In the next few days, word spread, my email inbox started to fill up, and I realised just how 'mega' a rarity the bird was. I did and still do, feel very privileged and lucky to have seen it at all. I had so very much hoped somebody else would re-sight the plover, but continued beach searches proved fruitless. Then some eleven days later, I received an email informing me that a Mongolian Plover had been found in Co. Cork, Ireland, and that it was thought to be the same male I had seen. By comparing the flank feather patterns

from my images and those taken in Ireland, it was generally felt they matched well enough to confirm that it was in fact the very same individual.

This is the first record of any form of Lesser Sand Plover in Moray & Nairn. The form known as Mongolian Plover breeds in far-eastern Russia and Mongolia, and winters from Taiwan to Australia.



Mongolian Plover on Lossiemouth east beach, 16 July 2013 (Photo: Margaret Sharpe)

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER IN FINDHORN BAY - SECOND RECORD FOR MORAY & NAIRN

RICHARD SOMERS COCKS

Just after 08:00 on 10 June 2013, I was out in Findhorn Bay at low water. In the middle of the bay, about 600 m out from the bird hide at around NJ046628, I found a group of small waders feeding on the sand flats. The group comprised 47 Ringed Plovers, 10 Dunlin and another small wader with which I was unfamiliar.

The bird was about the size of a Dunlin and stood out from the other waders by its pale appearance. All the Dunlin were in summer breeding plumage by that time of the year with their characteristic black belly patches. The lone wader, by comparison, was pale underneath with light brown streaking at the top of the chest. Its bill was dark but had a noticeable yellow/orange base to it. Its head had a pale stripe above the eye and its back was a mid brown colour similar to that of a Sanderling in summer plumage. Its wing feathers were noticeably long when folded compared to its tail.

I returned home and, after consulting references and discussion with local birders, I became certain that the bird was an adult White-rumped Sandpiper. Although the bird was not seen in flight on the first sighting, its white rump was observed on subsequent sightings when it got airborne.

It was seen in a very similar position at low water on the following days and remained until at least 14 June, affording excellent views for numerous visiting birders. Tony Backx also saw and photographed the bird on 11 June when it was roosting at high tide with other waders on the shingle areas of the dunes just east of Findhorn village.

This is the second record of this North American species in Moray & Nairn. The first, also an adult, was feeding beside a pool in a pig field at Hopeman on 23 September 2011.



White-rumped Sandpiper, Findhorn Bay 13 June 2013 (Photo: Richard Somers Cocks)

RINGING REPORT 2013

BOB PROCTOR

Numbers of birds ringed in Moray & Nairn during 2013:

	FG*	Pullus	Total		FG*	Pullus	Total
Goshawk		2	2	Grasshopper Warbler	1	2	3
Oystercatcher		4	4	Sedge Warbler	47	1	48
Ringed Plover	43		43	Treecreeper	6		6
Dunlin	23		23	Wren	39		39
Purple Sandpiper	23		23	Starling	64		64
Black Guillemot		1	1	Blackbird	93	2	95
Common Gull		9	9	Song Thrush	12		12
Woodpigeon	6		6	Spotted Flycatcher	1		1
Collared Dove	3		3	Robin	126		126
Great Sp. Woodpecker	22		22	Dunnock	100		100
Peregrine		4	4	House Sparrow	284	17	301
Magpie	1		1	Tree Sparrow	32	74	106
Jackdaw	2		2	Pied Wagtail		2	2
Goldcrest	14		14	Brambling	18		18
Blue Tit	332	261	593	Chaffinch	260		260
Great Tit	150	157	307	Bullfinch	13		13
Crested Tit	11	9	20	Greenfinch	335		335
Coal Tit	179	16	195	Linnet	5		5
Swallow		5	5	Lesser Redpoll	10		10
House Martin	4		4	Goldfinch	198		198
Long-tailed Tit	69		69	Siskin	960		960
Chiffchaff	3		3	Yellowhammer	7		7
Willow Warbler	46		46	Reed Bunting	38		38
Blackcap	12		12				
Garden Warbler	1		1				
Whitethroat	3		3	TOTALS	3596	566	4162

*FG=full grown

Recoveries in 2013:

All ringing recoveries reported for 2013 are included in this section with the more interesting ones given in full. Anyone finding a ringed bird in Moray or Nairn is asked to pass the details to Martin Cook.

