

Birds in Moray & Nairn in 2008

MORAY & NAIRN BIRD REPORT
No.24 Part 1 – 2008

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

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the 24th edition of Birds in Moray & Nairn, formerly entitled the Moray & Nairn Bird Report. Unfortunately rather a long period has elapsed since the appearance of the 23rd edition, which covered the year 2007. This has been a consequence of the time and work required in the production of the forthcoming bird atlas The Breeding Birds of North-East Scotland. In order to return report production to its correct schedule it was decided to produce a 'double' edition covering the years 2008 and 2009, to appear in mid 2011, and to revert to the normal single-year format for Birds in Moray & Nairn 2010 which should appear around the end of 2011. Thereafter, normal annual service should be resumed with the report appearing within nine months of the year it covers.

Regular readers may notice some minor changes to the English names, scientific names and species order which appear in the systematic list of species accounts. Some explanation for these changes may be helpful. Traditionally, perhaps, there has been greater stability in the use of scientific names than of English names and the view was often taken that the English name used for a species did not matter hugely so long as the scientific name was also given. In recent times however the pace of taxonomic change has quickened and scientific names are now as prone to change as English ones. For this reason the International Ornithological Congress made recommendations for a list of agreed English bird names at the international level. These names were adopted by the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU) for international use, and by the SOC (e.g. in *The Birds of Scotland*). In some cases, however, these international English names do not correspond to the 'everyday' names used within Britain e.g. 'Hedge Accentor' in place of Dunnock and 'Little Plover' instead of Little Ringed Plover. Also, and in many more cases, the international name uses a prefix which is unfamiliar in the language of most British birders e.g. 'Winter' Wren, 'Common' Blackbird and 'European' Greenfinch. In acceptance of the reality that few British birders will use these international English names in everyday reference to our British birds, the BOU Records Committee publishes a list of English vernacular names in current usage within Britain, and uses these names in its publications. The SOC now also uses these names in its journal *Scottish Birds*.

The *Moray & Nairn Bird Report* (and *Birds in Moray & Nairn*) has continued to use English vernacular names throughout and will continue to do so – following any changes that may be recommended in the BOU (and consequently SOC) list. Once such recent change is the adoption of the name Honey-buzzard for *Pernis apivorus* (in place of Honey Buzzard) to remove the suggestion that this species is closely related to the Buteo buzzards.

Further taxonomic research is throwing new light on species relationships, resulting in significant changes to the order of species in the Scottish list – most recently involving the sequence of passerines.

As always, the production of this report would not be possible without the input and assistance of many people. Special thanks are due to Duncan Gibson, Andy Jensen and Bob Proctor for help with writing species accounts, and to Bob Proctor for his informative Ringing Reports. Thanks also to the many observers who have taken the trouble to submit their records for inclusion in the report.

The editor expresses special gratitude to the following organisations and individuals for their generous financial support:

- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Baxters Food Group
- Dr Melvin Morrison, Keith
- Smith & Catto, Funeral Directors
- Walkers Shortbread Ltd, Aberlour

Submission of records

In earlier reports, guidance was offered on the type of records that are likely to prove most valuable for inclusion in Birds in Moray & Nairn. These guidelines are reproduced, with amendments, below:

- Arrival dates of summer visitors in spring
- First dates inland for species which desert the uplands in winter
- Last dates of departing summer visitors in autumn
- Arrival dates of winter visitors in autumn
- Last dates of departing winter visitors in spring
- Records of rarities and scarce birds
- All records relating to influxes (e.g. Waxwing, Quail etc.)
- Counts of flocks of commoner species
- Regular counts throughout the year from a local 'patch'
- Comments on increases or decreases of any species
- Counts of seabird passage (preferably for timed periods)
- First dates for song or other breeding behaviour in spring
- Breeding colony counts for colonial nesting species
- Data obtained from nest box schemes
- Notes of interesting or unusual behaviour

It should be emphasised, however, that all records are welcome – better to receive more information than can be accommodated in the report than to lose any potentially significant records. All records that are received are stored electronically on Excel databases – nothing is discarded.

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 editor would be very grateful to receive as many submissions as possible on Excel spreadsheets – such a spreadsheet with appropriate headings may be obtained from the editor/bird recorder. 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).

Please submit your records to the Moray & Nairn Bird Recorder, and report editor, at the following address:

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

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.

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 2008 REPORT
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H.Addlesee (HA), P.Adshead (PA), V.Anderson (VA), A.Ash (AA), H.Bain (HBa), P.Batten (PBa), J.Bell (JBe), S.Benn (SB), N.Bielby (NBi), Grey P.Biggarr (PBig), P.Bingham (PBin), J.Birkett (JBi), P.Bone (PBo), W.R.P.Bourne (WRPB), A.Bowie (ABO), A.Breen (ABr), J.Brighthouse (JBr), G.Brind (GB), D.Brown (DBr), M.Brown (MB), N.Burgum (NBu), J.Butcher (JBU), G.Campbell (GCa), R.P.Campbell (RPC), S.Chalmers (SCh), J.Clarke (JCl), A.J.Clunas (AJC), M.Coath (MCoa), M.Coleman (MCol), T.Comerford (TC), M.J.H.Cook (MJHC), J.Cornfoot (JCo), B.Cosnette (BC), J.K.Craib (JKC), D.Cree (DC), G.Cross (GCr), A.Cuthbert (ACu), K.Cuthbert (KC), S.Dalrymple (SD), J.Deans (JDe), R.H.Dennis (RHD), D.G.Devonport (DGD), B.Dodson (BD), A.Douse (ADo), P.Drysdale (PD), D.Dugan (DD), A.Dunbar (ADu), K.Duncan (KD), M.Durney (MDu), S.Eaves (SEa), A.Edward (AE), C.S.Elder (CSE), S.Elder (SEl), M.Esson (ME), H.Farquhar (HF), S.Fenwick (SF), M.Finn (MF), J.Forsyth (JFo), I.Francis (IFr), C.Fraser (CF), R.Fraser (RF), M.Galloway (MG), G.Garner (GGa), A.Garrod (AGa), G.George (GGe), C.A.Gervaise (CAG), D.A.Gibson (DAG), R.Gomes (RG), I.Gordon (IG), P.Gordon (PG), P.Gordon Smith (PGS), L.Graham (LG), K.L.Guthrie (KLG), C.Hall (CHal), T.Hall (TH), S.Halsey (SHa), C.Hamlett (CHam), G.Hamlett (GHa), J.Hammond (JHa), M.Harvey (MH), E.Harwood (EH), R.F.Hewitt (RFH), P.T.Hirst (PTH), J.Hogg (JHo), R.H.Hogg (RHH), H.Holbrook (HH), K.Horsfall (KHo), N.Humphries (NH), P.Hyvonen (PH), V.Ireland (VI), D.C.Jardine (DCJ), A.Jensen (AJ), R.Johnson (RJoh), M.Johnston (MJ), R.J.Jones (RJJ), C.Kail (CK), R.Kail (RK), P.W.Knott (PWK), K.Kortland (KK), C.Lane (CLa), J.D.Law (JDL), A.J.Lawrence (AJL), D.Leeming (DLe), K.Leeming (KL), J.Leestmans (JL), P.Lincoln (PLi), A.Little (ALi), D.Lloyd (DL), P.A.Lloyd (PAL), N.London (NL), C.Lyddon (CLy), B.Lynch (BL), S.McArdle (SMc), W.MacAlpine (WMacA), D.McCullough (DMc), D.Macdonald (DMac), J.&H.MacDonald (J&HMacD), P.Macdonald (PMc), M.Macgarvin (MMac), H.Maggs (HM), R.Mair (RMa), J.Matthews (JMa), R.A.Mavor (RAM), D.Merrie (DM), S.Milligan (SM), C.Mitchell (CMi), E.Mitchell (EMit), M.Morris (MMo), L.Morrison (LMO), W.M.Morrison (WMM), S.D.Morton (SDM), J.Moss (JMos), A.Murray (AMu), L.Oldershaw (LO), A.Owen (AO), A.Palethorpe (AP), E.Penman (EP), I.Phillips (IP), L.Phipps (LPh), D.Pierce (DPi), J.Pinnick (JPi), N.G.Pleasance (NGP), M.Polson (MP), T.Poole (TP), J.Pott (JPot), J.Poyner (JPoy), R.Prentice (RPr), L.Price (LPr), R.Proctor (RP), J.Protheroe (JPr), D.M.Pullan (DMP), D.Ramage (DR), R.Reglinski (RR), C.Reid (CRe), M.Reid (MR), P.Rhodes (PRh), S.Richards (SR), C.J.Richardson (CJR), T.Rogers (TR), S.E.Rosser (SER), C.Round (CRo), J.Ryall (JRY), F.Scott (FS), R.D.S.Scott (RDSS), E.Seal (ES), J.Selvidge (JSe), M.Sharpe (MSh), D.Short (DSh), A.Sime (ASi), D.Slater (DSl), D.M.Smith (DMS), K.Smith (KSm), R.Smith (RSm), M.Souter (MSo), H.A.Stewart (HAS), F.A.Strachan (FAS), C.J.Sugden (CJS), I.S.Suttie (ISS), R.Swift (RSw), W.G.Taylor (WGT), C.Taylor (CTa), S.Taylor (STa), P.Thoms (PeT), D.Thomson (DTh), A.Tolmie (ATo), A.Tribe (ATr), R.Tribe (RT), A.E.Turner (AET), P.Turner (PTu), J.Wallace (JWal), J.Watson (JWat), Y.Watson (YW), W.Weld-Moore (WW-M), I.Wilde (IW), S.Willis (SW), G.D.Woodard (GDW), 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 17 apparently occupied territories was recorded, with 14 pairs producing 63 young; of these 59 appear to have fledged, giving a mean fledged brood size of 4.2 young.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Flemington	9	4	nc			Breeders			nc	5	nc	3
Findhorn Bay	13	7	17	nc	58	52	nc	nc	23	19	nc	nc
Lossie estuary	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loch Spynie	100	59	45			Breeders			10	11	23	44
Cloddach	12	9	6			Breeders			nc	17	27	13
Loch na Bo	6	4	2						10	8	nc	10
Kingston	nc	nc	2			Breeders			7	7	nc	nc

nc = no count received

The only other site holding 10+ was Loch Loy: 17 on 13 Jan and 16 on 6 Feb.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Common migrant and winter visitor.

Winter-spring: In Nairn District, two sites were used: Loch Flemington (6 on 13 Jan) and Loch Loy (3 on 9 Mar). In Moray, flocks were recorded at nine sites, all were groups of less than 10 except: 29 Hardmuir 20 Jan, 13 Pitgaveny 22 Mar, 14 Wester Calcots 24 Mar and 29 Findhorn Bay 30 Mar.

Spring: The largest flock during this period was 13 Loch Spynie 1 Apr.

Summer: No records were received.

Autumn: The first autumn flocks were seen in September at Findhorn Bay (16 on 20th, 4 on 21st, 24 on 22nd) and Lossiemouth (17 on 23rd); these are typical arrival dates. No other migrants were seen until October when a further 23 flocks arrived, the largest being 40 Montgrew on 28th. In November, flocks with 10 or more individuals were seen at 14 sites, with two flocks over 100: 116 Loch Spynie on 4th and 104 Milltown on 4th. Much more evident this year with both more flocks and larger flock sizes being reported.

Winter (December): In Nairn District, two sites held flocks: 6 Loch Flemington 12 Dec and 34 Loch Loy 14 Dec. In Moray, seen at four sites in Dec: 1 Loch Oire 1st, 47 Loch na Bo 15th (43 on 2nd, 42 on 9th), 6 Clockeasy 16th and 12 Loch Spynie 31st.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Common migrant, increasing in winter.

Winter (January-mid March): One report from Nairn District of 3 Nairn Bar 13 Jan. Since 2003 the Nairn Bar has been the main area for records from Nairn District at this time of year. Typically in Moray District only a small number of sites containing flocks over 1000 individuals, these included: 1600 Foresterseat 1 Jan, c.1000 Kinloss 3 Jan, 2000 Coleburn 10 Jan, 1600 Colfield 12 Jan, 5000 Findhorn Bay 10 Feb and 4000 Troves 17 Feb.

Spring passage (max. counts): The largest flocks seen during this period were 1200 over Loch Spynie 30 Mar and on 15 Apr when 1500 west over Elgin and 1000 over Loch Oire. Elsewhere numbers were much lower with 75 north Edinkillie 11 Apr, one Cloddach quarry 22 Apr, 150 north Loch Spynie 23 Apr, 35 Bin of Cullen 27 Apr, 520 Findhorn Bay 28 Apr and two west Burghead 3 May.

Summer: a single at the Lossie estuary 27-28 Jun and Kingston 14 Jul-14 Sep may have been the same individual. Three Findhorn Bay and Netherton area 22-26 Aug.

Autumn: The first arrivals were three skeins on 19 Sep (a typical date): 37 (32 arriving from the north) Findhorn Bay, 51 south over the Lossie estuary and an unknown flock size over Longmorn. From 20-28 September a total of 14 skeins arrived, with the largest being 120 east past Loch Spynie 28 Sep. In November, flocks with over 1000 individuals were seen at Fochabers (1000 on 9th), Burgie (5000+ on 12th) and Clochan (1400 on 19th).

The only large counts in November were from Loch Spynie, Milltown and Findhorn Bay. At Loch Spynie 1000 on 1st, with a further 2000 flying over, and c.4000 at Milltown on 4th may have related to the same flock. Substantial numbers roosted counts in Findhorn Bay in November: 10000 on 2nd, 4000 on 8th and 5000 on 12th.

Winter: Typically for recent years, only two flocks exceeded 1000 in December: 2964 Findhorn Bay 7th and 4000 west past Hopeman 16th. In Nairn District, 50 Nairn Bar 29th was the only record.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Scarce winter visitor.

All records relate to the Greenland race *A.a.flavirostris*. In spring one Findhorn Bay 13 Apr (EH). In autumn, 3 Milltown 4 Nov (JW) and a group around the southern end of Findhorn Bay 17 Nov-26 Dec (RHD,AJ,AJL) frequenting farmland at Earnhill, Netherton and Invererne. This latter group involved a maximum of six individuals and included one juvenile.

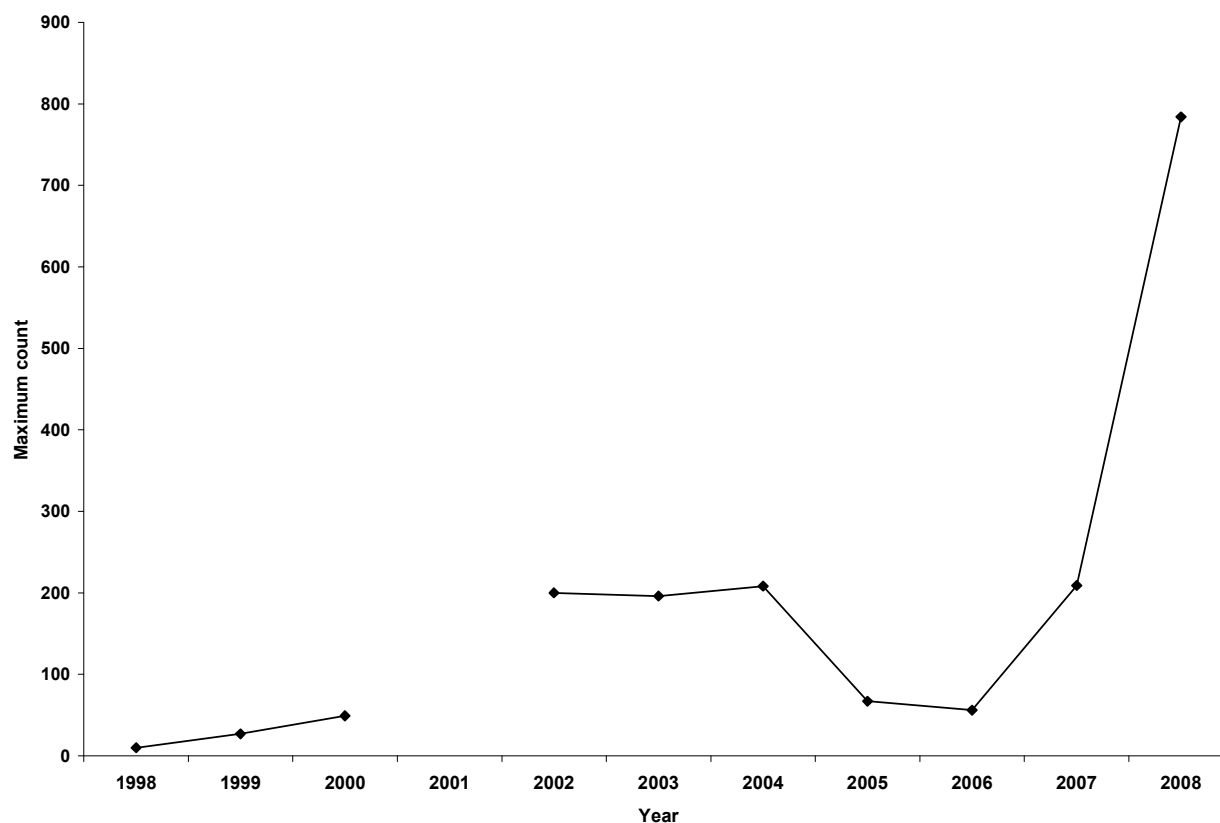
Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Common winter visitor.

Winter-spring: Flocks containing 500 or more birds were recorded at only two sites (max. counts only): 600 Broadley (Clochan) 6 Jan and 901 Wester Manbeen 23 Mar.

Summer: In the Lochindorb breeding area numbers continue to increase, 191 adults and 100 juveniles 8 Jun (MJHC) and 784 moulting adults and juveniles on 8 Jul (RHD); this is the largest count received from Lochindorb.

Maximum number of Greylag Geese (including chicks and juveniles) recorded at Lochindorb 1998-2008:



Elsewhere in the Dava area, three pairs with broods of four and six Auchlochan (Knock of Braemora) 8 Jul (RHD), 39 Dava on a roadside loch and 53 adults Lochan Tutach 8 Jun (MJHC). In the coastal strip, one Tugnet 28 May, 15 Jun and 27 Jul (RP,MJHC,CAG) and 13 west over Elgin 1 Jun (CAG).

Autumn: The first flock was seen over Linkwood (Elgin) 9 Oct; this is the latest arrival date recorded. The only count over 50 during October was 53 over Cloddach quarry 26th. In November, substantial flocks were 720 Byres (Bogmoor) 1st, 112 Waterford (Forres) 2nd, c.1000 Milltown 4th, 100 Fochabers 9th and 58 south Dunphail 26th.

Winter (max. counts only): Flocks over 500 occurred at two sites; 1200 Findhorn Bay 8 Nov and 650 Broadley (Clochan) 20 Dec. The smaller wintering flocks and possibly later arrival dates in the Districts are probably a result of more overwintering in northern areas such as Orkney and Shetland.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

Vagrant or escape.