Ringing details are given on the first line and recovery data on the second line. The age when ringed is given according to the EURING code, note however, that these numbers do not represent age in years:

- 1 Nestling or chick
- 2 Fully grown, year of hatching unknown
- 3 Hatched during year of ringing

- 4 Hatched before year of ringing, exact year unknown
 5 Hatched in the previous year
 6 Hatched before the previous year, exact year unknown

m = Male f = Female J = Juvenile CES = Constant Effort Site

Recovery symbols:	V	Caught and released with ring
	VV	Ring number read in field, or sight record of a colour-ringed bird
	VB	Breeding when trapped
	+	Shot or killed by man
	X	Found dead or dying (F = Fresh, L = Long dead)
	?	Unknown circumstances

WHOOPE SWAN

An unprecedented movement from Poland involved an individual from a recently established breeding population

AH0401(3R91)	1f	050810	Ozarow Fish Ponds, Mokrsko, Lodz voiv, POLAND	
	VV	281212	Niedersachsen, GERMANY	
	VV	260613	Loch Katrine, Glengyle, Central Region	1621 km
	VV	290613	Loch Oire	1569 km
	VV	130913	Spey estuary	
	VV	290913	Cloddach quarry	

GREYLAG GOOSE

A colour-ringed juvenile (HPB) from Loch of Hundland was ringed on 10 Jul 2011. Interestingly, this individual remained on Birsay, and was last seen on 20 Nov 2011, before being resighted at Strumshaw Fen, Norfolk on 24 Feb and 4 Mar 2012. It then returned to Birsay; being seen on 13 Mar, 29 May, 16 Oct and 10 Nov 2012. On 12 Jan 2013, it was seen at Clochan, suggesting that this could be a stop-over on a southward migration back to Norfolk.

BRENT GOOSE (PALE-BELLIED)

Two individuals colour-ringed at Nairn in January 2012 were seen along the Nairn foreshore on 5 Jan 2013.

STORM PETREL

2599344	4	040713	Scurdie Ness, Angus	
	V	080813	Lossiemouth	125 km

CORMORANT

Colour-ringed birds ringed as chicks on Dunbuy Island, Bullers of Buchan (Aberdeenshire) in 2013 were seen at Burghead (APZ & APU) and Hopeman (APU).

SHAG

A typical selection of reports concerning colour-ringed individuals originating from the Isle of May and other north-east colonies. Following a period of prolonged poor weather more than usual were found dead. Of these, the oldest was the skeletal remains of an adult female ringed on 16 June 2002 which were found at Lossiemouth harbour.

SPOONBILL

The individual present on the Spey estuary on 18 Jun was originally ringed in Schleswig-Holstein on 23 May 2009 where it remained until 26 Jul 2009. It was then seen at Esbjerg, Denmark on 21 Aug 2009 and Djoudj, Senegal on 10 Oct 2012 before being re-sighted on the Spey estuary.

OSPREY

AA	1m	040707	Moray	
	VV	300509	Rutland Water	
	VV	03-050413	Somerset	
	VV	May 2013	Lossie estuary	
1439548	1	240610	near Tain	
	VV	270813	Findhorn Bay	30 km

OYSTERCATCHER

FP47244	8	250197	Findhorn Bay	
	X	May 13	Leynavatn, Stremoy, FAEROES	534 km

SANDERLING

B03513	?	301008	Asenko village, GHANA	
	VV	140713	Lossiemouth east beach	
897168	?	190511	Siglingamerki, Sandgeroi, ICELAND	
	VV	220711	Sillon de Talbert, Pleubian, FRANCE	
	VV	140713	Lossiemouth east beach	
NS99972	4	021212	Hine Greenie, Sanday, Orkney	
	VV	170713	Lossiemouth east beach	
	VV	02 & 200813	North Ronaldsay, Orkney	

LITTLE STINT

A colour-ringed juvenile Little Stint ringed at Makkevika, Giske, Møre & Romsdal (NORWAY) between 9-25 Aug 2013 was seen on the Spey estuary on 28 Aug. This individual had travelled 737 km.

GREAT SKUA

HT56188	1	290695	Stourdale, Hoy, Orkney	
	XF	150613	Lossiemouth	133 km

GUILLEMOT

R59327	Adult	250610	Fair Isle	
	X (leg)	240813	Lossiemouth	224 km
R64633	1	220613	North Sutor	
	V	150713	Burghead	26 km

SANDWICH TERN

At Findorn Bay a total of 62 different colour-ringed birds were seen. The majority originated from Forvie Sands NNR on the Ythan Estuary. Other individuals originated from Highland (2), Farne Islands (6) and THE NETHERLANDS (3 from near Stellendam, Zuid-Holland).

NRF	1	280613	near Stellendam, Zuid-Holland, THE NETHERLANDS	
(White)	VV	250813	Findhorn Bay	
	VV	270813-010913	Findhorn Bay	

NZF	1	280613	near Stellendam, Zuid-Holland, THE NETHERLANDS	
(White)	VV	030913	Findhorn Bay	

NR5	1	280613	near Stellendam, Zuid-Holland, THE NETHERLANDS	
(White)	VV	210813	Findhorn Bay	
	VV	260813	Findhorn Bay	

Elsewhere;				
DD92267	1	120713	Inner Farne, Farne Islands, Northumbria	
(UDL)	VV	310813	Lossie estuary	256 km

ARCTIC TERN

SX07754	1	040794	RAF Kinloss	
	V	270713	Ythan estuary	101 km

SV05573	1	060709	Lossie Forest shore	
	V	260713	Ythan estuary	84 km

SX07754 was re-caught after 19 years 23 days; although old, this individual will need to live for a further 11 years to overtake the UK longevity record for this species.

KITTIWAKE

EX56827	1	250613	Lowestoft, Suffolk	
(Orange 7C)	VV	240913	Findhorn	672 km

BLACK-HEADED GULL

6215032	8	250311	Breiavatnet, Stavanger, NORWAY	
(JHZ3)	VV	310311	Breiavatnet, Stavanger, NORWAY	
	VV	230511-180611	Ulsrudvann, Oslo, NORWAY	308 km
	VV	190811-270212	Lossie estuary	544 km
	VV	210312	Breiavatnet, Klepp, NORWAY	
	VV	070512	Hovindammen, Oslo, NORWAY	306 km
	VV	300912-061012	Lossie estuary	544 km
	VV	291212-250213	Cooper Park pond, Elgin	548 km
	VV	270213	Lossie estuary	544 km
	VV	110313	Cooper Park pond, Elgin	548 km
	VV	090413	Bispevika, Oslo, NORWAY	303 km
	VV	150613	Østensjøvannet, Oslo, NORWAY	306 km
	VV	270713-151213	Lossie estuary	544 km