White-morph records: one present with Pink-footed Geese on Findhorn Bay 13 Jan (Birdguides). Later in the year an adult was seen near Spey Bay on 5 Nov (Birdguides), then presumably the same individual was seen at Burgie 12 Nov & 12 Dec (RHD,CAG,AJL), Findhorn Bay 12-13 Dec (AJL) and Muir of the Clans (Nairn) 23 Dec (Birdguides). The white-morph individuals are the 11th-12th records.

Blue-morph records: An adult Lesser Snow Goose was seen at Miltonhill 23 Dec (CAG) and then at Earnside (Alves) 28 Dec (RP). This is the 3rd record of a blue-morph Lesser Snow Goose in Moray following singles at Miltonhill (2005) and Kinloss (2007).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Scarce migrant in summer, rare in winter.

Summer and early autumn passage: A typical range of dates and localities of birds migrating to the Beaully Firth moult area; 10 Findhorn Bay 2 Jun may have been the same as 11 west over Strathlene earlier on the same day, 27 north over Aberlour 7 Jun, 40 south east over Dufftown 7 Jun, 16 Spey Bay 5 Jul, 1 Loch Spynie 7 Jul, 1 Findhorn Bay 23 Aug & 8 Sep and 32 Covesea Skerries 13 Sep. At Kingston/Tugnet numbers difficult to assess as individuals and flocks present on 15 dates from 13 Jul-14 Sep; max. count 17 on 15 Jun and 27 Jul.

Only one winter record concerned an individual at the Cloddach quarry 29 Nov and 21 Dec (MJHC).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Scarce migrant and winter visitor.

Winter-spring: Seen at four sites over this period, 2 Clochan 3 Jan, and singles at Redhill 16 Feb, Miltonduff 17 Feb and Wester Manbeen 23 Mar. Later, one east over Lossiemouth 5 May.

Summer: At Speymouth and Tugnet an individual was present from 29 Jun-17 Aug (MJHC,RHD,DAG,YW).

Autumn: On 4-5 Oct, a small passage occurred: 22 (in four groups) west past Lossiemouth and 9 (in two groups) west past Tugnet 4 Oct, with 10 west past Lossiemouth 5 Oct. Later during this period, 2 Findhorn Bay 12 Oct, 2 Kingston 16 Oct (and 2 on 21-22 Oct) and 10 Coltfield 18 Oct.

Winter: Seen at three sites during this period: 2 Findhorn Bay 2 Nov, 3 Burgie 12 Nov and 7 Clochan 19 Nov (dropping to 4 on 20 Dec).

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Scarce migrant and winter visitor.

All birds assigned to a race were Light-bellied Brent Geese *B.b.hrota*.

Winter: The regular winter flock was once again recorded in the Nairn area. The maximum count was 50 Nairn 7 Jan, small groups were recorded on 13 Jan (13) and 10 Feb (38) on the Nairn Bar, and 10 Feb (37) on the Nairn west beach (which were probably the same as the Nairn Bar flock on the same day).

Autumn passage period (Sep-Oct): Flocks were present at the Lossie estuary from 3 Sep-23 Oct (max. count 52 on 23 Oct). Distinct broods within this period contained a mean of 3.8 juveniles per pair. On 27-28 Sep a small passage occurred with eight flocks seen during this period: 20, 5, 3 & 2 west off Lossiemouth and c.35, c.30 & 5 west off Tugnet. Elsewhere, 6 (max. count) 31 Aug-27 Sep Tugnet/Spey Bay area, 28 west Burghead Bay 22 Sep, 1 Burghead-Hopeman 19 Oct, 27 Delnies-Nairn 19 Oct and 2 Corbiewell 29 Oct.

Winter: 3 (max. count) Findhorn Bay 6 Oct-9 Nov and 41 Delnies-Nairn 14 Dec.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Numerous spring and summer visitor and breeder.

Breeding: A total of five broods was seen at Findhorn Bay (3) and Kingston (2) giving a mean brood size of 9.2 chicks. In potential breeding areas were 14 Roseisle 8 Mar, 2 Miltonduff 9 Mar, 2 Cloddach quarry 23 Mar & 11-13 Apr, 2 Loch Spynie 16 & 23 Apr and 2 pairs Sherriffston 27 Apr.

Best monthly counts at coastal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	80	95	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	19	nc	77
Findhorn Bay	52	110	86	96	82	nc	nc	nc	7	nc	nc	nc
Lossie estuary	0	3	7	5	5	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Kingston	1	3	19	6	10	8	3	3	5	0	0	2

A large count of 29 Burghead Bay 23 Apr.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Probable escape or feral origin.

A dramatic decline in records from the Elgin area with only three reports submitted in 2008: a male flying downstream from the Glen Moray distillery 26 Mar (RP), a male Old Mills 25 Apr (AJ) and two eclipse males on the large Cooper Park island 29 Jun (RP).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Common winter visitor and scarce breeder.

Breeding: At the Dava lochans, a brood of two downy chicks was seen on 8 Jun (MJHC). A pair attempting copulation on the Lossie estuary 2 Mar (RP).

Non-breeders in summer (May-July): on Loch Spynie present almost daily 3 May-19 Jul (pair 4-6 May, increasing to 9 on 30 Jun and 40 on 18 Jul), 7 Kingston 4 May dropping to 4 on 18 Jul.

Winter: Monthly maximum counts at main coastal sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	763	674	nc	nc	nc	487	nc	670
Findhorn Bay	1066	510	200	nc	1300	1610	nc	nc
Lossie estuary	2000	1778	776	24	177	655	1500	1500
Kingston	nc	nc	140	7	70	nc	nc	150

Numbers of Wigeon using Lossie estuary fell for the 4th consecutive year following the peak of 3158 in 2004.

On freshwater:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Flemington	41	275	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	243
Loch Loy	nc	69	130	8	nc	2	10	4	nc
Loch Spynie	700	10	nc	9	38	32	2	6	30
Cloddach quarry	295	99	150	12	nc	60	211	274	335
Loch Oire	126	102	93	nc	2	72	179	250	70
Loch na Bo	117	62	33	nc	nc	nc	4	30	5

Maximum counts (over 100) at inland sites included: 300 Loch Kirkaldy 16 Nov. Interestingly, 2 Lochan Tutach 16 Nov were well inland for this time of year.

After seven years, the 'white-headed' female failed to return to the Lossie estuary in 2008.

[Chiloe Wigeon *Anas sibilatrix*

Escape.

One adult male Kingston 4 Feb-15 Jun (JCP,DAG,RP et al.) and then again from 14 Sep-11 Oct (DAG,RP et al.). On 11 May it was associating closely with a female Mallard and brood. The same bird, presumably, was seen almost daily at Loch Spynie from 3 Jul-23 Aug (RP,MJHC,et al.).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Scarce visitor.

Seen at three sites.

Cloddach quarry: 1 male on 26 Oct (MJHC).

Loch Spynie: 1 1st winter male 27 Jan (RP), while in spring 1 male on 13 Apr (RP) and a pair on 18 Apr (EH).

Kingston/Tugnet: seen in spring on 24 Apr (3), 27 Apr (2) and 4 May (4 male, 1 female) (RJJ,CAG,MJHC) and in autumn, when 1 female on 3 Sep (MJHC,EH).

Teal *Anas crecca*

Scarce breeder and common winter visitor.

Breeding: No confirmed breeding reports were received this year. However, a group of five flying juveniles Loch Spynie 3 Aug (RP) may have been hatched locally.

Potential breeding sites occupied during the breeding season included two pairs Loch of Bogmussach 19 Apr, 2 Loch Oire 1 May, 2 Kingston 4 May and 4 Montgrew 7 Jul.

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	51	4	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Findhorn Bay	280	55	nc	nc	84	nc	45	nc	nc
Miltoduff pool	nc	67	14	nc	nc	nc	nc	51	nc
Lossie estuary	35	19	6	6	1	4	3	21	6
Loch Spynie	250	15	87	5	5	10	2	14	2
Spynie Canal	200	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Cloddach quarry	4	17	12	6	nc	117	4	191	19
Loch Oire	23	67	2	4	nc	59	110	40	20
Loch na Bo	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	nc	nc
Kingston/Tugnet	nc	nc	9	16	155	80	nc	nc	143

Other sites holding over 50 birds were: 70 Loch Loy 10 Feb and 150 Cran Loch 14 Sep.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

Vagrant.

Spynie Canal: one male amongst a group of Teal 20 Jan (DAG,RP,MJHC).

Loch Spynie: two males together on the loch 13 Dec (DAG,RP,CAG).

These constitute the 16th-17th records for Moray & Nairn.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Numerous resident breeder and common winter visitor.

Breeding: The mean brood size from 11 broods was 6.4 chicks. All broods seen were within the coastal strip.

Best monthly flocks in regularly counted areas were:

Freshwater:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Flemington	61	31	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	nc	6
Loch Loy	2	133	37	44	nc	nc	nc	95	30	90	170	nc
Cran Loch	30	86	95	30	nc	nc	nc	180	120	40	125	nc
Loch Spynie	157	50	4	5	7	31	250	158	47	25	29	160
Cloddach quarry	80	35	30	10	nc	nc	nc	nc	388	208	259	191
Loch Oire	140	62	8	18	29	68	54	79	40	90	137	41
Loch na Bo	1	23	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	27	4	88

Other freshwater sites holding more than 50 birds were: 130 Ardclach 25 Aug, 54 Sanquhar Loch 1 Nov and 54 Kellas 23 Nov.

Coastal sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	188	109	nc	nc	nc	127	nc	81
Findhorn Bay	nc	170	nc	nc	420	42	nc	nc
Lossie estuary	24	16	2	35	19	1	15	7
Kingston	nc	32	nc	52	nc	nc	nc	10

Other coastal sites holding more than 50 birds were: 71 Gollachy Burn 14 Dec and 85 Strathlene 14 Dec. Interesting behaviour noted at Nairn 22 May when a brood of 12 ducklings were eaten by a Grey Heron.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Scarce winter visitor and migrant. Has bred.

Present at eight sites.

Delnies: 1 on 15 Dec (RHD).

Nairn Bar: Some high counts here, including 67 on 13 Jan, 94 on 10 Feb, 86 on 13 Feb (DCJ) and 45 on 25 Dec (RHD).

Loch Loy: present on 14 Sep (2), 26 Oct (2M, 2F, 1 imm M) and 16 Nov (5) (ADo).

Findhorn Bay: present January-April (max. 8 on 15 & 19 Mar [ISS,RHD]) and then September-November (max. 18 on 15 & 17 Sep (ISS,AJL)).

Cloddach quarry: 1F on 28 Sep (MJHC).

Loch Spynie: 1F from 6 Jan-1 Sep on 12 dates.

Loch Oire: 1F on 21 Oct (RP,MJHC).

Kingston: 1M on 27 Mar (NB).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Rare in spring.

Aberlour: 1M on 22 Apr (MP) was well inland.

Loch Spynie: 1M present from 2-6 May, then 2MM on 7 May, dropping to 1M on 11-13 May (CAG,DAG,RP,MJHC, et al.). 1M on 17-18 Jul (MM,HF) was probably a different individual and the latest record for Loch Spynie. The vast majority of records for Moray are in May from Loch Spynie.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Rare breeder and scarce migrant.

Shoveler have become rarer in Moray & Nairn over the last few years, particularly at Loch Spynie. The only records received this year were from Loch Spynie and the Nairn Bar.

Loch Spynie: 2MM from 22-26 Apr, 1M & 1F on 31 Aug, 4 on 18 Sep and 1F on 22 Nov.

Nairn Bar: 2 on 13 Jan, 1M & 1F on 10 Feb and 1M on 13 Dec (DCJ). This is a rare occurrence here as most coastal records in recent years have come from the Lossie estuary or Kingston.

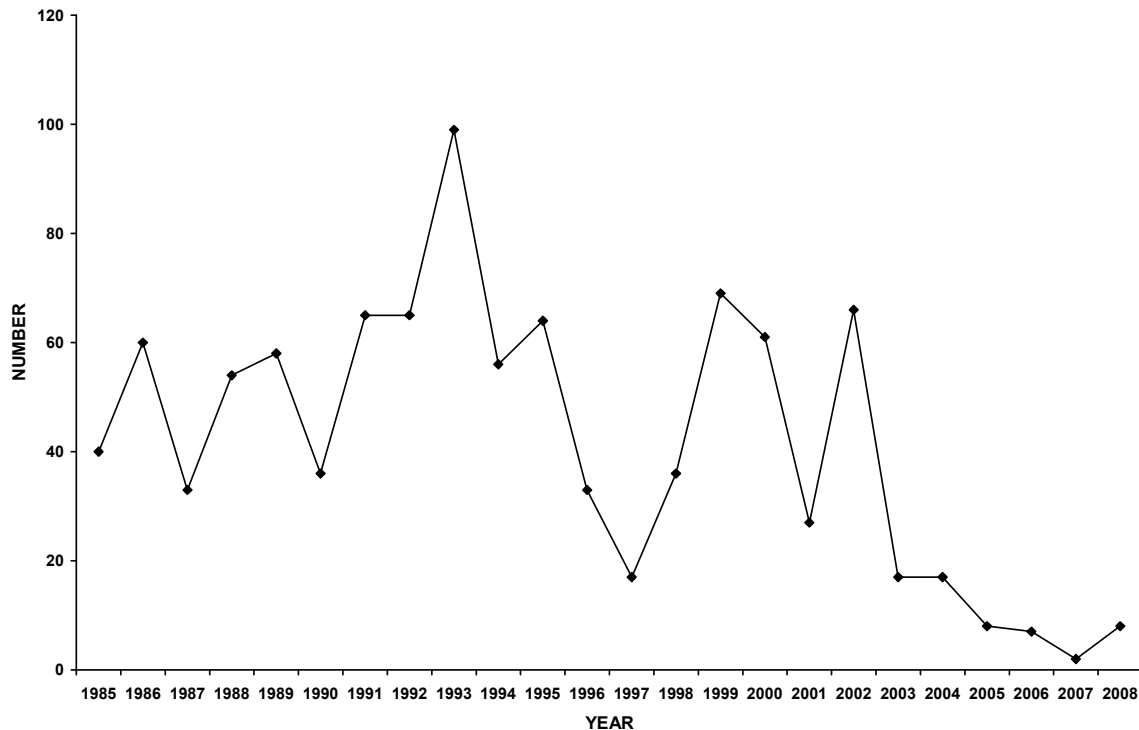
Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Common winter visitor and occasional breeder.

Maximum monthly counts at Loch Spynie were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Male	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	6	0	0	0	0
Female	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsexed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	0
Total	0	0	1	0	3	3	0	6	4	2	0	0

Winter maxima of Pochard at Loch Spynie since 1985 are given below:



Otherwise the only records were 1 Loch Loy 16 Nov and 1 Loch na Bo 17 Feb.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Scarce breeder and common winter visitor.

Breeding: The mean brood size from six broods was 6.2 chicks; this is just above the average of 5.5 chicks since 1993. Broods were only seen at Loch Spynie, where two broods of obviously different ages were seen together with one female on 3 & 9 Aug (RP).

Other potential breeding sites occupied during the summer months included Myreside, Loch Oire, Montgrew and Dava lochans.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Loy	nc	13	11	15	nc	nc	nc	2	2	3	4	nc
Loch Spynie	69	70	60	98	49	12	80	117	108	110	98	30
Cloddach quarry	20	12	32	17	nc	nc	nc	nc	18	26	69	91
Cooper Park	55	51	53	nc	27	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	18	nc
Loch na Bo	24	18	15	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	24	45	54	39
Loch Oire	8	14	11	34	29	28	26	9	10	11	31	37
Kingston	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	4	nc

The only coastal record was a single bird at Nairn Bar 13 Jan.

Scaup *Aythya marila**Scarce winter visitor.*

Recorded inland only at Loch Spynie where max. counts were 1 immature M & 2F on 4 Oct (DAG) and 2M & 1F on 18 Nov (RP).

At the coast, 4 Delnies-Nairn 14 Dec (DAG), 1M west past Lossiemouth 27 Sep (DAG) and around the mouth of the Spey, 1F on 2 Jan (MJHC), 1F on 8 Nov and 4 on 6 Dec (JM).

Eider *Somateria mollissima**Scarce breeder, common offshore.*

Breeding: The number of broods reported has fallen since 2003. Only one brood (of 4 chicks) reported this year - the mean brood size since 1988 is 2.9 chicks.

Mean number of chicks calculated from distinct broods 1998-2008:

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Broods	16	10	9	8	12	5	3	2	3	3	1
Mean	3.4	2.1	3.2	2.4	2.9	2.4	2.3	2.5	3.0	2.3	4.0

Counts over 100 (max. at each site) were 351 Findhorn 13 Jan, 118 Lossiemouth 10 Feb, c.250 Spey Bay 19 Apr, 268 Burghead Bay 2 Jun, 203 Strathlene 2 Jun, 330 Kingston 26 Oct, 900 Tugnet 9 Nov, 270 Burghead 5 Dec and 361 Burghead-Hopeman 14 Dec.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis**Common winter visitor offshore.*

A further decline in numbers from the large counts of the 1980s.

No coastal records in summer in 2008.

Maximum monthly counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn Bar	6	15	nc	nc						114	nc	46
Culbin Bar	5	15	nc	nc						14	nc	180
off Findhorn	4	15	nc	nc						20	nc	40
Burghead Bay	nc	27	6	25						nc	21	31
Burghead	78	nc	nc	252						nc	nc	54
Burghead-Hopeman	69	nc	nc	nc						31	nc	30
Lossiemouth	100	nc	nc	nc						nc	nc	nc
Spey Bay	200	nc	125	13						nc	nc	nc
Kingston	nc	nc	nc	nc						200	nc	nc

One inland record, of a female at Loch Spynie present from 19 Oct-22 Nov.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra**Common winter visitor, small numbers in summer.*

Maximum counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn Bar	6	54	nc					nc	nc	302	nc	111
Culbin Bar	19	79	nc					2	nc	3	nc	539
Burghead Bay	34	15	7					3	350	34	38	nc

Elsewhere, substantial counts included 950 Spey Bay 6 Jan, 120 Burghead Bay 10 Apr, 100 Burghead 24 Apr and c.300 Lossiemouth 11 May.

Summer records included 250 Portgordon-Tugnet 1 Jun, 15 east past Lossiemouth 2 Jun and 250 Kingston 8 Jun (with 29 on 18 Jul).

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata*

Rare, but regular, visitor.