K00091 (J2CR)	?	150712	Mosvangen Camping, Stavanger, NORWAY	
	VV	230912	Cullen	518 km
	VV	100413	Mosvangen Camping, Stavanger, NORWAY	
	VV	070513	Mosvatnetøstsidan, Stavanger, NORWAY	1 km
	VV	110613	Mosvatnetøstsidan, Stavanger, NORWAY	1 km
	VV	150613	Mosvangen, Stavanger, NORWAY	
EW77068	1	210605	Tom Mor, Moray	
	V	150113	Motherwell Country Park	194 km
EX00210	3	100909	Ythan estuary	
	VV	030213	Cooper Park pond, Elgin	87 km
COMMON GULL				
5168401 (J5E5)	8	090709	Prestvannet, Tromsø, NORWAY	
	VV	200411	Prestvannet, Tromsø, NORWAY	
	VV	050212	Cooper Park pond, Elgin	1709 km
	VV	080813	Prestvannet, Tromsø, NORWAY	
5190015 (J6YV)	5	130113	Mølledammen, Time, Rogoland, NORWAY	
	VV	19-200113	Cooper Park pond, Elgin	539 km
LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL				
FP15224	Adult	071298	near Hempsted, Gloucester	
	XF	120413	Findhorn Bay	649 km
HERRING GULL				
FA32966 (J4266)	1	040713	Ørndalen, Tromsø, Troms, NORWAY	
	VV	291213	Cooper Park pond, Elgin	1715 km
1D4:C	1	040712	Sheep Island, Sanda, Kintyre	
	VV	051013	Lossie estuary	
GG88707	1	200692	Ord of Caithness, Helmsdale	
	XF	200613	Lossiemouth	53 km
GR22290	3	071111	Cooper Park pond, Elgin	
	VV	010313	Cooper Park pond, Elgin	Local
GR71905 (T:01J)	ad. m	270713	Fraserburgh	
	VV	161113	Lossie estuary	
GR71940 (T:44J)	ad. m	040813	Buchanhaven, Peterhead	
	VV	231113	Lossie estuary	
T:640	10	080512	Pittodrie, Aberdeen	
	VV	281212	Lossie estuary	
	VV	311213	Lossie estuary	

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

3006096	1	200612	Sørhorsvær, Sømna, Nordland, NORWAY	
(JP508)	VV	260113	Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Suffolk	1533 km
	VV	290413	Lossie estuary	1152 km
MA09374	1	010703	Rothiesholm Head, Stronsay, Orkney	
	VV	010813	Lossiemouth	154 km

A total of 24 colour-ringed individuals from various Caithness colonies were reported, mainly from the Lossie estuary. The colour-ringed individual (T:011) from Fraserburgh was seen again at the Lossie estuary on 1st and 11th-12th May.

KESTREL

EG79669	1	200613	Argaty, Central Region	
	XF	050813	Findochty, Buckie	181 km

BLUE TIT

Y615025	5	120113	Coral Cottage, near Lossiemouth	
	V	200513	Loch Spynie CES	3 km
D043271	3	111212	Cairnfield, Buckie	
	V	020313	Inchberry, Fochabers	12 km

GREAT TIT

L135379	3f	201011	Strone, Newtonmore, Highland	
	V	250213	Keith	87 km

CRESTED TIT

Y769900	1	030512	Lossie Forest	
	VV	040613	Lossiemouth	0 km

COAL TIT

Y250949	3J	310712	Loch Spynie CES	
	XF cat	140513	Lossiemouth	6 km

LONG-TAILED TIT

DED710	3J	050611	Loch Spynie CES	
	V	120113	Coral Cottage, near Lossiemouth	3 km

GREENFINCH

TR75213	3m	191012	Clochan, Buckie	
	V	310313	Fort Augustus	116 km
TT66950	3Jf	190712	Keith	
	V	190913	Buckie	15 km

GOLDFINCH

D052757	3f	211012	Gibraltar Point, Skegness	
	V	240413	Buckie	548 km

D210676	6m XF	230213 040513	Clochan, Buckie Baile Mor, Argyll & Bute	251 km
SISKIN				
D043438	5m V	070413 110513	Keith Inverarnie, Highland	75 km
L825633	3J V	300611 170313	Keith Pope's Hill, Gloucestershire	636 km
D250008	5f XF	280113 260513	Baldwins Hill, East Grinstead, Sussex Inchberry, Fochabers	745 km
D298982	6m V	050413 180513	Balnain, Glen Urquhart Keith	100 km
D277622	6f V	230213 130413	Orrell, Wigan, Greater Manchester Keith	447 km
D010892	6m V	300313 290413	Brandon, Suffolk Keith	610 km
D025888	5m V	140313 290413	Humshaugh, Northumberland Keith	283 km
D139472	5f V	050513 160513	New Laithe Farm, Newton, Lancashire Keith	402 km
Y273680	5f V	090413 260413	West Moor, Tyne & Wear Keith	293 km
L997152	6m V	210412 090413	Selkirk, Borders Keith	223 km
Y637332	3Jm V	290512 230413	Morar, Highland Keith	184 km
Y984806	5m V	050313 300513	Bourne Wood, Lincolnshire Keith	555 km
Y707995	6m V	180313 210513	Thetford, Norfolk Cairnfield, Buckie	628 km
D448167	6m VV	300313 220513	Kemple End, Lancashire Clochan	420 km
X371780	6f V	190313 260513	Nursery Lane, Ascot, Berkshire Dufftown	689 km

X371834	5f XF cat	210313 120613	Nursery Lane, Ascot, Berkshire Dallas	705 km
Y609526	5m V V	220413 290113 010613	West Tofts, Norfolk Clochan, Buckie Buckie	617 km 621 km
Y656764	5m V	050413 010513	Hilton of Fern, Fern, Angus Clochan, Buckie	99 km
D253456	6m V	120313 210413	Claregate, West Midlands Clochan, Buckie	560 km
D000086	3J V	010712 230213	Dunbeath, Caithness Clochan, Buckie	76 km
Y769803	4f V	270412 220413	Clochan, Buckie Lockerbie, Dumfries & Galloway	279 km
Y769863	6m V	300412 160213	Clochan, Buckie Great Livermere, Suffolk	638 km
Y769980	4f V	090512 050513	Clochan, Buckie Skeld, Shetland	299 km
Y769989	5f V	100512 200513	Clochan, Buckie Berriedale, Highland	69 km
Y889138	3J V	290712 030413	Clochan, Buckie Dunmurry, Antrim, Northern Ireland	389 km
Y889286	3m V	061012 290113	Clochan, Buckie Low Waters, Hamilton, South Lanarkshire	217 km
D210740	5f V	210413 010513	Clochan, Buckie Drummond, Inverness	76 km

SNOW BUNTING

?	5f VV	110413 250513	Glenshee ski area car park Cairngorm plateau	
---	----------	------------------	---	--

GRID REFERENCES OF LOCALITIES MENTIONED IN THE SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Aberlour	NJ2642	Bellie cemetery	NJ3561
Achnatone	NH9149	Ben Aigan	NJ3048
Achmore	NJ2631	Ben Macdui	NN9999
Ailnack	NJ1414	Ben Main	NJ3535
Aitnoch	NH9839	Ben Rinnes	NJ2435
Allaburn	NJ1961	Berryburn	NJ0545
Aldivalloch	NJ3626	Bin of Cullen	NJ4764
Aldunie	NJ3626	Binn Hill	NJ3065
Altnaglander	NJ1628	Binns	NJ3164
Altyre Woods	NJ0253	Binsness	NJ0362
Alves	NJ1362	Birchfield	NJ1614
Archiestown	NJ2344	Bishopmill	NJ2163
Ardclach	NH9545	Blackhillock	NJ2044
Ardgye	NJ1563	Blacksboat	NJ1838
Ardivot	NJ2267	Blackwater Lodge	NJ3328
Arndilly	NJ2848	Blinkbonnie	NJ3365
Arthur's Bridge	NJ2567	Boar's Head Rock	NJ2867
Auchenhalrig	NJ3761	Boat o' Brig	NJ3251
Auchindoun Castle	NJ3437	Boath	NH9155
Auchinhandoch	NJ3338	Boghole	NJ9655
Auchlochan	NJ0241	Bogmoor	NJ3562
Auchmair	NJ3828	Boldow	NJ1740
Auchnarrow	NJ2123	Bow Fiddle Rock	NJ4968
Auchroisk	NJ3351	Braes of Enzie	NJ3959
Auchtertyre	NJ1858	Braidbog	NJ4963
Auldearn	NH9155	Brandston	NJ2865
		Bridge of Avon	NJ1835
Badcheear	NJ3532	Bridge of Brown	NJ1220
Badentinan	NJ2957	Bridgend	NJ3731
Bailliesland	NJ2565	Broadley	NJ3961
Ballindalloch Castle	NJ1736	Brodie Castle	NH9757
Ballnellan Burn	NJ1326	Brodieshill	NJ1059
Ballochford	NJ3633	Broom of Moy	NJ0159
Balnacoul	NJ3146	Broombank	NH9255
Balormie	NJ2167	Broomton	NH9654
Balvalley Moss	NJ3725	Brown Muir	NJ2555
Balvenie	NJ3242	Buckie	NJ4165
Banchor	NH9140	Buckpool	NJ4165
Bank Farm	NJ3929	Burghead	NJ1169
Bankhead	NH9658	Burghead Bay	NJ0867
Bardonside	NJ2154	Burgie Wood	NJ0958
Barmuckity	NJ2461	Burnside of Birnie	NJ2259
Bauds of Cullen	NJ4766	Burnside of Dipple	NJ3256
Beatshach	NJ2737	Burnside of Enzie	NJ3960
Beinn a' Chaorainn	NJ0401	Burnside of Geddes	NH8851
Beinn a' Chruinnich	NJ2313	Byres	NJ3562
Beinn Mheadhoin	NJ0201		
Bellandy	NJ2832	Cabrach	NJ3827