Spey Bay: 1M off Kingston 4-8 Jun (MJHC,AJ). Another poor year; since 1985, singles have only been recorded here in 1987 and 1988.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

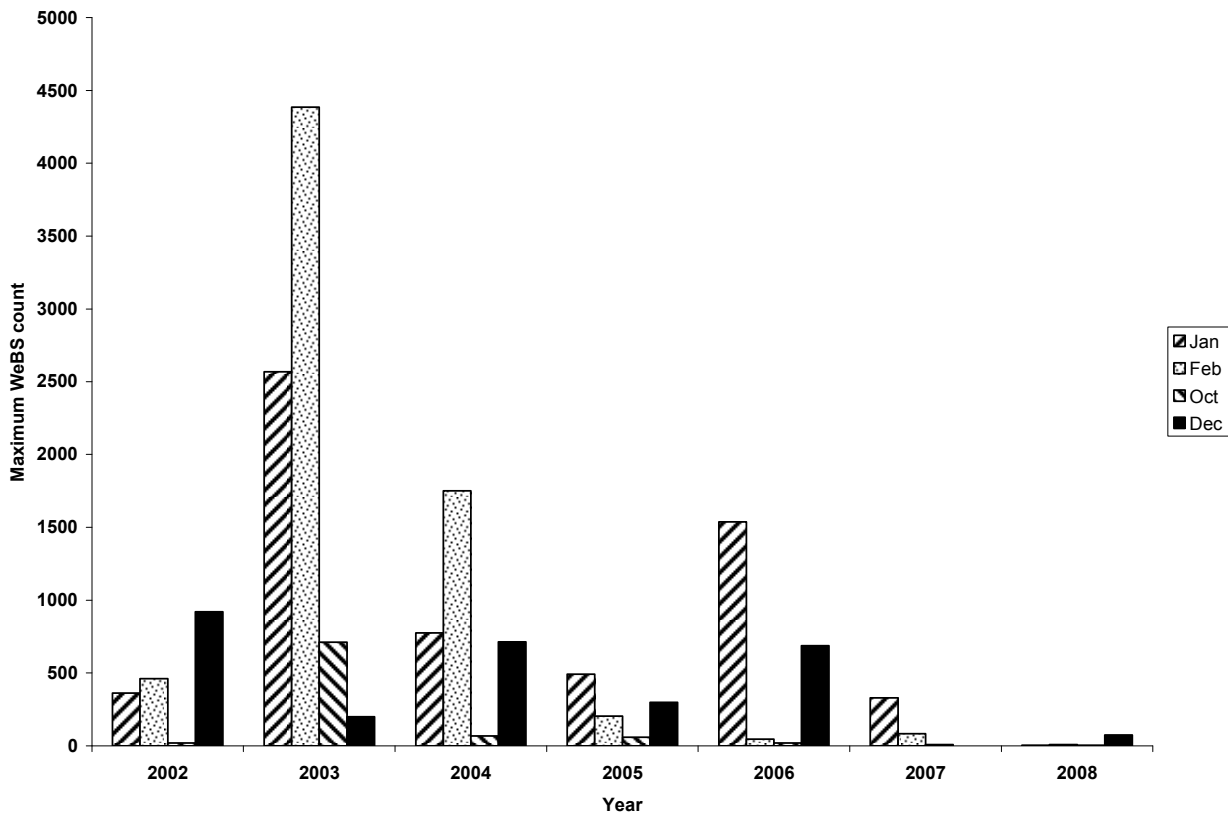
Common winter visitor.

Maximum counts for main areas were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn Bar	4	7	nc	1	nc	72
Culbin Bar	1	nc	nc	2	nc	3
Burghead Bay	nc	27	20	nc	8	nc

Despite a peak in numbers in Jan & Feb 2003 at the Nairn and Culbin Bars, numbers at these sites have declined substantially in recent years.

Combined WeBS count for Velvet Scoter from Nairn and Culbin Bars 2002-2008:



A large spring count involved 46 Burghead Bay 23 Apr. In summer, 1M off Kingston 18 Jul (RP).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula**Rare breeder and common winter visitor.*

Breeding: No confirmed breeding records but inland summer records included one pair Lochs of Bogmussach 19 Apr (AJ) and 1F Dava lochans 8 Jun (MJHC).

Coastal summer records: 1 Kingston 14 Jul.

Maximum counts on most frequented lochs were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Flemington	nc	16	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	9
Loch Loy	nc	5	5	nc	nc	nc	1	2
Loch Spynie	33	26	30	51	1	10	29	38
Cloddach quarry	2	3	3	4	nc	nc	1	nc
Loch na Bo	2	3	10	nc	nc	nc	5	6
Loch Oire	10	3	3	3	0	5	8	6

Maximum counts at most frequented coastal sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	8	7	nc	nc	nc	nc	10
Findhorn Bay	9	4	2	nc	nc	nc	nc
Burghead Bay	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	2
Burghead-Hopeman	7	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	7
Kingston/Tugnet	6	2	36	nc	9	49	25

At Aberlour, max. counts on the River Spey were 7 on 7 Feb and 8 on 30 Nov. In spring two pairs Loch Park 15 Mar. The spring build up at Loch Spynie saw much lower numbers than in 2007. In mid May, departure dates were very similar for Loch Spynie (13th) and Loch Oire (14th) with individuals returning to Loch Spynie on 20 Sep and Loch Oire on 16 Oct.

Smew *Mergellus albellus**Rare winter visitor.*

An adult male at Loch na Bo from 3 Mar-10 Apr (many obs.) was presumably the same individual first seen in 2006. On 8 Mar it was seen displaying to a Goldeneye (DAG).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator**Scarce local breeder and common visitor.*

Breeding: A brood of 10 was seen on the lower Findhorn in June (ISS).

Coastal records in summer (May-June) were only from Spey Bay where 2 on 19 May and 10 on 22 May.

Maximum monthly counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	9	8	nc	nc	nc	159	nc	8
Findhorn Bay	8	6	6	6	nc	nc	nc	nc
Burghead Bay	nc	3	nc	15	nc	nc	nc	nc
Burghead-Hopeman	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Lossie estuary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Spey Bay	2	nc	4	10	nc	nc	5	11
Kingston	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	8	nc	nc

Unusual were 1 Loch Loy 10 Feb and 1M Mosset pond, Forres 12 Mar.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Widespread but scarce breeder.

Breeding: No confirmed breeding records, but birds in potential breeding areas included a pair Edinkillie 14 Apr (1F there on 17 May), a pair & 1M River Fiddich 10 May, 1 Birchfield (Glen Avon) 11 May, 1F Blackwater Lodge (Glenfiddich) 1 Jun and 1F Dufftown-Craigellachie 7 Jun.

Coastal records in summer: 11 Strathlene 14 Jul.

Maximum monthly counts at the main sites were:

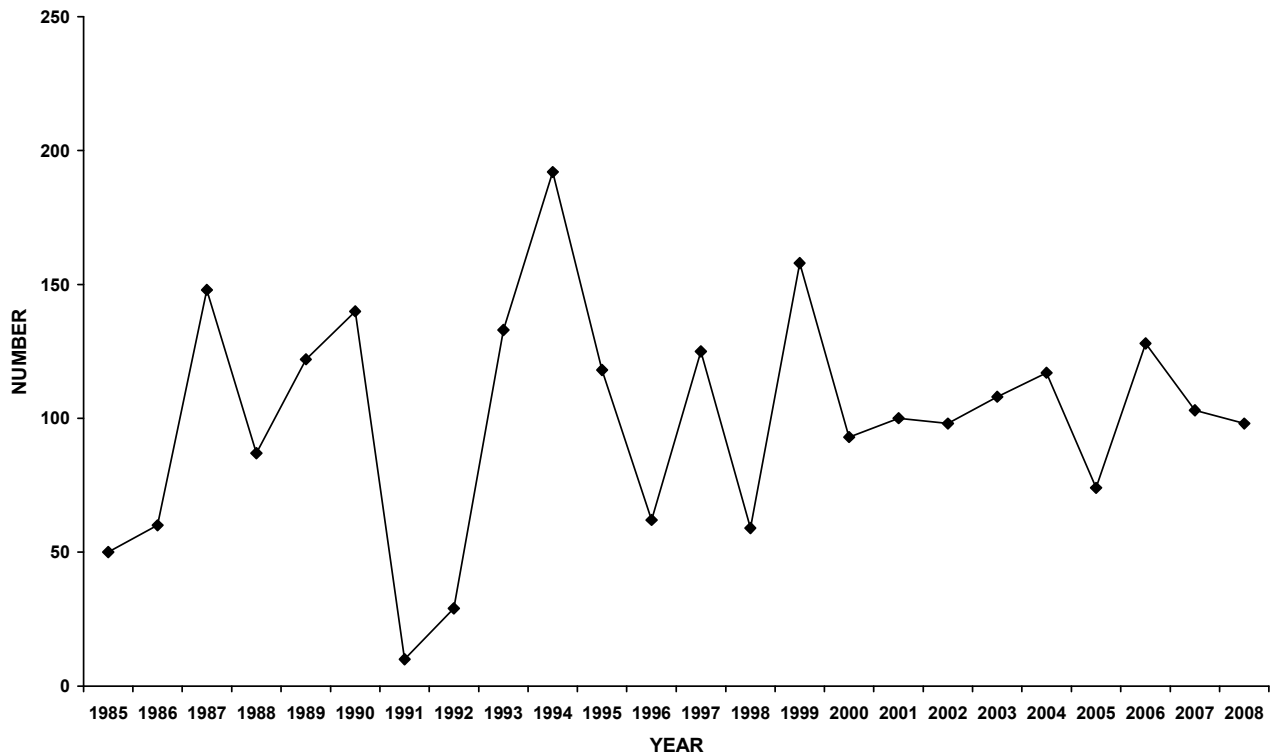
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aberlour	8	nc	6	1	nc	nc	nc	10	14	nc	1	nc
Cloddach quarry	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	nc	nc
Loch Spynie	2	1	4	2	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Lossie estuary	0	0	3	0	3	1	0	10	31	nc	nc	nc
Speymouth	1	nc	nc	nc	40	13	70	98	nc	nc	nc	11

Inland in winter: a pair flying upstream River Divie (Edinkillie) 14 Jan, 1M Loch na Bo 2 & 19 Jan and 8 Mar, with a pair present on 9 Mar, 8 flying south over Bishopmill (Elgin) 5 Sep, 2 Cooper Park (Elgin) 20 Jan, a pair Kingsmills (Elgin) 6 Jan (M, 2FF on 25 Dec), a pair flying east South Lesmurdie (Elgin) 28 Dec and 3 flying upstream River Findhorn 31 Dec.

In spring, 3F Sanquhar Loch 5 Apr, increasing to 1M, 4F on 6 Apr.

A large count was 41 Findhorn Bay 20 Aug.

Peak counts of moulting Goosander at Speymouth 1985-2008:



Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis**Rare visitor.*

1M Loch Spynie 11 Jul-23 Aug (many obs.), with some display recorded on 18 Jul (RP).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus**Very common resident breeder.*

A small population survives on Ben Aigan where birds were seen in most months of the year; a female with a juvenile was seen in July, and the highest count was 7 on 27 July (GG). Elsewhere, 16 Ben Rinnes 8 May (and 1F with 7 young on 3 Jul), 1F with c.6 chicks Hills of Cromdale 18 Jun and 4 Dava Moor 27 Apr.

Ptarmigan *Lagopus muta**Fairly common resident breeder.*

Best counts on Ben Rinnes were 12 on 1 Jan, 11 in 11 Feb and 14 on 11 Sep (AE, HF). Other reports, in the Cairngorms, were 4 Beinn a' Chaorainn 18 Mar (DMc), 5 Cairn Lochan 17 May (IFr) (and 9 there 3 Sep (TC), 7 on 6 Dec (CTa), 1 Feith Buidhe 17 May and 1 near the Shelter Stone 17 May (IFr).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix**Scarce resident breeder.*

The only reports in 2008 were 1 Paul's Hill 26 Mar (SD), 3 Tomnavoulin 20 Apr (LPh) and 2F Inchnacape (Tomintoul) 11 May (MJHC).

Capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus**Scarce resident breeder.*

Two reports, of single birds.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa**Introduced scarce breeder. Commonly released.*

Greatly under-recorded. Reports of 1-3 birds were received from Banchor (Nov), Clochan (Jun-Jul), Elgin (2 in a garden near Dr Gray's Hospital 7 Jun), Hillpark (Feb, Apr, Jul), Innesmill (Jul), Lein (Kingston) (Nov), Muir of Holmie (May) and Roseisle (Feb).



Red-legged Partridges, Clochan 28 June 2008 (Martin Cook)

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix**Common resident breeder.*

The only coveys of any size were at Tarras, where 6 on 23 Jan and 14 on 15 Dec. Reports of 1-3 from Cullen (Apr), Netherton (May), Hillpark (Jul), Kingston (Sep), Lhanbryde (Jan), Midwood (Clochan) (Apr), Salterhill (May), Roseisle (Feb, Sep) and Sheriffston (Apr).

Quail *Coturnix coturnix**Rare summer visitor and breeder, occasionally more numerous.*

Birds called at four localities: 1 Covesea 7-14 Jun (EH, RAM, CAG), 1 North Darkland 14 Jun (JDL), 1 Strypes 2 Jun (IG) and 1 Tarras 31 May (ISS).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus**Very common resident breeder.*

Largest autumn/winter counts received were 73 Whitetree 7 Nov and 52 Delnabo 11 May. Much larger numbers will of course have been present in areas surrounding release sites prior to the shooting season.

[Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris**Escape.*

Five at the roadside between Craigmill Lodge and Dallas Lodge 10 Jul (RP).]

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata**Rare breeder. Common autumn and winter visitor offshore.*

Summer: In the moorland area where birds have most regularly been found in summer in the past, was a pair with one juvenile on 10 Aug (DMP) – the first confirmed breeding in Moray & Nairn since 2005. One flew high over Dunphail on 7 Aug (RHD)

At the coast in the April-July period, highest counts were 15 Portgordon 24 Apr, 10 Findhorn 27 Apr, 8 Portknockie-Findochty 3 Apr, 8 Burghead 25 Apr and 6 Kingston 4 May.

Best monthly counts offshore in each winter period were:

	Jan	Feb	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Delnies	nc	nc	nc	1	nc	2
Nairn/Culbin Bars	nc	31	nc	7	nc	2
Burghead Bay	nc	nc	5	5	2	2
Spey Bay	30	nc	4	3	1	3

No other winter coastal record exceeded three birds. An unusual record of 1 Loch Flemington 22 Oct (RP). Up to three birds were seen on most seawatches off Lossiemouth in June and September-November.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica**Rare breeder. Scarce autumn and winter visitor offshore.*

Upland lochs: For the second successive year, one pair bred - but failed to hatch their eggs (IFr).

Monthly maxima in Burghead Bay were as follows:

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

No evidence of the large spring assembly seen in 2007, though observer coverage was probably less.

Elsewhere, 1 Nairn/Culbin Bars 10 Feb and 19 Oct (AY,PG), 2 Lossiemouth 15 May (DAG) and 1 Spey Bay 27 Jan and 13 Dec (RP,JMos).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Scarce visitor offshore.

Seen offshore in all months except March and June-August. In spring, 7 Spey Bay 10 May (MJHC) and 4 Burghead 24 Apr (AJ).

On 5 Nov, 25 birds were seen from a boat c.3 nautical miles offshore between Buckie-Cullen, mostly off Findochty (IFr) and 3 were off Portknockie on 26 Dec (TH). Off Tugnet, 4 on 6 Dec and 8 Dec (JMOS). Also 11 reports of single birds at several coastal localities.

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*

Rare visitor.

An adult bird in summer plumage was off the Burghead shore between 24 Apr-4 May (RP,DAG,MJHC et al.). There have been six previous records in Moray & Nairn, most recently in 2005, also in the Burghead area, between 3-7 May.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Common breeder, very common offshore.

Breeding: No reports of breeding were received this year.

Passage: Three counts exceeded 100. The largest count of the year was of 167 east past Strathlene in 10 minutes 6 Sep (MJHC). This was the only three figure count all year, although 56 were seen in a 15 minute seawatch the same morning off Lossiemouth, with 77 in 30 minutes early afternoon the same day, and 89 the following day (RP).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Very scarce migrant in late summer and autumn.

A fair year, with birds only recorded on two dates: three east past Lossiemouth 7 Sep and eight west past the same site 2 Oct (DAG). Annual totals since 1999 are as follows:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
2	13	57	3	3	0	23	1	38	11

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Scarce offshore in summer and autumn.

The annual total was 264 records, a good year and the highest total since the exceptional numbers of 2003. Estimated monthly totals were:

May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1	173	42	7	41

Spring: The only spring record was of a single bird off Lossiemouth 27 May.

Summer: High numbers were recorded throughout June, presumably involving non-breeding birds feeding in the Moray Firth. Birds were noted on six dates, with 35, 60 and 35 off Lossiemouth 12-14 June respectively the highest counts of the year (DAG, DP, RP).

Autumn: Passage was light in August, with all seven birds past Lossiemouth on three dates. A reasonable passage occurred in the first week of September. All counts were from Lossiemouth with the exception of two past Strathlene 6 Sep (MJHC). Highest counts were 18 past Lossiemouth 6 Sep, with 15 the following day (DAG, RP).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Summer and autumn visitor offshore, probably very common at night.

One lingering off the north pier at Lossiemouth for at least five hours on 23 November (DAG, RP) was the only record of the year. This is the latest recorded in Moray & Nairn since the formation of the MNBR in 1985 with two earlier November records in 1986 and 1999.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Very common offshore in summer and autumn, fewer in winter.

A strong passage at the start of June, with 229 past Lossiemouth and 203 past Strathlene (both in 30 minutes) 2 Jun. In early autumn, a series of good counts off the Moray & Nairn coast with 'hundreds' past Nairn 28 Aug. A large feeding flock was noted in Burghead Bay at the start of September with 500+ on 1st and 400+ the following day. On 6 Sep, 176 passed Lossiemouth in 55 minutes, with 176 the following day in an hour's seawatching. On the latter date, 98 were counted from Strathlene in 30 minutes. At the end of the month, a substantial feeding flock was counted in Spey Bay, with 530+ close inshore off Kingston on 27th the highest count of the year.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Scarce resident and common winter visitor.

Breeding: One adult was on a ledge at Covesea 31 May but no nest was built.

Highest coastal counts were 28 Strathlene 7 Sep, 26 Tugnet 11 Oct and 25 Burghead-Hopeman 14 Dec.

On the Spey at Aberlour were 2 on 1 Jan, 1 on 22 Feb, 1 on 27 Nov and 3 on 30 Nov. Other inland records included 8 Loch na Bo 19/1, 2 Cooper Park (Elgin) 20 Jan, and singles in winter at Cloddach quarry, Dunphail, Linkwood (Elgin), Loch Flemington, Loch Oire, Rothes and Sanquhar Loch (Forres).

More than usual at Loch Spynie in winter where monthly maxima were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
15	8	4	5	5	1	2	0	2	4	6	7

Birds showing characteristics of the continental race *P.c.sinensis* were again at Loch Spynie, although numbers were down on the previous year. In May, an adult was noted on 7th and 13th, and in December a single was recorded on 13th (adult) and an adult and 1st winter the following day (RP).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Scarce breeder and common visitor, chiefly in winter.

Breeding: Numbers again increased slightly at Portknockie/Bow Fiddle Rock cliffs where 79 occupied nests were noted 15 Jun (73 in 2007) (MJHC). A considerable improvement on the 0-2 nests at this site in the mid 1980s! Apparently occupied nests at this site since 1999 have been as follows:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
22	27	31	40	43	47	49	49	73	79

Numbers declined slightly at Covesea with 11 occupied nests noted 31 May (13 in 2005, 2006 and 2007) (MJHC). At Tronach Head, 23 occupied nests were counted 16 Jul – a slight increase.