Cairn Ballantruan	NJ1524		
Cairn Gorm	NJ0003	Dallas	NJ1252
Cairn Lochan	NH9802	Dallas Dhu	NJ0356
Cairn Uish	NJ1750	Dallas Lodge	NJ1052
Cairneyhillock	NJ2658	Dallasbraughty	NJ0346
Calcots	NJ2563	Darnaway Castle	NH9955
Cantsford	NJ0754	Dava	NJ0038
Cardhu	NJ1843	Delmore	NJ2442
Cardnach Fm	NJ1942	Delnabo	NJ1617
Carn Allt a' Chlaiginn	NJ3230	Delnies	NH8356
Carn Daimh	NJ1824	Deskford	NJ5061
Carn Liath	NJ2515	Drainie	NJ2168
Carron	NJ2241	Drumdivan	NH8454
Catherinebraes	NJ2544	Drumfurrich	NJ2944
Caysbriggs	NJ2466	Drumin	NJ1830
Charlestown of Aberlour	NJ2642	Drummuir	NJ3844
Clackmarras	NJ2458	Drybridge	NJ4362
Clashach Cove	NJ1570	Drynachan	NH8639
Clochan	NJ4060	Dufftown	NJ3239
Clockeasy	NJ2962	Duffus	NJ1668
Cloddach	NJ1958	Duffus Castle	NJ1867
Cloddymoss	NH9860	Dulsie	NH9341
Clovenside	NJ0459	Dulsie Bridge	NH9341
Cluny Hill	NJ0458	Dunearn	NH9341
Cnoc Lochy	NJ1621	Dunphail Ho	NJ0047
Coire Raibeirt	NJ0003	Dykeside	NJ1159
Coldburn	NJ1449		
Coldhome	NJ3639	Earnhill Fm	NJ0160
Coleburn	NJ2455	Earnside	NJ1062
College of Roseisle	NJ1366	Easter Calcots	NJ2563
Coltfield	NJ1163	Easter Cloves	NJ1461
Conicavel	NH9953	Easter Gaulrig	NJ1514
Cook's Cairn	NJ3027	Easter Lawrenceton	NJ0858
Corbiewell	NJ3165	Easter Newforres	NJ0658
Covesea	NJ1870	Easterton	NJ2156
Covesea Skerries	NJ1971	Edinkillie	NJ0246
Coxton	NJ2660	Elgin	NJ2162
Coxtontower	NJ2660	Elginshill	NJ2663
Craigellachie	NJ2844		
Craigmill Lodge	NJ1052	Feakirk	NJ0344
Craigroy	NJ1250	Fèith Buidhe	NJ0909
Cran Loch	NH9459	Ferniefield	NJ3064
Croftglass	NJ2530	Findhorn Bay	NJ0462
Crofts of Dipple	NJ3259	Findochty	NJ4668
Cromdale Hills	NJ1226	Findrassie	NJ1965
Crooked Wood	NJ2762	Fochabers	NJ3458
Culbin Bar	NH9662	Fogwatt	NJ2357
Culbin Forest	NH9862	Foresterseat	NJ2562
Cullen	NJ5167	Forres	NJ0358
Cunningston	NJ1368		
Cunninghaugh	NJ3564	Garbh Uisge Mòr	NH9900