Counts: 132 between Portgordon-Strathlene 19 Oct (MJHC).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Fairly common resident breeder.

Heronries: Counts of occupied nests only received from two heronries: 7 at Aberlour (AE) and 11 at Loch Spynie (RP).

Best counts on the estuaries in the late summer-winter period were 25 Findhorn Bay 22 Aug, 11-12 on several dates between 9 Aug-24 Sep on Lossie estuary and 5 Kingston 11 Aug.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Rare visitor

Three were seen and photographed in a ploughed field beside the A96 at Lhanbryde on the morning of 26 Apr by a Highland RSPB Group outing (RPr et al.). This is the 9th record for Moray & Nairn, and the first since 2002.



White Storks, Lhanbryde 26 April 2008 (Keith Barnes)

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Scarce breeder, scarce on the estuaries in winter.

Mid-winter: On freshwater in January and December were 1 Cloddach quarry 19 Jan and 21 Dec, 1 Loch Flemington 13 Jan, 2 Loch na Bo 19 Jan (4 there 27 Dec), 1 Loch Oire 29 Jan, 1 Loch Spynie 2 Jan and 14 Dec and 2 Sanquhar Loch 27 Jan.

Present in spring/summer (*italics* = proved breeding) at Cloddach Quarry (3 pairs), Fochabers Lake, Loch Flemington, *Loch Loy*, *Loch of Blairs* (4 pairs), *Loch Oire* (5 pairs), Loch Park, *Loch Spynie* (3 pairs) and Myreside.

Best post-breeding congregations in late summer/autumn were 32 Loch Oire 2 Sep, 20 Loch Spynie 12 Sep, 17 Loch na Bo 21 Oct and 16 Loch Flemington 20 Jul. Regular counting at Loch Oire revealed 20-30 birds regularly between July-late September and a steady decline in early October from 17 on 2nd to 12 on 9th, 4 on 20th and only 1-2 thereafter until the last on 15 Nov (EH).

Coastal in winter: No counts received from Binsness which normally holds the highest numbers. Elsewhere, singles on Lossie estuary on several dates with 2 on 13-15 Dec rising to 5 on 31 Dec. Two Tugnet 6 Dec.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegina*

Very scarce migrant and winter visitor.

In Burghead Bay, 2 on 11 Feb and singles on 11 Mar, 22 Sep and 6 Oct (AJL). 1 Culbin Bar 25 Dec (RHD).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Rare breeder. Scarce offshore in winter.

Breeding: 1 pair attempted to breed at one site.

Site 2 – A single bird remained at the site, unpaired, between 12 Apr-26 Jul. A pair was present between 18 Jun-14 Jul and built three nests. The first was predated, the second failed for unknown reasons and the third was flooded out (CAG).

The table below shows: number of sites occupied by territorial pairs, total number of territorial pairs and number of young raised to fledging since 1997.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Sites	4	3	3	2	3	4	2	2	2	4	1	1
Pairs	12	9	8	3	7	10	8	4	8	4	2	1
Young	2	5-6	1	3	11	6	9	7	0	0	0	0

It seems almost certain that Slavonian Grebes will shortly be lost as a breeding species in Moray & Nairn.

Inland at other seasons were 1 Cloddach 30 Jan (DAG), 1 Loch Spynie 12-16 Oct (CAG,DAG,HF et al.) and 1 Loch Oire 20-31 Oct (EH,MJHC). The dates suggest that the same bird may have been involved at Loch Spynie and Loch Oire.

Coastal: Monthly maxima in Burghead Bay were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	4	nc	nc				4	5	14	1
(8 th)	(11 th)						(24 th)	(12 th)	(5 th)	(26 th)

(AJL,RP,DAG et al.)

Elsewhere, 1 Culbin Bar 13 Jan (AY), 5 Nairn Bar 10 Feb (DCJ) and 2 there 25 Dec (RHD), 1 Spey Bay 26 Feb (CJR) and 3 there 12 Oct (DAG).

Honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Rare breeder.

One pair bred successfully in Moray in the same site as in 2007, raising two young (RHD).

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Rare visitor.

A bird bearing a radio transmitter was in the Culbin/Findhorn Bay area on 29-30 Jan (RHD). This bird originated from the reintroduction scheme in Fife in 2007.

This species has not been seen in the wild in Moray & Nairn since two historical records between Lossiemouth and the mouth of the Spey, in 1844 and 1878.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Very scarce visitor, usually in spring.

A pair at Loch Spynie 30 Apr-8 May (RP,DAG,MJHC et al.). Although some display was seen, the birds failed to settle – the female was not seen after 8 May although the male remained until 11 May.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Rare resident breeder, very scarce migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding: Twelve pairs were located of which 11 laid eggs. The mean clutch size from seven clutches was 5.1 – at the upper end of the range for Hen Harrier clutches. Eight pairs were successful, fledging 16 young between them. Three pairs failed at the large young stage, one due to fox predation and the others for unknown reasons (JKC).

Away from breeding areas were 1M Archiestown 12 Jan (NL) and 1M Milltown airfield 16 Mar (CAG).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Rare resident breeder.

Present in at least 3 localities in spring/summer.

In winter, 1 Lhanbryde 21 Jan (EH).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Common resident breeder.

Breeding season (Apr-July) records included birds/pairs at Ben Aigan, Culbin Forest, Forres, Kinloss and Loch Spynie.

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Fairly common resident breeder.

Groups of five or more together were 6 Netherton (Forres) in a field during ploughing 30 Jan, 5 Kingston 4 Sep, 4 Cloddach 28 Sep and 4 Kinloss on five dates between 18 Feb-5 May.

The leucistic individual seen west of Alves in 2007 was still present in 2008 with reports in August and December. Unusually, a pair nested on the ground among small conifers near Cummington – at least 2 eggs were laid but the nest was predated (per RP).

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Rare resident breeder.

Breeding: At the three usual/most recent breeding sites: i) no sign of occupancy, ii) a pair raised one young, iii) no information received (MJHC,RHD).

Elsewhere, 1 Carn allt a' Chlaiginn (Glenfiddich) 1 Jun (IFr), 1 immature Drynachan 25 May (CAG,DAG), 1 Hills of Cromdale 18 Jun (GG), 1 Lecht 30 Dec (GG) and 1 immature Wester Gaulrig 11 May (MJHC).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Scarce summer visitor and breeder.

Breeding: It was a good breeding season for ospreys, with 9 pairs in West Moray & Nairn, mainly feeding in Findhorn Bay; 9 pairs laid eggs and 9 pairs reared a total of 20 young. There were also single adults at two other nests. In East Moray there were 6 pairs, 6 of which laid eggs and 6 pairs were successful with 9 young (RHD).

First returning birds in spring were two males back at nests in west Moray on 31 Mar. Away from nest sites, most together at one time were 5 Findhorn Bay on 21 Jul and 20 Aug. In autumn, an unusual record of a bird perched on a bridge over the River Fiddich in Dufftown on 30 Sep (AE) is the latest ever in Moray & Nairn, by one day.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Widespread but scarce resident breeder.

Breeding season (April-July) records included birds/pairs at Dallas, Dulsie Bridge, Dunphail, Findhorn Bay, Ben Rinnes, Kinloss and Rafford.

In winter, 1 Nairn Bar 13 Jan.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Scarce resident breeder and migrant.

Breeding: 52 sites were checked; 18 of these were occupied by pairs, and 2 sites by single birds. 14 pairs laid clutches. 10 pairs were successful, and these raised a very poor 29 young between them, at a mean brood size of 2.1 per laying pair (2.9 per successful pair). Two nests were predated, one by a fox and one by crows. The recent low occupancy rate and patchy distribution in Moray continues. Clutch sizes were

smaller on average than than in areas elsewhere in north-east Scotland. Although overall breeding performance in 2008 in Moray showed some improvement on recent years, the mean success rate was again markedly lower than in other parts of North-East Scotland (BC,JKC).

Outside the breeding season, single birds were seen at Archiestown 28 Jan, Brown Muir 14 Oct, Fochabers 9 Nov, Forres 26 Sep, Findhorn Bay 21 Sep, Kinloss 8 Jan and Scarffbanks 22 Oct.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Scarce resident breeder.

Breeding: At least three pairs bred successfully – none of them on grouse moors.

In late summer-winter, single birds were reported from Hopeman (Mar), Edinkillie (Jan), Elgin cathedral (Dec), Findhorn Bay (Jan, Mar, Sep, Nov), Lossie estuary (Sep), Nairn Bar (Feb, Oct – when the bird was seen to catch and eat a Grey Plover), Scarffbanks (Sep) and Tugnet (Jul).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Fairly common breeder and winter visitor.

Present in the breeding season at Cran Loch (AD), Kinloss (AJL), Lein reedbed (Kingston) (PGS) and Loch Spynie.

At other times, 1 Cran Loch 13 Jan (AD), 2 Kingsteps 13 Jan (DCJ) (also 1 on 10 Feb (DCJ), 2 on 13 Nov (SEI), frequent at Loch Spynie (max. 4 calling 16 Nov (RP) and 1 Netherbyre (Pluscarden) 9 Nov (RP).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Fairly common resident breeder.

Breeding proved (*italics*) or probable at Braidbog (Bin of Cullen), Cloddach quarry, Cran Loch, Fochabers lake, Forres (*Mosset duck pond*), Kinloss, Loch Loy, Loch Oire and Loch Spynie.

Largest winter count was 33 Loch Spynie 31 Dec (DAG) – mostly out in the open on the ice. High counts elsewhere were 11 Loch Flemington 12 Dec and 9 Cooper Park (Elgin) 6 Dec.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Scarce resident breeder and fairly common winter visitor.

Breeding proved (*italics*) or probable at Cloddach quarry, Cran Loch, *Loch Loy (min. 2 nests)*, Loch Oire, Loch Spynie and *Wellhill pool (Culbin)*.

Maximum monthly counts on main lochs were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
L.Flemington	32	21	nc	nc	nc	3	nc	5
Loch Loy	8	12	10	6	10	8	6	nc
Loch Spynie	23	9	20	18	5	2	1	1
L.Oire/na Bo	4	3	3	nc	10	8	3	4
Cloddach	2	18	17	nc	8	4	nc	4

In recent years, the maximum number counted at Loch Spynie during November-February has dwindled as follows:

1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
95	82	76	71	92	90	51	30	23	20

Surprisingly unusual on Cooper Park pond (Elgin) where 1 on 24 Feb and 2 Mar.

Crane *Grus grus**Rare migrant.*

On 5 Jan, a flock 14 birds was found at Wick (Caithness). On the morning of 6 Jan, 11 of the flock left Wick and were seen to fly in off the sea at Lossiemouth that afternoon. No more was seen of these birds until they were relocated in fields in the Pitgaveny area on 11 Jan (J&HMacD). The flock, consisting of 10 adults and 1 first-winter bird, remained in the Pitgaveny/ Calcots/Gordonsward area until at least 19 Feb (MJHC,RHD,CAG,DAG,RP et al.). By 24 Feb, the group was reduced to three (2 adults and the immature bird) and these were last seen on 11 Mar.



Cranes, Pitgaveny area January 2008 (Duncan Gibson)

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus**Very common resident breeder, winter visitor and migrant.*

First inland were 2 Cloddach quarry 19 Jan. The tern nesting platform at Loch Spynie held 3 on 10 Feb, 7 on 17 Feb and 4 on 9 Mar. The various high roofs in Elgin attracted one on the Town Hall 10 Feb, 2 on Walkers factory 11 Feb, 2 on Tesco 23 Feb and one on Halfords 24 Feb. Also in Elgin two were feeding in the grounds of Walkers factory 25 Feb and 20 flying around Tyock Industrial Estate 10 Mar. One was at Broadley (Clochan) 18 Feb. Well inland, one Aberlour 9 Feb and 10 there 20 Feb. Arrival also noticed at Dufftown 14 Feb. Fifteen were at Craigellachie 26 Feb. At Edinkillie, 2 back on territory 9 Mar and 17 in the area 2 Apr.

Pre-breeding assemblies at Cloddach quarry of 39 on 17 Feb, c.80 on 2 Mar, 161 on 9 Mar and 34 on 2 Apr. A gathering of 22 was at the Quarry Pool (Fochabers) 29 Mar.

Breeding: Roof nesting recorded at Walkers' factory in Aberlour where a pair with a brood of three on 23 May.

Post-breeding flocks at Cloddach quarry of 200 on 28 Jun, 180 on 1 Jul reducing to 47 on 3 Aug. Interestingly, 2 remained there as late as 29 Nov. Elsewhere, 20 Tormore Distillery 27 Jun.

Spring, summer and early autumn counts of ten or more at the coast:

- Apr: on 24th, 200 Burghead, 34 Lossiemouth and 28 Spey Bay.
 May: 32 Kingston 4th, 140 Findhorn Bay 8th and, at the Lossie estuary, 11 on 11th, 15 on 16th and 24 on 26th.
 Jun: 52 Findhorn Bay 2nd and 59 Lossie estuary 7th.
 Jul: 450 Culbin Bar 5th, 48 Findhorn Bay 16th, 10 Findhorn dunes 26th and, at the Lossie estuary, 156 on 11th and 10 on 26th.
 Aug: At the Lossie estuary, 51 on 16th, 89 on 25th and 61 on 31st and in Findhorn Bay, 250 on 18th and 460 on 19th.
 Sep: 200 Burghead 11th, 610 Findhorn Bay 7th (125 there 12th) and, at the Lossie estuary, 104 on 3rd, 57 on 11th and 31 on 28th.

Winter maxima at the coast were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	1170	880	704	1666
Findhorn Bay	494	840	160	nc
Burghead-Hopeman	224	nc	201	160
Lossiemouth	47	53	61	46
Portgordon-Strathlene	45	84	114	116

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Rare summer visitor and breeder.

A pair on the lower Spey shingles 2 Jun, and a nest (clutch 4 eggs) 15-24 Jun.

A brood of 3 young there 29 Jun and 1 & 16 Jul (MJHC). This is the 9th year since 1996 that this species has been recorded here.



Little Ringed Plover clutch, lower Spey shingles 15 June 2008 (Martin Cook)

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Scarce resident breeder and very common migrant.

Breeding: 1 Cloddach quarry 2 Mar. Two pairs, one with a nest and clutch of 4 eggs on 1 Jul; one pair and only one chick seen there on 7 & 12 Jul. One pair bred within RAF Kinloss – incubating eggs on 5 May, but apparently unsuccessful. One pair on the Lein (Kingston) laid 3 clutches but all were robbed/predated - 11 adults were nearby at the mouth of the Spey on 1 Jun with some display observed. At Lossiemouth east beach, a pair 29 May and an adult incubating 31 May. One bird still incubating 8 & 12 Jun but no further breeding information received.

Winter maxima at the coast were:

	Jan-Feb	Nov-Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	9	3
Findhorn Bay	18	38
Burghead-Hopeman	3	nc
Lossiemouth	12	12
Portgordon-Strathlene	2	nc

At RAF Kinloss, maximum counts of 39 on 7 Feb and 37 on 12 Nov.

Spring passage (April – early June):

Lossiemouth: 16 on 5 Apr, 28 on 28 Apr, a peak of 58 on 2 Jun, 23 on 3 May, 13 on 8 May and 15 on 31 May.

Findhorn Bay/Netherton pool: 142 on 8 May, a maximum of 476 on 11 May (RHD), 154 on 31 May and 15 on 16 Jun.

Kingston/Tugnet/Spey Bay: 23 on 27 Apr, and in May, 50 on 6th, 42 on 8th, 47 on 10th, 30 on 19th, 50 on 22nd and 82 on 25th.

The count of 476 at Findhorn Bay on 11 May is the highest there since 590 on 15 May 1994.

Autumn passage (July-September):

Counts of 10 or more birds listed below:

Lossiemouth: In August, 32 on 19th, 27 on 20th, 11 on 25th and 17 on 31st.
22 on 3 Sep.

Findhorn Bay: 27 on 17 Aug, 119 on 19 Aug and 68 on 7 Sep.

Kingston/Tugnet: 36 on 14 Jul and 26 on 26 Jul.

Kinloss: 45 on 16 Sep and 20 on 30 Sep.

Burghead: 29 on 11 Sep.

A few birds showing features of the high arctic breeding subspecies

C.h.tundrae were noted on the Lossie estuary: 2 on 20 Aug (RP, AJ) and one on 16-17 Sep (RP).

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Scarce summer visitor and breeder.

Three records received from the Cairngorms breeding grounds. On 17 May, 21 in loose groups at Cairn Lochan and 2 Feith Buidhe (Ben Macdui) (IFr). On 8 Aug, 22 including 10 fledged juveniles at Cairn Lochan (DMP).

Golden Plover *Charadrius apricaria*

Common breeder, migrant and winter visitor.

Pre-breeding: A flock of 80 in fields at Clochan 26 Mar and a flock of 180 in summer plumage flying around and landing briefly at Miltonduff 19 Apr.

Breeding: First record in breeding territory was 3 Ben Rinnes 8 Jun. In the Ladder Hills, 1 Cairn Liath and 1 Monadh an t-Sluich Leith 26 May. In the Glenfiddich area, 2 Carn allt a' Chlaiginn, 2 Carn Daimh and one displaying on Scout Hill 1 Jun. Around 30 were noted during a walk on the plateau in the Hills of Cromdale 18 Jun. Four birds at Easter Gaulrig (Glen Avon) 28 Jun. At least one calling Moss of Birnie (Glen Latterach) 29 Jun. On Ben Rinnes in mid to late summer, 6 on 26 Jul, 22 on 25 Aug and two still present 11 Sep.

No coastal records for July or August. The first noted back on the coast was 1 Findhorn Bay 14 Sep.

Winter coastal maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Kinloss	171	208	109	nc	41	420	240
Findhorn Bay	208	nc	14	2	30	380	nc

Outwith these locations, but still in the coastal fringe, were 50 Sunbank (Lossiemouth) 6 Feb and 43 Brodieshill (Forres) 14 Nov. On the summit of Ben Aigan, c.60 on 15 Nov but only two there on the following day.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Scarce autumn migrant and winter visitor.

Records received from eight locations but the third year in succession that the maximum count at any site has failed to exceed 20.

Main sites were:

Nairn/Culbin Bars: 20 on 13 Jan, 17 on 10 Feb, 14 on 8 Oct, 11 on 13 Dec and 14 on 25 Dec.

Findhorn Bay: singles on 7 & 16 Sep, 6 on 13 Sep, 9 on 18 Sep and 3 on 12 Oct.

Elsewhere, 1 Nairn 4 Sep, 3 Burghead 3 Aug (and 1 on 5 Sep), 1 Lossie estuary 12 Sep and 20-22 Sep, and 1 Portgordon 19 Oct.

An unusual inland record of one flying west over Clochan 1 Oct (MJHC).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Very common migrant breeder, small numbers in winter.