Garlinebeg	NJ1741	Kinermory	NJ2541
Garmouth	NJ3364	Kingsteps	NH9057
Garmouth viaduct	NJ3464	Kingston	NJ3365
Gateside	NJ3647	Kinloss	NJ0661
Gervally	NH9948	Kinneddar	NJ2269
Gilston	NJ2066	Kirdellbeg	NJ1741
Glack Harnes	NJ2836	Kirkhill	NJ2462
Glacks of Balloch	NJ3534	Knock of Braemoray	NJ0141
Glass	NJ4239	Knock of Gownie	NJ2942
Glen Avon	NJ1006	Kylnadrochit Lodge	NJ1419
Glen Gheallaidh	NJ1338		
Glen Latterach	NJ1951	Ladder Hills	NJ2719
Glen Lossie	NJ1347	Ladycroft	NJ2444
Glen Rinnes	NJ2834	Laggan	NJ2026
Glenallachie	NJ2741	Lecht Road	NJ2413
Glenfarclas Distillery	NJ2138	Leids Hill	NJ4126
Glenferness	NH9443	Lein	NJ3365
Glenlatterach Reservoir	NJ1952	Lethen	NH9351
Glenmullie	NJ1916	Lethenhill	NJ1058
Gollachy Burn	NJ4064	Lhanbryde	NJ2761
Gordonsward	NJ2564	Little Aitnoch	NH9640
Gownie	NJ2842	Little Pitlurg	NJ4245
		Loch Allan	NH9939
Half Davoch	NJ0451	Loch Belivat	NH9547
Hardmuir	NH9556	Loch Flemington	NH8152
Heldon Wood	NJ1257	Loch Kirkaldy	NH9641
Hill of Mackalea	NJ3638	Loch Loy	NH9358
Hill of Maud	NJ4662	Loch of Blairs	NJ0255
Hill of Mulundy	NJ1053	Loch Oire	NJ2860
Hillhead	NJ2058	Loch Park	NJ3543
Hillpark	NJ4360	Loch Spynie	NJ2366
Hills of Cromdale	NJ1226	Lochan Tùtach	NH9840
Hopeman	NJ1469	Lochbuie	NJ2153
Howford bridge	NH8753	Lochindorb	NH9736
Humbrack	NJ2556	Lochs of Bogmussach	NJ1347
Hunt Hill	NJ2346	Lochyhill	NJ0559
		Logie	NJ0150
Inchberry	NJ3155	Logieburn	NJ2656
Inchnacape	NJ2020	Longmorn	NJ2358
Innes House	NJ2764	Lossie estuary	NJ2469
Innesmill	NJ2863	Lossiemouth	NJ2370
Inveravon	NJ1837	Lower Auchenreath	NJ3763
Invererne	NJ0360	Lower Blairnain	NJ2738
Inverharroch Fm	NJ3831	Lower Bogrotten	NJ4861
		Lower Hempriggs	NJ1064
Johnstripe	NJ0447	Lyne of Knockando	NJ1745
		Lynemore	NJ1438
Keith	NJ4250		
Kellas	NJ1754	Macbeth's Hillock	NH9656
Kerrow	NH9941	Machattie's Cairn	NJ3547
Kilravock	NH8149	Mains of Kirdells	NJ1739