Breeding: First breeding activity reported was in the coastal fringe with display noted at Easter Cloves 16 Mar. Three individuals including display at Hillpark (Clochan) 19 Apr. Up country in breeding territory there was a single at Cabrach House fields 4 May and another single at Blackwater Lodge (Glenfiddich) 1 Jun. No proved breeding records were received.

In the coastal fringe there were pre-breeding flocks of 20 or more in various locations; 30 at Ardivot 4 Jan, 440 Tarras 23 Jan, 175 Covesea 3 Feb, 30 Roseisle also 3 Feb, 40 Cloddach quarry 17 Feb, 33 Findhorn Bay area 24 Feb (and 48 there 9 Mar) and 20 Roseisle 15 Mar.

Up country pre-breeding flocks included 105 Inchnacape (Tomintoul) 10 Feb, 28 in snow at Tomcork (Dunphail) 22 Mar and 40 Cabrach 17 May. At Rothes on 25 Mar there was a flock of 220 presumably driven to lower ground by the snowy conditions up country.

Post breeding flocks of 30 or more:

Jul: 55 north of Loch Oire on 18th and 40 there on 22nd.

Aug: 32 Cloddach quarry on 3rd and north of Loch Oire 40 on 20th and 250 on 28th.

Sep: 40 Roseisle on 12th, 40 Loch Spynie area on 15th (and 100 on 20th) and 35 Kingston 20th.

Winter flocks of 50 or more: 220 Burgie 12 Nov, 70 Findhorn Bay 12 Nov, and in Loch Spynie area, 100 on 20 Dec and 115 on 28 Dec.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Very common migrant and winter visitor.

Winter maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	390	nc	300	nc	2403
Findhorn Bay	30	10	160	16	nc
Burghead-Hopeman	228	nc	59	nc	nc
Lossiemouth	90	nc	1	nc	13

In general, a disappointing numbers of records received, particularly in February and November.

Counts in other months were:

Mar: 400 Findhorn Bay 25th.

Apr: 147 Findhorn Bay 9th and 45 Burghead 25th.

May: At Findhorn Bay, 99 on 11th, 78 on 28th and 28 on 31st.

Jun: 1 Lossie estuary on 20th and 10 there on 30th.

Jul: At Lossiemouth, 2 in summer plumage 8th and singles on 6 other dates. At Findhorn Bay, 40 on 13th, 26 on 16th, 50 on 20th and 34 on 26th. At Tugnet, 8 in summer plumage on 26th.

Aug: 20 in summer plumage Burghead 3rd. In Findhorn Bay, 50 on 2nd, 108 on 4th, 140 on 17th and 48 on 29th. Nine records Speymouth, max. 9 on 24th. Max. Lossiemouth 8 on 10th and 16th.

Sep: 48 Burghead 11th, 40 Findhorn Bay 7th and 3 Kingston 14th. Five records from Lossiemouth with max of 9 on 14th.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Scarce migrant and fairly common but very localised winter visitor.

Monthly maxima at the two best sites were:

Winter-spring:

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May
Nairn/Culbin Bars	49	113	nc	nc	nc
Lossiemouth	13	18	nc	nc	4

Late summer-autumn:

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	82	nc	nc	115	nc	226
Lossiemouth	20	5	38	42	9	16

Unusual not to receive any records from Mar or Apr. Outwith the above best sites, records also received from Findhorn Bay, Findhorn beach, Kinloss, Burghead, Kingston and Tugnet. All low counts in single figures apart from 12 Burghead 1 Aug.

Traces of spring passage at Lossiemouth where 4 summer plumaged birds on 11 May and 12 Jun, 3 on 13 Jun and a flock of 17 on 14 Jun.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Scarce migrant, mostly in autumn.

Nineteen records received from three locations.

At Findhorn Bay, 1 on 30 May (per Birdguides) is the first May record since 2002. All other records were of autumn migrants; 1 juvenile on the Netherton pool on 22 Aug (RHD) and 1 in the bay on 28 Sep (DAG).

On the Lossie estuary in September were 4 on 13th, 2 on 15th (CAG), 3 juveniles on 18th (DMP) and singles on 19th (DAG) and 21st (CAG).

At the mouth of the Spey (Tugnet and Kingston) in September: 2 on the 12th, 1 on 13th, 3 on 14th, 2 on 16th, 4 juveniles on 18th, 3 on 20th, 4 on 25th and 5 on the 27th. (MJHC, DMP, CAG, DAG).

It is difficult to ascertain the exact number of birds passing through on migration due to probable duplicate records of the same birds but fairly obvious that there have only been a small number of birds on passage.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Scarce autumn migrant.

An unusual spring record of 1 Spey Bay 6 May (JDe). This is only the seventh spring record and the earliest ever in Moray & Nairn.

In autumn, most records from Findhorn Bay in September were 7 on 13th, 3 on 16th, 16 on 17th, 5 on 19th & 20th, 21 on 23rd (including breeding plumage birds and several juveniles), 3 on 27th and 8 on the 18th (DAG, RHD, ISS, AJL). On the Lossie estuary in September were 2 on 14th & 15th, 3 on 19th and 1 on 23rd (CAG, JW, DAG) and a late single was there on 12 Oct (CAG, DAG). Also at Lossiemouth, 1 on the west beach on 15th Sep (CAG). At Kingston/Tugnet, 2 on 30 Aug (DAG), 1 on 19 Sep, 3 on 20 Sep and 2 on 27 Sep (MJHC).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Common winter visitor.

Main winter site maxima were:

	Jan-Feb	Oct-Dec
Burghead-Hopeman	44	33
Lossiemouth	144	130
Portgordon-Strathlene	47	1

The count of 144 at Lossiemouth on 10th Feb (RP) is the highest count since December 1998. On 4 Jan and 3 Feb there was a very unusual sighting of a single bird associating with Dunlin on the mud on Lossie estuary (DAG, RP). Of four records received in May, the last was of 23 on the rocks off Lossiemouth north pier on the 6th. A single bird at the base of the cliffs at Portknockie on 15 Jun (MJHC) was unusual. The first bird to return from breeding grounds was one at Lossiemouth on 18 Oct.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Scarce breeder, very common migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding: In the Ladder Hills on 26 May were 2 pairs and a single at Carn Liath, and 3 birds at Monadh an t-Sluich Leith (AE). In the Glenfiddich area, 2 displaying Cook's Cairn 1 Jun (IFr).

Winter monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	440	340	50	nc	1203
Findhorn Bay	1220	450	450	580	250
Lossiemouth	181	274	17	104	184

Also 134 Delnies 7 Mar.

Spring passage: May/June maximum counts on the three estuaries were 172 Findhorn Bay 11 May, 21 Lossiemouth 2 May and 31 Tugnet 10 May.

Autumn passage (July – September):

Findhorn Bay: a steady increase in numbers from 52 on 2 Aug, to 82 on 19 Aug, 162 on 7 Sep, 209 on 12 Sep and 350 on 19 Sep.
 Lossie estuary: Monthly maxima of 15 on 24 Jul, 15 on 20 Aug and 56 on 20-21 Sep.
 Kingston/Tugnet: 16 on 7 Jul, 69 on 22 Aug, 91 on 29 Aug, 128 on 14 Sep and 62 on 27 Sep.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Scarce autumn migrant, rare in spring.

Birds on autumn passage observed between 30 Jul-12 Sep. The only July record was 1 Nairn on 30th (RPC). At Findhorn Bay/Netherton pool area were 1 on 20-26 Aug (AJ, RHD, DAG) and 2 on the 25 Aug (DW, RHD). On the Lossie estuary, 1 on 16 Aug (EH) and 1 on 19 Aug (DAG). At Tugnet in August, 1 on 23rd, 3 on 27th and 1 on 29th and, during September, 5 on 9th and 1 on 12th (MJHC, DAG).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Scarce migrant and winter visitor.

Winter-spring: Kingsteps (Nairn) as usual held the most with 3 on 13 Jan and 8 on 10 Feb (DCJ). In spring, 1 Loch Spynie 13 Apr (RP) and a late single at Kingston on 27 Apr (MJHC).

Autumn-winter: An unusual inland record of one at Brown Muir (NJ2554) on 14 Oct (EH). At the coast, 1 Nairn Bar 19 Oct (PG) and 2 Kingsteps 13 Dec (DCJ).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Common breeder and migrant.

Breeding: Two in the same area of the Lein (Kingston) between mid March-mid April were possible breeders. Upcountry, drumming at Wester Gaulrig (Glen Avon) 11 May and 3 Stronachavie (Tomintoul) 24 May. Unusual was a Snipe perched high on the top of an electricity pylon near Tomintoul on 9 Jul.

Winter-spring: Best count was 29 Kingsteps 10 Feb. Also, 6 Cran Loch 10 Feb (5 there 9 Mar), 7 Kingston 27 Mar, 5 Humbrack (Brown Muir) 9 Apr and 5 Kinloss 19 Apr. 1 on Ben Aigan summit 17 Feb.

Autumn-winter: Best counts at Kingsteps/Nairn Bar where 55 on 19 Oct and 39 on 13 Dec. Wet fields at Chapelton (Forres) held 20 on 11 Oct and there were 19 Wester Coxton 18 Nov, 3 Cloddach quarry 29 Nov and 6 in a boggy ditch during hard frost at Hill of Mackalea 28 Dec.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Common resident breeder, scarce migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding: First roding Loch Spynie 30 Mar. Roding also noted Newbold (Forres) 16 May-2 Jun, Muiry Woods (Forres) 2 Jul (3) and Dunphail 13 Jul – latest of the year. Other potential breeders included 1-2 Tanzie (Ben Aigan) 23 Mar-28 Apr, 2 Blackboat 30 Mar, 1 Loch Spynie 23rd May, 1 Stronachavie (Tomintoul) 24 May and 1 Elginshill 7 Jun. Predation by domestic dogs had a detrimental effect on the local breeding population in the Forres area where one juvenile killed at Muiry Wood on 26 May and another two juveniles were killed at Sanquhar on 3 Jul (ISS).

The first early autumn record of returning birds was at.

Autumn/winter: 1 Dunphail 30 Oct and 1-2 at 20 lowland locations during January-March and November-December.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Scarce migrant.

Winter: The only record was 1 Lossie estuary 5 Jan (CAG).

Spring: 5 Kingston 27 Apr (MJHC), 1 Nairn 2 May (RPC), singles Findhorn Bay 19 May and 21 Jun (DAG), a flock of 26 Drumdivan pool (west of Nairn) 22 May (SB) and singles at Miltonduff pool on 2 & 6 May (DAG).

Autumn: First returning birds were 20 Findhorn Bay 16 Jul (AJL). At Kingston, 6 on 11 Aug (MJHC), 2 on 30 Aug and 1 on 31 Aug (DAG). Fifteen records Findhorn Bay between 17 Aug-21 Oct, max.10 on 13 Sep (DAG).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Very common winter visitor and migrant. Small numbers in summer.

Monthly maxima at main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	137	198	nc	nc	nc	nc	42	nc	17
Findhorn Bay	13	10	nc	nc	1	7	10	5	nc
Burghead-Hopeman	27	nc	nc	12	nc	nc	38	nc	9
Lossiemouth	2	2	2	2	3	7	4	6	5

Elsewhere, 2 Tugnet 26 Jul and 18 on Nairn west beach 14 Dec.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Scarce migrant.

Winter: A single bird amongst 119 Curlew at Hopeman on 27 Jan (RHD). This is the first winter record for Moray & Nairn.

Spring: First on passage were 5 Lossie estuary and 6 west past Strathlene on 27 Apr. Subsequent records were 3 Burghead 29 Apr, 1 over Loch Spynie 3 May, 3 singles heading west over Lossiemouth 3 May, 2 west past Kingston 4 May, single birds Findhorn Bay 4 & 8 May and 1 Lossie estuary 14 May.

Autumn: Of 23 records during this period, 13 were of single birds. Sites ranged from Culbin Bar to Tugnet but most records, twelve in total, were from Lossiemouth. Extreme autumn dates ranged from 1 Culbin 5 Jul to 1 over Lossiemouth 19 Sep. Only three flocks exceeded 10 birds: 15 Tugnet 26 Jul, 11 west past Lossiemouth 2 Aug and 16 Kingston 3 Aug.

Fluctuating total numbers of autumn migrants over the past ten years gives an average of just under 108 birds per year.

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
AutumnTotal	139	65	78	136	147	104	160	116	53	81

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Common breeder. Very common migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding: Up country, first at Ben Aigan 9 Apr (one on the summit 30 Apr), 8 Cabrach 17 May and 4 Ben Rinnes 30 May. Proved breeding RAF Kinloss where a pair with four eggs 14 May. Chicks seen Tarras (Forres) 15 Jun.

In spring, 162 Linkwood 9 Mar and 170 over Loch Spynie 4 Apr.

Largest flocks in summer/early autumn were:

Jul: 217 Kingston 14th.

Aug: 518 Kingston 11th (450 on 24th) and 300 Findhorn Bay 20th.

Sep: 130 Miltonduff pool 3rd, 370 Findhorn Bay 17th and a peak at Kingston of 391 on 27th.

Coastal winter maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	160	384	255	168
Findhorn Bay	434	343	540	75
Burghead-Hopeman	5	nc	21	68
Lossiemouth	6	274	87	4
Portgordon-Strathlene	nc	126	10	6

Additional winter flocks of over 100 from other locations were 132 at an inland pool at Innes 7 Jan, 119 Hopeman 27 Jan, 280 in wet fields Miltonduff 17 Feb, 150 over Loch Spynie 8 Oct and 196 Pittendreich (Elgin) 9 Nov.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Arrival: First in spring were 3 Cloddach quarry 20 Apr. Up country, 2 Lochindorb 23 Apr and 1 Drynachan 27 Apr.

Breeding: Two pairs anxious Cloddach quarry 7 Jul, suggesting chicks nearby.

On 17 May, 1 Cabrach and 3 pairs along a one mile stretch of the River Divie at Edinkillie. 2 Ardlach fishing pools 23 May and 1 displaying Blackwater Lodge (Glenfiddich) 1 Jun. On the River Spey at Aberlour, 1 adult with a brood of 3 chicks 21 Jun.

At Stronachavie (Tomintoul) a bird was seen to catch and eat a newly emerged dragonfly 9 Jul.

Late summer/autumn: 1 still up country at Blacksboat 20 Jul. At the coast, 22 Kingston 14 Jul, but only 1-2 there in Aug and last 1 on 21 Sep. At Lossiemouth, 2 at the west beach 13 Sep and 1 on the estuary 20 Sep. Two Findhorn 22 Aug.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Very scarce migrant, occasional in winter.

On the Netherton pool (behind the sea wall on the south side of Findhorn Bay) were 1 on 20 Aug (AJ), 2 on 22 Aug (RHD), 1 on 24 Aug (RHH) and 1 on 7 Sep (RHD). In Findhorn Bay, 1 on 25 Aug (DW,RHD).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Very scarce migrant.

An excellent year. All records came from Findhorn Bay (or the pool behind the sea wall at Netherton on the south side of the bay [marked *]).

Reports were 1 on 16-17 Aug (DAG), 2 on 20 Aug (AJ), 1 on 22 Aug* (RHD), 3 on 25 Aug (DW,RHD), 4 on 19 Sep* (RHD), 1 on 20 Sep (DAG) and 1 on 29 Sep* (ISS).

It is impossible to be certain how many individuals were involved – clearly a minimum of 4 and at least 7-8 seems likely. This is the most in one year since the early 1990s. Four together is the best multiple sighting since 10 in Findhorn Bay on 15 Sep 1974.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Scarce migrant, very scarce in winter.

Winter: the only record was 1 Findhorn Bay 26th Jan (DAG).

Spring (late Mar-Jun):

Single birds at Findhorn Bay 9 & 12 Apr, Cloddach quarry 20 Apr, near Lochindorb 28 Apr and flying over Loch Spynie 5 May.

Late summer-autumn (Jul-Oct):

Findhorn Bay/Netherton pool: first single on 20 Jul and 4 on 3 Aug. Larger numbers in mid August, peaking at 22 at Netherton on 20 Aug (AJ). Up to 4 later in August and singles on 13 & 20 Sep.

Lossiemouth: recorded between 8 Jul-24 Sep. Single birds except 3 on 31 Aug, 2 on 17-18 Sep and 3 on 19 Sep.

Kingston/Tugnet: ten records between 14 Aug-21 Oct. Single birds except 4 on 14 Sep and 3 on 21 Oct.

The count of 22 birds on the Netherton pool on 20 Aug is the largest group recorded since 25 in Findhorn Bay in late July 1985.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Very scarce migrant

At the Netherton pool, behind the sea wall on the south side of Findhorn Bay, were singles on 8 May (RHD) and 20 Aug (AJ).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Scarce breeder, very common migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding: the only records from up country were of one “alarming” at Inchnacape (Tomintoul) 11 May and one in a marsh to the north-east of Tomintoul 24 May (MJHC). In the coastal fringe indication of breeding activity with two pairs, one pair displaying, at Netherton pool (Findhorn Bay) on 19 May. At Kingston, 3 birds on 25 May and a pair mating on 1 Jun.

Spring (Mar – early Jun): Passage indicated in Findhorn Bay where 350 on 19 Mar, a peak of 430 on 25 Mar, 71 on 9 Apr and 17 on 8 May. Elsewhere, 114 Delnies marsh 7 Mar, 60 Lossie estuary 6 Apr and 11 Kingston 27 Apr.

Late summer/autumn (Jul – Sep): Fluctuating numbers at Lossie estuary with max. count 72 on 16 & 31 Aug. At Burghead, 13 on 13 Jul and 15 on 11 Sep. Fewer than 10 at Kingston, 21 RAF Kinloss 24 Aug and 4 over Loch Spynie 19 Jul. Largest numbers in Findhorn Bay where 300 on 20 Jul, 220 on 18 Aug, 634 on 19 Aug and, in September, 300 on 1st, 820 on 7th and 700 on 19th.

Winter: Monthly maxima at the coast were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars	120	107	134	158
Findhorn Bay	386	377	1080	nc
Burghead-Hopeman	nc	nc	58	53
Lossiemouth	83	93	100	96
Portgordon-Strathlene	56	65	84	55

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Common winter visitor, small numbers in summer.

Winter monthly maxima at main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Nov	Dec
Culbin Bar	23	38	19	nc	16
Findhorn	12	nc	47	3	nc
Burghead-Hopeman	29	nc	62	16	40
Lossiemouth	21	32	70	4	27
Portgordon-Strathlene	45	80	81	nc	62

Additional winter counts of 10 or more from other locations were 12 in the Delnies-Nairn area 19 Oct and 14 Dec and 12 also at Kingston 26 Oct.

Spring-early autumn:

Apr: 18 Burghead 24th, 11 Spey Bay 24th.

May: 8 Burghead 4th, 27 Tugnet 8th and 20 there on 10th.

Jul: 1 Findhorn 3rd, and at Lossiemouth 1 on 11th and 8 on 20th.

Aug: At Lossiemouth, slow increase from 1 on 9th to 5 on 31st. At Kingston/Tugnet, 4 on 11th and 5 on 27th.