Mains of Moyness	NH9553	Ordiquish	NJ3357
Manachie Fm	NJ0356	Orton	NJ3153
Manbeen	NJ1959	Overton	NJ2745
Marypark	NJ1938		
Maviston	NH9458	Paddockhaugh	NJ2058
Meikle Balloch Hill	NJ3534	Parks of Innes	NJ2763
Meikle Coire Riabhach	NJ2513	Paul's Hill	NJ1140
Mid Mains	NJ1966	Penick	NH9356
Midwood	NJ4261	Philaxdale	NJ1667
Mill of Grange	NJ0460	Pitairlie	NJ2465
Millhill	NJ3158	Pitgaveny Ho	NJ2465
Milltown	NJ2758	Pittendreich	NJ1961
Milltown of Laggan	NJ2834	Pluscarden	NJ1456
Miltonduff	NJ1860	Portgordon	NJ3964
Miltonhill	NJ0963	Portknockie	NJ4868
Monadh an t-Sluich Leith	NJ2617		
Monahoudie Moss	NJ2243	Quarrywood	NJ1864
Monaughty	NJ1260		
Moniemouies	NJ2756	Rafford	NJ0656
Montgrew	NJ4551	Recletich	NJ2834
Moor of Tore	NJ1054	Redhill	NJ1661
Moss of Barmuckity	NJ2461	Refouble	NH9540
Moss of Birnie	NJ2051	Relugas	NH9948
Mosstodloch	NJ3360	Rhinturk	NJ3632
Moycroft	NJ2362	Rinour	NJ1740
Muir of Holmie	NJ4161	Rosarie	NJ3849
Muir of Miltonduff	NJ1859	Roseisle Forest	NJ1166
Muir of the Clans	NH8352		
Muirhead	NJ0863	Salterhill	NJ2067
Muirton	NJ2268	Sanquhar Loch	NJ0458
Muiry Wood	NJ0558	Scabbed Hill	NJ4160
Mulben	NJ3550	Scarffbanks	NJ2366
Muldearie Mains	NJ3950	Scaut Hill	NJ3331
Mundole	NJ0156	Scotstonhill	NJ2662
Myreside	NJ2164	Shaw Hill	NH9748
		Sheanspark	NJ3645
Nairn	NH8856	Shearleat	NH8641
Nairn Bar	NH9260	Shelter Stone	NJ0001
Nether Bellandy	NJ2833	Sherriffmill	NJ2062
Nether Birnie	NJ2059	Sheriffston	NJ2561
Nether Dallachy	NJ3663	Sluie	NJ0052
Nether Meft	NJ2764	South Darkland	NJ2661
Netherbyre	NJ1557	Spey Bay	NJ3564
Netherton	NJ0361	Speymouth	NJ3465
Newbold Wood	NJ0558	Spynie canal	NJ2366
Newforres Wood	NJ0657	Spynie Palace	NJ2365
Newton nursery	NJ1663	St. John's Meads	NJ0155
Newton of Darnaway	NH9853	Stoneyford pond	NJ0455
Newton of Innes	NJ2866	Strath Avon	NJ1425
North Darkland	NJ2662	Strathlene	NJ4467
		Stronachavie	NJ1318

Strondow	NJ1644
Strypes	NJ2758
Succoth	NJ2935
Surradale	NJ1665
Tanzie	NJ3146
Tapp	NJ1447
Tarras	NJ0659
Teindland	NJ2655
Tervieside	NJ2330
Tips of Corsemaul	NJ3939
Todholes	NJ1054
Tomachar	NJ2432
Tombreck	NJ1218
Tomcork	NJ1349
Tomintoul	NJ1618
Tomnavoulin	NJ2126
Tormore Distillery	NJ1534
Torrieston	NJ1658
Tronach Head	NJ4768
Troves	NJ2459
Tugnet	NJ3465
Tynet	NJ3861
Upper Bruntlands	NJ1943
Upper Dallachy	NJ3662
Upper Knockando	NJ1843
Upper Mulben	NJ3652
Urquhart	NJ2862
Waterford Fm	NJ0259
Wellheads	NJ3860
Wellhill	NJ0061
Wester Calcots	NJ2463
Wester Elchies	NJ2542
Wester Gaulrig	NJ1513
Wester Manbeen	NJ1960
Westerfolds	NJ1967
Westertown	NJ1925
Whiteash Hill	NJ3857
Whitefolds	NJ2425
Whitetree	NJ1156
Whitewreath	NJ2357
Yellowbog	NJ1448