Sep: 40 Lossiemouth 5th, 52 Findhorn 8th, 32 Burghead 11th, and 5 Kingston 27th.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Rare visitor.

One was found freshly dead on the beach at Cullen on 29 Oct (RR). This is the 6th record in Moray & Nairn.



Grey Phalarope, Cullen 29 October 2008 (Richard Reglinski)

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Scarce migrant offshore in summer and autumn, rare in winter.

The annual total was 10 birds, a reasonable year. First records of the year were off Lossiemouth in early June when 2 on 7th and 1 on 13th (DAG). In August, singles were off Strathlene on 13th (MJHC) and Culbin on 30th (EH). Five were logged in September – 1 Kingston 3rd (EH), a juvenile chasing Sandwich Terns off Findhorn 7th (RHD), 2 Covesea 13th (CAG) and 1 Lossiemouth 20th (DAG).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Fairly common migrant in summer and autumn.

The annual total was 67 records, an average year. Estimated monthly totals were:

May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
4	8	3	23	29

Spring: First of the year were 2 Lossiemouth 6 May, with two singles there later in the month.

Summer: June records were all off Lossiemouth (five dates). July records were 1 Lossiemouth 4th and singles Spey Bay on 26th and 31st. August records were mainly from Lossiemouth (21 birds on ten dates) with singles off Burghead and Kingston.

Autumn: Peak counts in September, focussed on Lossiemouth where 17 on four dates, including max. day counts of 8 on 6th and 7 on 7th (DAG, RP). Also 3 Burghead 11th and 4 Covesea 13th with singles at Burghead Bay, Hopeman and Strathlene.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Rare visitor.

Two records. The first was 1 Findhorn Bay 16 June (AJL), an unusual late spring/summer record, coinciding with records of Pomarine Skua and good counts of Manx Shearwater around the same time. This is only the second spring record since 1985. In late July, an adult was in Spey Bay on 26th before flying off to the west (DAG).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Scarce migrant in summer and autumn.

The annual total was 56 records – a fairly average year. Estimated monthly totals were:

May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
3	12	6	13	16	6

Spring: No April records. In May, 1 past Lossiemouth on two dates, and 1 off Burghead.

Summer: Aside from 1 Strathlene 2 Jun, all summer records were off Lossiemouth with 11 birds in June (six dates), 6 birds in July (four dates) and 13 birds in August (nine dates), including an individual harassing terns on the estuary on 19th and 20th.

Autumn: In September, 11 birds past Lossiemouth on three dates, including peak day count of nine on 6th. Other September records were 3 Strathlene 7th and 1 Burghead 12th. In October, 6 past Lossiemouth (three dates) in the first week of the month.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Common breeder and very common migrant.

Breeding: 420 apparently occupied nests (AON) at Covesea 31 May (MJHC) was a decrease from 2007 (474 AON), while 263 AON at Portknockie 15 Jun was a slight increase from 2007 (238 AON). Numbers of AON since 2000 at these colonies are as follows:

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Covesea	384	386	369	347	397	302	437	474	420
Portknockie	104	118	110	122	109	158	246	238	263

Passage counts offshore were poor this year, with the highest count being 72 off Findhorn 30 Jun. Counts offshore continue to decline over recent years.

Inland: An adult was at Loch Spynie 22 June (CRo,SW), only the fifth inland record since 1985.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Very common resident breeder and winter visitor.

Breeding: At Loch Spynie, 21 nests on the platform (and a single nest on the far shooting butt) - 41 chicks on 7 Jul. Elsewhere, 10 nests on the Spey shingles near Garmouth viaduct 25 May.

Flock counts in excess of 500 were, at Loch Spynie, 700 on 12 Jan, 500 on 27 Jan, 650 on 10 Feb, 700 on 17 Feb and 750+ on 29 Nov. At the Lossie estuary, 563 on 1 Oct. A leucistic bird was at Loch Spynie 10 Feb (DAG).

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Very scarce visitor.

A continuing run of records in the Garmouth/Spey Bay area, with a 1st summer bird on the Spey near Garmouth viaduct between 25 May - 2 Jun (MJHC, DAG, HM, RP). This area has attracted 1st summer birds on an annual basis since 2005. Elsewhere, 1 juvenile Lossie estuary 30 Aug (DAG).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Very common resident breeder and winter visitor.

Breeding: c.750 pairs Tips of Corsemal colony although most breeding failed at the site (WPRB, IF). Some 350 birds were dispersed over the Hill of Mackalea colony at Glass 4 May (IF) and at Upper Mulben, 'hundreds' were noted at the bonded warehouses in late July (WPRB). In Elgin, breeding occurred at the old gas works site, with 148 nests on 11 May (RP). Breeding also occurred in Elgin cemetery, with c.20 apparently occupied nests, although only three nests contained clutches of eggs (RP). Counts of apparently occupied nests elsewhere included c20 Boars Head Rock foreshore 25 May, 1 Kingston rifle range, 3 Garmouth viaduct 25 May, c.40 Balvalley Moss (Cabrach) 5 May and 3 Ben Main 5 May. Nesting was also recorded at Balvenie, Ben Rinnes, Glenfarclas and Glenfiddich distilleries.

Flock counts in excess of 500 away from breeding areas were 900 Clochan 5 Jan (the highest count of the year), 500+ Loch Spynie 6 Jan, 813+ Loch Spynie 12 Jan, 510 Tugnet 27 Aug, c.760 Kingston 20 Sep and c.740 Findhorn Bay 9 Oct.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Summer visitor and fairly common breeder. Very scarce in winter.

Winter: Recorded in both winter periods. 1 adult Lower Auchenreath 1 Jan, a 2nd winter bird Loch Spynie 6 Jan (and probably the same individual there 25 Jan), 1 adult Nairn 31 Jan, and a 1st winter bird Cooper Park (Elgin) 2 Feb. In the second winter period, a 1st winter bird Lossie estuary 25 Dec, with the same individual at Loch Spynie on 27 Dec.

Arrival: Other than likely wintering birds, the first report was 2 Loch Spynie 2 Mar, with regular sightings around the Elgin/Loch Spynie/Lossiemouth area thereafter.

Breeding: The only records received were of "some nests" at Auchroisk Distillery 25 Jul and around Elgin, the usual roof top nesters included 7 apparently occupied nests (AON) on Johnstone's roof, 7+ AON on RTC roof and 5+ AON on Bowl 2000 roof, all of which had several broods on the roofs (RP). Also, one nest Bow Fiddle Rock (Portknockie) 15 Jun.

Counts over 50 were 74 Lossie estuary 27 Jun (the largest count on the estuary in over 25 years of regular WeBS counts [RP]), and 70 at Loch Spynie 18 Jul.

A bird of the race *L.f.intermedius* was on the Lossie estuary 10 Aug (RP).

A hybrid gull, assumed to be of Lesser Black-backed Gull x Herring Gull parentage was again seen on the Lossie estuary between March and October.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Very common resident breeder and winter visitor.

Breeding: All reports of breeding were in urban Elgin, with broods noted at Blane Place at Bishopmill, Gordon & Macphail at Boroughbriggs, Elgin Cemetery, and Johnstone's roof, RTC roof and Bowl 2000 roof all at Moycroft (RP).

Monthly maximum counts on the Lossie estuary were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
800	147	122	572	302	674	138	397	495	86	63	26

Elsewhere, counts over 1500, were mainly at Loch Spynie in the winter months, where 2500 on 12 Jan, 2000 on 2 Feb, 2800 on 10 Feb, 2600 on 9 Mar and 1178 on 28 Mar. The highest count of the year was c.5000 Delnies pig farm 13 Jan (DCJ). At Loch Flemington on 4 Sep, a juvenile was dragged alive across the loch into vegetation by an otter (DMP).

A hybrid gull, assumed to be of Lesser Black-backed Gull x Herring Gull parentage was seen on the Lossie estuary between July and October.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Very scarce winter visitor.

A reasonable year, but difficult to ascertain the exact number of birds involved due to the possibility of duplication - some known individuals were seen at more than one site. A minimum of 11 individuals was involved.

First winter period: The regular adult was present around Loch Spynie from 2007 until 21 Apr (DAG et al), and was accompanied at times by a 3rd winter bird between 12 Jan-17 Mar (DAG et al); this bird was also seen at Lossie estuary occasionally during this period. Also a juvenile around Loch Spynie between 6 Feb-23 Mar (DAG et al). In the Loch Oire/Urquhart area, an adult and an immature were present between 23 Jan-21 Apr (EH,MJHC).

Spring: One (unspecified age) Burghead 4 May (ISS) – possibly the same was a 3rd summer bird Hopeman 11 May (DAG). A 1st summer was at Kingston 4 May (MJHC).

Summer: A 3rd summer was at Loch Spynie between 21 Jun-26 Jul and was probably the same as the 3rd winter bird at Loch Spynie earlier in the year (DAG). A very pale 1st summer bird was in the Loch Spynie/Lossie estuary area throughout, seen at Lossie estuary between 19 May-3 Sep, and occasionally at Loch Spynie in July and August (DAG,CAG,RP).

Second winter period: The regular adult returned to Loch Spynie on 29 Nov (RP) and was joined by a second adult between 28-31 Dec (DAG,RP). This is the 6th consecutive year for this presumed returning adult. Also at Loch Spynie, a 3rd winter bird was present between 13-31 Dec (DAG,RP), and was also seen briefly at the Lossie estuary on 24 Dec. Also at the Lossie estuary, a 1st winter was present 22 Nov (DAG). At Loch Oire/Urquhart what was assumed to be the same adult as in the first winter period was seen between 17-27 Dec (EH,MJHC).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Very scarce winter visitor.

A reasonable year with, probably, 8-9 individuals although duplication is sometimes hard to rule out.

First winter period: A juvenile was in the Loch Spynie area on many dates between 13 Feb-23 Apr (DAG et al), and was joined briefly by a second juvenile on 23 Apr (AJ). At Spey Bay, a 2nd winter was seen on 14 Feb (per Birdguides), and an immature was at Nairn on 17 Mar (RPC).

Summer: A 2nd summer was 2km west of Portgordon 1 Jun (MJHC) and a 1st summer, possibly one of the Loch Spynie juveniles in the first winter period was in the Loch Spynie/Lossie estuary area between 27 Jun-13 Oct (RP et al).

Second winter period: One juvenile Lossiemouth on nine dates 2 Nov-25 Dec (DAG) and another juvenile Lossie estuary 25-26 Dec (DAG, RP). A 2nd winter bird was at Spey Bay on 19 Nov (per Birdguides).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Scarce resident breeder and common visitor.

Breeding: The only reports of breeding were 2 pairs Covesea cliffs 15 Jun, and 2 pairs at Bow Fiddle Rock (Portknockie) the same day (MJHC).

Highest count of the year was 160 Tugnet 1 Jan, also 120 there 24 Aug. At the Lossie estuary, numbers peaked as usual in late summer, when 113 on 10 Aug and 130 on 13 Sep.

At the Lossie estuary, an adult was seen to catch, kill and start to eat a female Wigeon on 17 Oct (DAG).

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Very scarce summer visitor and rare breeder.

Breeding: Site 3 – a single bird on 26 Apr (CAG) was the second earliest return date in Moray & Nairn, after one on 25 Apr 2006. Numbers incubating peaked at 12 on 21 Jun, while the largest count of non-incubating adults was 30 on 7 Jul (DAG,CAG). As last year though, another disappointing failure with no chicks hatched. This site suffers heavily from disturbance and from high tides.

Site 4 – Up to 5 in early May (MJHC,DAG,CAG) but no further records.

There were no reports away from the breeding sites this year.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Very common summer visitor and occasional breeder.

Arrival: First of the year was 1 Lossiemouth 3 Apr. Arrival dates (first report) in the last ten years have been as follows:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
28 Mar	25 Mar	28 Mar	24 Mar	26 Mar	28 Mar	1 Apr	1 Apr	31 Mar	3 Apr

Birds were widely spread along the coast from 12 Apr onwards.

Breeding: No breeding records in Moray & Nairn again this year.

Peak counts (all in September) were c.350 Burghead Bay 2nd, 109 Strathlene 7th, 168 Findhorn Bay 7th, 410 east past Lossiemouth 7th, 120 Burghead Bay 12th and 112 Burghead Bay 18th. The Lossiemouth passage on 7 Sep is the highest count since 1985 – although large numbers sometimes gathered in Findhorn Bay prior to this (e.g. c.600 on 22 Apr 1970 and c.1000 on 3 May 1984).

Last of the year were 2 Culbin Bar 19 Oct.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Summer visitor and fairly common breeder.

Arrival: 2 Spey Bay 24 Apr and 2 Loch Spynie 29 Apr were the only April reports.

Breeding: At Loch Spynie, a peak of 20 nests on the platforms on 24 Jun (RP) with 11 chicks of various ages on 12 Jul and 14 chicks of various ages on 3 Aug. Elsewhere, one pair bred Cloddach Quarry but failed (CAG).

Peak counts were up to 44 Loch Spynie throughout the breeding period, c.100 Spey Bay 6 May and 51 Lossie estuary 12 Aug. Last of the year were 3 off Lossiemouth 1 Oct.

Roseate Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Rare vagrant.

Two adults Lossie estuary 9 Aug (RP,DAG). After four records during 1967-1970, the only other recent occurrence was an adult at Lossie estuary on 24 Aug 1986.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Summer visitor and common but local breeder.

Arrival: 2 Tugnet 24 Apr and one there 27 Apr.

Breeding: First arrivals RAF Kinloss in mid May, increasing to 110 by 11 Jun. 150+ apparently occupied nests (AON) 26 Jun but the colony was deserted by 8 Jul (AJL). At Lossiemouth east beach, 40-50 AON in May-June, although this colony was deserted on 13 Jul with fox predation suspected (DAG). At Garmouth viaduct, there were 84 AON on 15 Jun with c.130 birds loafing in the same area. However, this colony too was deserted by 24 Jun (MJHC).

Away from colonies, the highest count of the year was c.250 on the shoreline at Lossiemouth on 28 Jun (DAG). 125 on the Lossie estuary 10 Aug included 84 juveniles, indicating breeding success elsewhere, although sadly not at the Moray colonies which suffered a disappointing year.

Last of the year were c.60 Burghead 11 Sep.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Very common offshore.

In summer, on 15 Jun, c.10 were flying around the Bow Fiddle Rock, (Portknockie) and one landed on the cliffs (MJHC). However, there was no suggestion of the first breeding in Moray & Nairn.

Counts were generally low in 2008, with only six reaching double figures. Best count by far was 1250 on the sea off Findhorn 30 Jun (RHD), the highest count in Moray & Nairn since 1992.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Very common offshore.

Breeding: Since the first breeding of this species in 2003, it has bred annually in Moray & Nairn at Portknockie. On 15 Jun, there were 3 pairs here, each with a single chick, and 17 other birds on the cliff ledges (MJHC).

Offshore counts included 120 Strathlene 2 Jun, 156 Findhorn 18 Sep and c.200 there 19 Sep.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

Scarce offshore, rare breeder.

Breeding: At Tronach Head, 21 adults 3 Apr, 8 pairs on the sea 20 Apr and 10 adults offshore 16 Jul, including one with a fish, possibly for young. No nest in the usual accessible crevice after 22 successive years of breeding there (MJHC).

At other times, away from breeding areas, up to 3 off Burghead, Findhorn and Lossiemouth on various dates, mainly July onwards. A remarkable winter congregation three nautical miles offshore between Buckie and Cullen (mostly off Findochty) where at least 97 on 5 Nov (IFr).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Scarce winter visitor.

The only record in the first winter period was of a long dead bird found on Culbin Bar 13 Jan, probably from 2007 (AY). In the second winter period, dead single birds were found on Culbin Bar and Nairn Bar on 13 Dec (AY,DCJ). The only live bird of the year was one west past Findhorn 11 Nov (per Birdguides) – the worst year since 1993.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Scarce offshore.

A poor year with only five birds recorded, the worst year since 1994. Records were 1 east Strathlene 2 Jun (MJHC) and, off Lossiemouth, 1 west 13 Jun, 1 west 14 Jun, 1 east 21 Jun and 1 west 19 Jul (DAG).

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

120 Relugas 6 Dec, 50 Myreside 8 Nov and 40 Duffus Castle 15 Nov were the highest counts received.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas**Scarce resident breeder, formerly common.*

Breeding season: Records in the period late March-July included 2 Arthur's Bridge 3 May, 3 College of Roseisle 12 Apr, 1 Craigellachie 10 May, 1 Duffus 12 Apr, 2 (a pair) Dunphail 8 May, 1 Elgin (Morrison playing fields) 29 Jun, 2 Elginshill 7 Jun, 2 Kinloss 19 Jun, 2 Loch Oire 10 Apr (subsequently 1-2 regular there May-Jul with 4 on 13 Jun), 1 Loch Spynie 18 May, 1 Muirton 4 May, 4 Nether Meft 19 May and 5 Urquhart 16 Apr (and 3 on 4-5 Jun). In the Scarffbanks/Loch Spynie area, three nest boxes were occupied by Stock Doves – but two of the nests were predated (RP).

During the winter periods, other localities where birds were seen included Alves, Cairneyhillock, Easter Calcots, Innesmill, Lhanbryde, Linksfield, Netherton, Philaxdale (Duffus) and South Darkland.

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

Breeding: First song heard Kingston 9 Feb and, in anticipation of the 2009 season, Dunphail 24 Dec. Nests were found in Gorse at Kinloss in May and June and breeding was confirmed again in Scots Pines on Culbin Bar. At the end of the season, birds were carrying nesting material in Forres on 8 Sep and Elgin on 10 Sep.

Largest flocks reported were 2000 Alves 5 Jan, 1400 Altyre 10 Dec, 1000 Dunphail 21 Dec, 200 Conicavel 23 Aug, 200 Midwood (Clochan) 28 Dec and 100 Duffus 8 Nov.

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

Counts of 10+ were 14 Clochan 30 Nov and 14 Dec, and 11 Duffus 8 Nov.

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

Arrival: April records (all single calling birds) were at Nairn 27th, Ben Aigan 29th and Archiestown 30th. Subsequently heard at Ardclach, Cairn Uish, Crooked Wood (Lhanbryde), Dava, Dunphail, Inchnacape, Paul's Hill, Rafford, Tomintoul and Wester Gaulrig. Very scarce in the Forres area where 1 in Altyre but none at Tarras or in Muiry and Newforres Woods.

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

Breeding: During Apr-Jul, birds were seen in 9 localities, from the coastal strip up country to Strath Avon. At other times of year, reports came from Aberlour, Alves, Archiestown, Ardivot, Garlinebeg, Blackhillock (Knockando), Boldow (Knockando), Bridge of Avon, Carron, Catherinebraes (Archiestown), Dallas Dhu, Drumfurrich (Craigellachie), Easter Lawrenceton, Easter Newforres, Greyhope (Shaw Hill), Hardmuir, Inveravon School, Kirdellbeg/Mains of Kirdells (Knockando), Kinermory, Kinloss, Lhanbryde, Lochyhill, Longmorn, Marypark, Monaughty, Oakwood (Elgin), Rothes-Craigellachie road, Surradale, Tomachar (Glen Rinnes) and Westertown (Dufftown).

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus**Rare visitor.*

An immature/female Snowy Owl was seen and photographed in the Cairngorms on 16 Feb. It was in the upper part of the Garbh Uisge Mor, north-east of Ben Macdui. The observer, whose name is not known, reported his sighting to the Cairngorm Ranger base and left a copy of his photograph.

Since 1960, birds have been seen on the Cairngorms plateau during April-October in 15 years (1963-67, 79-81, 84, 87, 90-92, 96, 98) but only twice in winter (December 1990 and now February 2008). There have, however, been winter records on lower ground, mostly around Archiestown, Cabrach and Dufftown. The majority of these records were in the 1960s, but birds were also seen in 1974 and in the mid 1980s. A bird released at the Lecht in July 1992 was last reported there in April 1993. There have been no reports anywhere in Moray & Nairn since 1998.



Snowy Owl, near Ben Macdui 16 February 2008 (photographer unknown)

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco**Common resident breeder.*

Reported widely between Binsness on the coast and Inchnacape near Tomintoul.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus**Scarce resident breeder.*

Breeding: Confirmed by the presence of calling young at Kinloss on 10 Jul (AJL) and at Lochyhill Wood (Forres) on 2 Jul (ISS). Also, the remains of predated young were found in Muiry Wood (Forres) 13 Jun (ISS).

Other reports were 1 Clackmarras 3 Dec (EH), 1 Binsness 3 Aug (AJL), 1 Lein (Kingston) on 5 dates between 2 Jun-26 Aug (PGS).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus**Rare breeder and very scarce migrant.*

Breeding: Only three spring/summer records - single birds near Refouble 18 Jul (JFo), RAF Kinloss 10 Apr (AJL) and Kerrow in April (per ISS).

At other times, 1 south of Lossiemouth 22 Feb (AJL) and 1 flying west over Lossie estuary 2 Nov (CAG).

Swift *Apus apus*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Arrival: First were 2 over Linkwood (Elgin) 25 Apr (RP), the second earliest arrival date in Moray & Nairn. Most observers recorded arrival in the second week of May. Arrival dates (first record) for the past 10 years have been as follows:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
8 May	8 May	11 May	14 May	30 Apr	19 Apr	30 Apr	3 May	8 May	25 Apr

There appears to be a trend towards earlier arrival, with the only four April arrivals occurring in the past six years.

Largest congregations of feeding birds were c.70 over New Elgin 26 Jul (ABO) and (quite late) 180+ over Darnaway Castle 23 Aug (with 80 there the following day) (RHH). Few other reports after the first week of August. In September, 1-2 Lossiemouth until 15th (RP,DAG), 1 Strathlene 16th (MJHC), 4 Spey Bay 18th (DMP) and lastly 3 Clochan 19th (MJHC). September Swifts are unusual, and four records is the most since before 1985.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Very scarce visitor and occasional breeder.

Breeding: Following 1 Fochabers 25 May (MJHC) and reports from local fishermen, two adults and three juveniles were seen on the River Spey c.1km downstream from Fochabers bridge on 7 June (TR), the first breeding record in Moray & Nairn since 2005, also near Fochabers.

Other reports were 1 Nairn harbour 15 Feb (RPC), 1 Mosset Burn (Forres) 14 Aug (AJL), 1 Lossiemouth 13 Oct (DAG) and 2 Nov (CAG) and 1 Loch na Bo 27 Dec (MJHC).

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Rare visitor.

1 Todholes (Rafford) 5 May (AO) and 1 Ladycroft (Wester Elchies) 14-15 May (FS). These are the 18th and 19th records in Moray & Nairn. Hoopoes were seen in nine years during the period 1981-1992 but these are only the third and fourth records since that time, despite a considerable increase in the number of observers. Months of arrival for all 19 birds are shown below:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
3	5	1	0	1	2	5	2

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Common resident breeder.

Continues to be very widespread in suitable woodlands throughout Moray & Nairn, and an increasing visitor to garden nut feeders. Near Forres, 2 pairs Rafford, 2 pairs Sanquhar, several pairs Altyre and 1 pair Newbold. Juveniles were noted at Dallas Dhu (Forres), Loch Spynie and Ben Aigan.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Rare migrant.

A female/immature was seen at Strathlene 16 Sep (MJHC). This is the 12th record for Moray & Nairn.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

Scarce winter migrant.

An individual photographed at RAF Kinloss was present from 15-20 Apr (AJL), unfortunately in an area without public access. The last record for Moray & Nairn was also at Kinloss, in 2002.



Great Grey Shrike, Kinloss 16 April 2008 (Allan Lawrence)

Magpie *Pica pica*

Fairly common resident breeder.

For the third successive year breeding occurred at Newbold Wood (Forres) although the brood was later predated.

The vast majority of records involved 1-2 birds but three counts of five or more were 11 Lower Blairmain 9 Mar, 6 Logieburn 9 Apr and 5 Longmorn 9 Feb.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Scarce resident breeder.

Breeding season: April-July reports came from Ardyge House, Bauds of Cullen, Braidbog (Bin of Cullen), Conicavel, Dallas Dhu (Forres) Darnaway Forest, Elgin (behind the Eight Acres Hotel), Findrassie, Half Davoch, Loch Oire, Lochs of Bogmussach, Lossie Forest, Maviston Farm (Nairn), Midwood, Mundole, Sanquhar, Stoneyford Pond (Rafford),

At other seasons, Jays were seen at the following additional sites: Archiestown (Sep, Nov), Ardivot (Oct), Binsness (Aug), Knock of Gownie (Aberlour) (Dec), Heldon Wood (Feb), Hill of Mulundy (Feb), Kinermony (Feb), Loch na Bo (Oct), Loch Park (Oct), Nairn (Oct), College of Roseisle (Mar), Netherbyre (Nov), Pitgaveny (Jan), Teindland (Aug), Torrieston (Nov), Tynet woods (Dec) and Clochan (Sep, Oct, Dec).

Largest counts were 5 Loch Spynie 6 Jan & 22 Sep, 5 Elgin (behind the Eight Acres Hotel) 22 Jun and 5 Stoneyford Pond (Rafford) 6 Jul.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Very common resident breeder.

Highest count was 1100 on the tideline at Findhorn Bay 7 Dec (AJL). On 6 Dec, 337 flew from west from Portgordon over Lower Auchenreath, en route to roost (MJHC).

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

Only two reports received: 120 Findhorn Bay 7 Dec and 36 Relugas 6 Dec.

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

Best monthly counts on the Lossie estuary were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
nc	29	nc	nc	69	67	55	22	95	81	nc	27

Elsewhere, 82 Findhorn Bay 7 Oct, 13 Muir of Miltonduff 17 Nov and 18 Nairn Bar 13 Jan.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix**Scarce visitor.*

Hooded Crows or hybrids were seen on the Lossie estuary as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Hooded	nc	0	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	nc	1
Hybrid	nc	2	nc	nc	8	7	8	4	4	5	nc	0

Other 'good' Hooded Crows: 1 Culbin Bar 13 Jan and 10 Feb, 1 Findhorn Bay 30 Jan, 23 Apr and 25 Sep, 1-2 Loch Oire area many dates, 1 Muirhead (Kinloss) 6 Feb and 28 Mar, 1 Nairn Bar 13 Jan and 13 Dec, 1 Penick (Auldearn) 8 Apr, 1 Shaw Hill 8 Dec and 2 Strathlene 27 Apr.

Hybrids are frequent throughout the Districts. Largest counts were 8 Nairn Bar and 8 Culbin Bar 13 Jan.

Raven *Corvus corax**Scarce visitor, formerly widespread breeder.*

No breeding reported from Tronach Head. The area was searched early in the breeding season between Findochty-Portnockie on 16 Mar and Tronach Head on 3 Apr but no Ravens were found (MJHC).

Inland was a single (possibly nest prospecting) on the Edinkillie viaduct 14 Apr (RHD) and another single Scurran of Morinish (Ben Rinnes) 27 Jul (AE). Upcountry, records were frequent around the Cabrach, Glen Avon, Lecht and Tomintoul areas. Largest counts from here were 16 Stronachavie (Tomintoul) 9 Jul and nine The Lecht 14 Mar.

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

No meaningful data were received this year.

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

First song Forres 5 Feb.

Nest boxes:

	Pairs	Mean clutch	Mean fledged brood (all pairs)	Mean fledged brood/successful pair	
Lossie Forest	13	7.4	?	?	(MJHC)
Loch Spynie	14	7.4	4.8	6.7	(RP,CAG)

A further increase in the number of chicks fledging from nest boxes at Loch Spynie. This was reflected in the results from ringing at the 'Constant Effort Site' at Loch Spynie, which also showed an increase (albeit slight) in the proportion of juveniles caught per adult from 1.1 in 2007 to 2.3 in 2008 (RP).

In the Elgin Oakwood, an average 6.4 young per pair were fledged from 14 occupied nestboxes (CAG) but in woodland around Forres, mean fledged brood size from 6 nests was only 3.0 young (ISS). Highest reported counts were 10 Sanquhar Pond 20 Apr and 10 Kinloss 6 Aug.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Very common resident breeder.

First song Clochan 10 Feb.

Nest boxes:

	Pairs	Mean clutch	Mean fledged brood (all pairs)	Mean fledged brood/ successful pair	
Lossie Forest	14	6.4	?	?	(MJHC)
Loch Spynie	7	6.9	5.0	6.4	(RP, CAG)

A stable year at Loch Spynie for chicks fledging from nest boxes, which is also reflected in results from ringing at the 'Constant Effort Site' where the proportion of juveniles caught per adult was 0.8 in 2007 and 0.6 in 2008 (RP). In woodland around Forres, mean fledged brood size from 5 nests was only 1.4 young, cold wet weather at the end of May being the likely cause of low chick survival (ISS).

Crested Tit *Lophophanes cristatus*

Fairly common resident breeder.

Breeding: Two nest boxes were occupied in Lossie Forest – both pairs laid clutches of 5 eggs, all of which hatched and all 10 young fledged successfully (MJHC). Two breeding attempts from natural nest sites: inland a fledged brood at Dava 8 Jun (MJHC) and, on the coastal strip, a family party with three young at Kinloss 13 Aug (AJL).

A juvenile trapped in the north-east fen during CES ringing on 3 Jul was the 5th for the Loch Spynie area (RP).

Elsewhere, records included 6 Wellhill (Culbin Forest) 7 Jun, 1 Shaw Hill 6 Dec, 1 Hill of Mulundy (Dallas) 21 Sep, 1 Loch Oire area 20 Nov and 1 Whiteash Hill Wood 5 May.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Very common resident breeder.

There appeared to be an influx of into the area in the latter half of 2008 when 30 together on feeders at Forres 14 Nov and 8 at feeders Longmorn 27 Sep. At Loch Spynie 14 trapped was above average during the late summer when usually only 2-3 caught each year (RP). At Clochan 62 were ringed in one garden between 7 Sep and the end of the year – the annual average over the period 1976-2007 was 6.5 with 20 being exceeded in only 3 years (max. 28 in 1999) (MJHC).

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Rare breeder.

Only two records received, from the reedbed below Spynie Palace: several, including a male, 5 May and two over the reeds 13 Jul (DAG).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Common breeder and migrant.

First song, in February, at Clochan 9th, Longmorn 9th, Nairn 12th and Ben Aigan 13th.

Highest count of the year was 65 Loanhead 17 Feb. The only other count of 20 or more was 20 Myreside 23 Nov. Small scale movements were noted in autumn, with small groups of birds (<10) flying south over Lossiemouth, Tarras and Miltonduff.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Arrival: Only one report in late March, of 2 Loch Spynie 31st. A more substantial arrival was noted in early April when c.50 Cloddach Quarry 1st and c.30 at Loch na Bo 3rd.

Arrival dates (first record of the year) since 1999 are as follows – March records have been noted in all but one of the last ten years:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
18 Mar	21 Mar	2 Apr	26 Mar	25 Mar	18 Mar	20 Mar	31 Mar	29 Mar	31 Mar

Largest colony count (apparently occupied burrows) was 775 Quarry Pool (River Spey, near Fochabers) 25 May (MJHC). Elsewhere, c.30 Clashach Quarry (Hopeman), 39 Findhorn dunes, 15 Cloddach Quarry, 12 Buckpool golf course, 5 Wester Gaulrig and 3 in the dunes near Covesea lighthouse.

Peak counts away from colonies were ‘many hundreds’ over the Spey at Garmouth 24 June and 150 Loch Spynie 10 May. Last report was 4 Ardclach 25 Aug.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Summer visitor and very common breeder.

Arrival: First was 1 Findhorn 5 Apr, a typical arrival date by recent standards.

In the following week birds were seen at Craigellachie, Aberlour and Kinloss, and there was a widespread arrival from 18 Apr onwards.

Arrival dates (first record of the year) since 1999 are as follows:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
2 Apr	8 Apr	19 Apr	24 Mar	1 Apr	3 Apr	4 Apr	2 Apr	13 Apr	5 Apr

Breeding: In the Lhanbryde barn, there were five simultaneously active nests on 30 Jun (down from nine in 2007). Mean clutch size of the first brood was 3.3 eggs and of the second brood was 3.4 eggs. Mean young produced was 1.6 from 8 attempts, the lowest on record at this site – poor weather and Sparrowhawk activity suspected as having impacts on production (RP). A pair nested in a boathouse beside a remote loch on Dava moor.

October reports came from Burnside of Enzie, Dufftown, Lossiemouth, Mosstodloch and Nairn. There were two November records – 2 Lossiemouth 2nd (DAG,J&HMacD) and 1 Tugnet 10th (ES).

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Arrival: An early single Elgin 14 Apr (CAG), followed by up to 10 in Garmouth 23-24 Apr. Widespread arrival in the last week of April. Arrival in the 2nd-3rd week of the month seems typical, and arrival dates since 1999 are as follows:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
4 May	21 Apr	26 Apr	22 Apr	16 Apr	17 Apr	18 Apr	21 Apr	17 Apr	14 Apr

Breeding: Counts of occupied nests included 8 Buckie High School 8 Jul (decline from 14 in 2007), 19 Delnabo Lodge 28 Jun and 25 Whitefolds 28 Jul.

Largest gatherings were in late summer/autumn, prior to migration, when c.350 Kinloss 2 Sep (still c.110 on 12 Sep) and 70 Clochan 14 Sep. Two birds lingered into Oct – 1 Mosstodloch 4th and 1 Altyre 24th, the latest since 2005.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Very common resident breeder.

A large flock of 39 Clochan 11 Aug, and 20 Tugnet 1 Dec.

Results from ringing at the 'Constant Effort Site' at Loch Spynie showed a slight decline in the proportion of juveniles caught per adult from 5.0 in 2007 to 3.4 in 2008 (RP).

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus collybita*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder. Scarce migrant and rare winter visitor.

No breeding records were received this year. Migrants were seen at Rosarie (Mulben) 7 May (WMM) and Clochan 13 & 20 Sep (when trapped) (MJHC).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder. Scarce migrant and rare winter visitor.

Winter: No winter records were received this year.

Arrival: One March singing bird was located along the River Spey at Quarry pool, Fochabers on 29th. A further four singers were located in early April: on 1st at Manachie and Muiry Wood (Forres) and on 3rd at The Lein (Kingston) and Loch na Bo (5). Subsequently, singing birds were found at Badentinan (4), Bauds of Cullen wood (4), Bin of Cullen (2), Cloddach quarry (5), Dallas Dhu, Darnaway Forest, Dufftown, Fochabers (4), Forres (2), Glenmullie (Tomintoul), Kinloss, The Lein (Kingston) (7), Loch Oire (2), Loch Spynie (5), Lossie Forest (3), Lower Bogrotten, Muir of Holmie (Clochan), Sanquhar Pond (2) and Stoneyford Pond (Rafford) (3).

Through the summer and early autumn a total of 18 was trapped at the north-east fen at Loch Spynie.

Autumn: Seen at Linkwood, Elgin 26 Sep, 2 Clochan 27 Sep and 2 Loch Spynie 28 Sep.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Summer visitor and very common breeder.

Arrival: First was 1 Kinloss 18 Apr, followed over the next few days by individuals on 19th (Cloddach quarry), 20th (Forres & Clochan (2)) and 21st (Muiry Wood). Along the old railway line between Dufftown-Craigellachie the largest count was 19 on 10 May.

Results from ringing at the 'Constant Effort Site' at Loch Spynie showed an increase in the proportion of juveniles caught per adult from 1.4 in 2007 to 3.5 in 2008 (RP).

Last report was one Kingston 8 Sep.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

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

January-March: 1 Aberlour 5 Feb and 1M, 1F Elgin Jan-Mar.

Spring/summer: Singing birds (singles unless stated) were found at Aberlour, Bishopmill (Elgin), Brodie Castle, Clochan, Cullen Hotel, Dallas Dhu, Drybridge, Dufftown, Dufftown-Craigellachie old railway line (8), Old Mills (Elgin) (3), Eight Acres Hotel (Elgin) (2), River Spey (Fochabers), Forres (2), Kinloss (2), Kingston, Lhanbryde, Linkwood (Elgin), Loch Oire (4), Loch Spynie (6), Lossie estuary, Ordiquish, River Findhorn (Forres) (13), Sanquhar Pond (Forres), Sheriffston, Spynie quarry and Stoneyford Pond (Rafford).

Autumn: 6 together at Scarffbanks farm feeding on berries at the car park 7 Sep.

Late November/December: 1M Elgin 1-3 Dec, 1M Aberlour 4 Dec, 1 Forres 15 Dec and 1 Rafford 15 Dec.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin**Summer visitor and scarce breeder.*

Singing birds were found at Aberlour, Cranloch, Dufftown-Craigellachie, Garmouth viaduct, Moycroft, River Findhorn and Sanquhar Pond.

One trapped and ringed at Loch Spynie 20 Aug. Also 2 at Scarffbanks farm feeding on berries at the car park with a group of 6 Blackcaps 7 Sep.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis**Summer visitor and common breeder.*

Arrival: First was 1 Sheriffston 29 Apr.

A nest containing a brood of five chicks was found at Hopeman 31 May (RP).

Last record of the year was one in scrub Findhorn Bay 30 Aug.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia**Summer visitor and scarce breeder.*

Recorded at four sites; a decrease from 2007. First heard Bardonside 27 Apr (JDL). Other singing birds were heard below Spynie Palace 5 May (DAG), Tantie (Ben Aigan) 15 Jun-3 Jul (2+) (GG) and Lochbuie 27 Jun (JDL).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus**Summer visitor and common breeder.*

Arrival: First song Kinloss 20 Apr - a week earlier than 2007. Subsequently, first song Barmuckity 29 Apr and, in early May, at The Lein (Kingston) 1st, Loch Spynie 3rd, Kingston reedbed 4th and Clochan 9th.

Ringling at the 'Constant Effort Site' in the north-east fen at Loch Spynie estimated the adult population at 14 individuals, up from four recorded in 2007. The proportion of juveniles caught per adult was 2.6, down from 6.3 recorded in 2007 (RP). In August, a migrant at Portknockie 21st, while two adults were still alarm calling at Loch Spynie 22nd.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus**Rare migrant.*

Two juveniles trapped and ringed in the Constant Effort Site area of the north-east fen at Loch Spynie 3 & 22 Aug (RP). These individuals were both trapped in exactly the same net location and may suggest local breeding rather than migrants. They represent the 3rd-4th records for Moray following migrants at Strathlene 4 Sep 1998 and Portknockie 21 Sep 2000.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus**Irruptive winter visitor, scarce in most years but occasionally common.*

Winter-spring: The only record was 2 Lossiemouth 4 Jan (per Birdguides).

Summer: A single bird was in a Clackmarras garden 3-7 Jul, feeding on redcurrants (Mrs A Souter, MJHC, J&HMacD). This is the first summer record in Moray & Nairn.

Autumn-winter: A widespread arrival on 1 Nov, when 50 Milltown airfield, 19 Lossiemouth, 12 Elgin, 11 Clochan, 10 Dallas and 3 Tugnet. This heralded an increase in numbers over the next two weeks. In Elgin 59 on 5th rising to 170 on 15th, in Forres 70 on 3rd, 100 on 5th and 12 on 7th, and in Nairn 80 on 2nd and 150 on 7th. Elsewhere, 31 Aberlour 9th increased to 58 on 11th, 18 Clunas reservoir 3rd, 53 Mosstodloch 7th, 23 South Darkland 8th and 30 Dunphail 17th. Later in the month, as birds moved on, counts were much smaller – after 18th only two flocks were reported; 9 Loch Oire 20th, 12 Elgin 23rd (also 1 Findhorn 24th). The only December reports were 70 Forres 20th and 12 there 29th-30th.



Waxwing, Clackmarras 4 July 2008 (Martin Cook)

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Very common resident breeder.

No significant records received in 2009.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Very common resident breeder.

The proportion of juveniles to adults trapped at Loch Spynie 'Constant Effort Site' was a high 7.7 (from 2.4 in 2007), suggesting a good breeding season (RP). In spring, 36 singing in a 5.5km section of the old railway line between Craigellachie and Dufftown 10 May (MJHC) (the same number as in 2007). Counts of 10 or more included 10 Nairn Bar 13 Jan, 13 Braidbog (Bin of Cullen) 13 Jul, 15 Culbin Bar 13 Dec, 10 Nairn Bar 13 Dec and 10 between Kinneddar and Muirton 30 Dec.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Very common resident breeder and winter visitor.

Nestboxes: Five out of 10 boxes at Clochan were occupied. All were successful and mean brood size at fledging was 5.0, compared to a 2000-07 average of 4.3.

Flocks of 500 or more (away from roosts) were 1000 Clochan 4 Jan and 500+ Findhorn Bay 16 Jul. Estimates of numbers using the reedbed roost at Loch Spynie ranged from 500 on 9 Oct to 1500 on 4 Nov – substantially fewer than in recent years.

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*

Rare vagrant.

1 Lossiemouth 25 Jun-3 Jul (Mr & Mrs George, CAG,RP,DAG et al.). This 1st summer bird frequently visited a town garden where it fed mainly on fat balls. This is the 9th record for Moray & Nairn. Previous

records were in 1851, 1987, 1988, 1999, 2000 (2) and 2002 (2). All were in the period June-August except one in October.



Rose-coloured Starling, Lossiemouth 27 June 2008 (Allan Lawrence)

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Common resident breeder.

A pair displaying Edinkillie 15 Feb. Counts included 7 on the River Livet at Drumin 25 Dec and 5 on the River Avon at Strath Avon the same day (J&HMacD).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder.

The only reports were one male on passage in fields at Moss of Barmuckity 19 Apr (ALi) and one in the Shelter Stone area (Cairngorms) 17 May (IFr).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Very common resident breeder, winter visitor and migrant.

Breeding: An interesting record of a male feeding two erythristic juveniles in Elgin (CAG).

The only winter count exceeding 10 birds was of 14 in a mixed thrush flock at Dallas Dhu pond 9 Nov.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Very common migrant and winter visitor.

Winter-spring: Flocks of 50 or more were c.120 Dallas Dhu pond 6 Jan, 51 Auchnahyle (Glen Avon) 12 Jan, 87 Netherton 12 Jan, c.80 Dallas Dhu pond 20 Jan, 110 Half Davoch 8 Feb, 70 Wellheads (Clochan) 1 Mar and c.180 Edinkillie 9 Mar. Last in spring were 20 Scotstonhill 13 Apr.

Arrival: First migrant arrivals (in October) were late in 2008; 1 near Loch Oire 15th, 10 Ben Rinnes 17th, 1 Elgin 19th and 1 Clochan 20th. Dates of first arrivals since 1999 have been:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
25 Sep	26 Oct	3 Oct	8 Oct	13 Oct	4 Oct	15 Sep	21 Oct	1 Oct	15 Oct

Autumn-winter: Counts of 50 or more were 250 Sherriffston 3 Nov, 100 Upper Dallachy 8 Nov, 400 Duffus 8 Nov, 70 Lochan Tutach (Dava) 16 Nov and 80 Wellheads (Clochan) 23 Dec.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Very common breeder and migrant.

First song in February at Clochan 9th and Nairn 13th. Highest counts of the year were only 4 birds - at Edinkillie, Kinloss and Midwood (Clochan).

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Very common migrant and winter visitor.

Winter-spring: Very small numbers in the first winter period, with only two counts above 40 birds - 86 Culbin Bar 13 Jan and 43 Dallas Dhu pond 20 Jan. No reports beyond mid February.

Autumn: First arrival was 1 over Elgin 7 Oct. More widespread arrival from mid October onwards. Dates of first arrivals since 1999 have been:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
30 Sep	11 Oct	29 Sep	8 Oct	9 Oct	4 Oct	25 Sep	10 Oct	5 Oct	7 Oct

Autumn-winter: Only three flocks exceeding 50: 140 Duffus and 70 Upper Dallachy 8 Nov, and 100 South Darkland 15 Nov.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Common resident breeder and migrant.

First song, in late January, at Edinkillie on 29th.

No large flock counts noted this year – best being only 7 Edinkillie 6 Jan, 6 Dallas Dhu pond 6 Jul, 8 Kinloss 24 Oct and 11 Lyne of Knockando 15 Nov.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Arrival: On 11 May, 3 Delnabo and 1 Old Mills, Elgin.

Other breeding season records from Archiestown, Birchfield (Glen Avon),

Burghead, Delnabo (pair carrying food 28 Jun), Dunphail, Elgin, Kinloss, Kynadrochit Lodge (Tomintoul), Nether Meft, Sluie, Stronachavie (near Tomintoul) and Tomintoul.

Early autumn migrants included singles at Clochan 13-19 Sep and Covesea lighthouse 13 Sep.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Very common resident breeder and migrant.

First full song Lein (Kingston) 12 Feb.

The proportion of juveniles to adults trapped at Loch Spynie 'Constant Effort Site' was 2.3 (from 1.4 in 2007) (RP). Twenty-one were singing in a 5.5km section of the old railway line between Craigellachie and Dufftown 10 May (MJHC).

In the second winter period, 6 along the River Findhorn at Forres 30 Nov and 9 Nairn Bar 13 Dec were the highest counts.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder. Very scarce migrant.

Breeding season: a pair Dulsie area 27 Apr (DAG), a male singing Drynachen 25 May (DAG) and 2 Wester Gaulrig (Glen Avon) 28 Jun (MJHC). A female/immature at Covesea lighthouse 13 Sep (MJHC) was the only coastal migrant.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Summer visitor and scarce breeder. Very scarce migrant.

No breeding reports – continuing the poor run of records received for this species. Two autumn migrants were at Covesea Lighthouse 13 Sep (MJHC).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus*

Scarce resident breeder and probable migrant.

Inland moorland breeding (pairs, territorial males or proven breeding) was recorded at Ben Rinnes, Berryburn, Dava, east of Scaut Hill (Glenfiddich), Johnstripe and Loch Allan (Dava). On the coastal plain breeding was reported at Ardivot, Buckpool, Findhorn dunes, along the shore between Kingston and Boar's Head Rock, Kinloss, Moss of Barmuckity and Portknockie.

Up country in autumn/winter were 1 Rothes windfarm 6 Jan, 4 Nether Meft 8 Nov and 2 Loch Kirkaldy 16 Nov.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Summer visitor, fairly common migrant and local breeder.

Arrival: First back, in April, were 1 Findhorn 2nd and 1 Kingston 6th. Subsequently only small numbers were reported at a scatter of sites. Unusual was a group of 10 probable Greenland race birds (*O.o.leucorhoa*) Clochan 24 Apr (MJHC). Also, 8 Lein (Kingston) 4 May (PGS).

Breeding: Family groups were at each of the three Scurrans on Ben Rinnes on 26 Jul and 25 Aug (AE). Birds also seen in likely breeding habitat at Auchmair (Cabrach), Birchfield (Glen Avon) and Cairn Lochan.

At the coast, juveniles in mid/late July at Findhorn Bay, Kinloss and Strathlene probably related to dispersing juveniles from elsewhere, and not locally-bred birds. Best autumn coastal passage count was only 4 Kingston 13 Sep. Last of the year, in September, were 1 Kingston 21st, 2 Tugnet 25th and 1 Kinloss 30th.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Very scarce migrant, occasional breeder.

A single bird was near Spynie hospital 24 May (HH).

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Very common resident breeder.

First song Clochan 10 Feb and Elgin 18 Feb. Highest count of the year was 5 Nairn Bar 13 Dec.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Very common resident breeder.

Flock counts of 25 or more were 70 Spey Bay 11 Aug, 69 Tomintoul 10 Feb, 60 Clochan 27 Jan, 50 Inchberry 4 Sep and 30 Crofts of Dipple 5 Sep.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Fairly common resident breeder.

Breeding season: At Longmorn, nest building commenced 19 Mar and the first brood hatched by 27 May. On 6 Jun 12 fledged young were at bird tables (14 on 8 Jun) and second broods were fledged by 8 Aug. In all, 16 broods were fledged from 10 nest boxes (J&HMacD). Elsewhere, breeding was confirmed at Bruntown (Portknockie), and birds were present in the breeding season at Bauds of Cullen, Clochan, Drybridge, Fochabers, Hillpark (near Clochan), Innesmill, Linkwood, Little Pitlurg (Drummuir), Loch Oire, Midwood (near Clochan), Spey Bay and Troves.

Best flock counts were 55 Miltonhill 12 Sep, 40 Wester Calcots 18 Sep, 20-30 Longmorn many dates and 10 Archiestown 21 Jan.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Summer visitor and common breeder. Scarce in winter.

Breeding: 2 pairs on the Lour Burn (Aberlour), 1 pair Brodie Castle Pond, and juveniles on the Mosset in Forres, at Rafford and on the Spey at Aberlour.

Winter: Records are becoming increasingly frequent. In the first winter period, birds were seen at Aberlour, Forres, Glenlivet and Portgordon. In the second winter period records were received from Aberlour, Burnside of Dipple, Caysbriggs, Cloddach, Forres, Longmorn, Millhill, Tugnet and Wester Coxtan. Highest count of the year was 4 on the Mosset Burn (Forres) 23 Jan. One visited a bird table in a garden at Tanzie on 15 Jun.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Very common breeder and migrant.

The only counts exceeding 20 birds were 48 Grant Park (Forres) 14 Sep and 32 Rothes sewage works 28 Mar.

Passage: Records of 'White Wagtails' *M.a.alba* in spring included 1 Spey Bay 20 Apr and 24 Apr, and 1 Lossie estuary 24 Apr, with 6 there on 26 Apr. In autumn, 6 Tugnet 24 Aug, 1 Lossie estuary 17 Sep and 2 Tugnet 20 Sep.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Summer visitor and common breeder.

Breeding: Singing males recorded at Archiestown, Birchfield (Glen Avon) (2), Darnaway Forest, Delnabo, Drynachan (2), Dulsie, Easter Gaulrig (3), Kynadrochit Lodge, Lossie Forest and Wester Gaulrig (2). Food carrying, suggesting successful breeding, noted at Delnabo and Lossie Forest.

In late summer, singles over Loch Spynie on 26 Jul and 9 Aug.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Very common breeder and migrant.

In winter-spring, 85 Kinloss 7 Jan (the highest count of the year), 17 Culbin Bar 2 Feb, 20 Tronach Head 3 Apr and 40+ Kinloss 23 Apr.

In late summer-winter, 28 Kinloss 7 Aug, 48 Kinloss 12 Sep and 20 Kingston 20 Sep.

Unusual winter records from up country were 1 Ben Rinnes 11 Feb and 8 Loch Kirkaldy 16 Nov.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Scarce breeder, fairly common in winter.

Breeding: 2 display fighting Covesea lighthouse 25 Apr, one carrying food for young Covesea cliffs 31 May and two carrying food Strathlene 14 Jul.

Winter counts between Portgordon-Strathlene were 30 on 9 Feb (of which 18 were in Portgordon harbour) and 23 on 19 Oct (MJHC). Maximum counts along the Portgordon-Strathlene rocky shore (c.7km) in the October-December period in recent years have been as follows:

1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
37	45	18	50	72	31	47	30	44	48	56	20	37	41	29	23

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Very common resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor.

First song Kingston 5 Feb. At Tanzie (Ben Aigan), a female was nest-building on 26 Apr and first young were seen on 21 May. Productivity at Loch Spynie Constant Effort Site was measured at 0.5 juveniles/adult (RP).

Few flocks were counted - 200 Dunphail 17 Dec being the largest although 800 finches at Archiestown on 9 Mar were 'mainly Chaffinches'.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Fairly common winter visitor and migrant.

A poor year. Small numbers regular at Archiestown during January-April when best days were 10 on 21 Jan, 6 on 4 Feb and 4 on 14 Apr. Elsewhere, 7 Dunphail 17 Dec, 1 Longmorn 13 Apr and 1 Lossiemouth 10 Apr.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Very common resident breeder.

First song Kingston 8 Feb. First fledged young Tanzie (Ben Aigan) 26 May.

Flock counts included 47 Tomintoul 10 Feb, 20 Culbin 31 Jul, 14 New Elgin 22 Mar, 12 Waterford (Forres) 22 May, 12 Forres 30 Nov and 11 Midwood (Clochan) 21 Mar.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Common resident breeder.

Flocks of 10 or more were 100+ Haughs (Keith) in the first quarter of the year, 100 Innes House 1 Sep, 80 Fernyfield 17 Sep, 80 Tugnet 11 Aug, 53 Elginshill 1 Jan, 50 Loch Oire 15 Oct, 45 Kinloss 24 Sep (17 there 17 Dec), 22 Clochan 2 Jan, 20 Muir of Miltonduff 17 Nov, 14 Findhorn Bay 29 Sep and 10 New Elgin 22 Mar.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Very common resident breeder and migrant.

Flocks of 20 or more were 160 Bin of Cullen 18 Feb, 150 Teindland 5 Jan, 110 Culbin Forest 13 Jan, 100 Coxtan 3 Jan, 86 Dallas Dhu 6 Jan, 72 Tomintoul 10 Feb, 60 Kinloss 12 Feb, 59 Hill of Maud 18 Feb, 50 Scabbed Hill wood (Clochan) 9 Feb, 36 Rafford 6 Jul, 32 Forres 1 Jan and 20 Relugas 10 Sep. Very scarce in woods in the Keith area in winter 2008-09, in contrast to winter 2007-08 when they were plentiful.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Very common resident breeder.

Flocks of 100 or more were 500 Longmorn 21 Mar, 420 South Darkland 23 Nov, 290 Tugnet 22 Aug (120 there 29 Mar), 200 Loch Oire 15 Oct (170 there 29 Jan) and 150 Elginshill 1 Jan.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Scarce resident breeder, a few on the coast in winter.

A notable feeding flock of 100 in a cultivated field at Tombreck (near Bridge of Brown) 14 Oct (JDL). Upcountry in mid winter was 1 Wester Gaulrig (Glen Avon) 12 Jan (MJHC). Small numbers in the usual coastal wintering area included 30 Nairn Bar 10 Feb (15 there 13 Dec) (DCJ) and 14 Findhorn Bay 17 Nov (AJL).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Common resident breeder and migrant.

Breeding season records from Bardonside, Bin of Cullen, Burnside, Delnabo, Johnstripe, Kynadrochit Lodge (Tomintoul), Lochbuie, Moniemouies and Stronachavie (Tomintoul).

Winter flocks of 10 or more were 20 Clackmarras 22 Oct, 20 Whitewreath (Fogwatt) 22 Oct and 14 Muiry Wood (Forres) 9 Jan.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Common resident and irruptive migrant breeder.

Scottish Crossbill *Loxia scotica*

Probable common resident breeder.

Counts of 10 or more crossbill sp. (most likely to have been Common Crossbills) were 70+ in one flock Sluie 26 Aug (25 there 2 Aug), 45 (including one flock of 22) Newton of Darnaway 24 Aug, 30+ Lochs of Bogmussach 19 Apr, 25 Sluie 2 Aug, 20 Fochabers 20 Apr and 12 Kinloss 23 Sep (10 there 4 Aug and 3 Dec). A flock of 7, probably Common, flew south high over open farmland at Clochan on 18 Jul. Scarce in woods in the Keith area in winter 2008-09.

Considered to have been Scottish Crossbills were 9 Culbin Bar 13 Dec, 8 Whiteash Wood 2 Mar (4 there 13 Jul), 7 Feakirk 20 Jan and possibly 6 (a family party) Tapp (near Lochs of Bogmussach) 19 Apr.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Rare migrant.

A 1st summer male sang in willow scrub behind Hopeman east beach on 30-31 May (PRh,RP,DAG,AJ,RHD,MJHC,AJL et al.). The only previous record is of an adult male dead at Burnside of Geddes (near Nairn) on 7 June 1996.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Common resident breeder.

Highest counts of the year were 13 in one flock on the moorland edge at Dulsie Wood 8 Nov and 10 along the River Findhorn near Forres 1 Jan.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Common winter visitor and rare breeder.

First coastal records in autumn were 1 Lein (Kingston) 5 Oct, 3 Lossiemouth east beach 17 Oct and 8 Nairn Bar 19 Oct.

Winter counts: Best monthly counts at regular sites on the coast were:

	Jan	Feb	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nairn/Culbin Bars (& E.Nairn)	164 (13 th)	61 (10 th)	8 (19 th)	nc	127 (13 th)
Lossiemouth east beach	31 (6 th)	nc	3 (17 th)	90+ (23 rd)	100+ (6 th)

A return to better numbers at these sites after a poor year in 2007.

Elsewhere, in the lowlands, 24 Burgie 9 Feb, 18 near Milltown airfield 8 Nov, 36 Tugnet 2 Dec, 1 Cloddach 17 Feb and, in Findhorn Bay, 30 on 30 Jan, 34 on 2 Mar, 21 on 23 Mar and 2 on 5 Apr. Upcountry, 140 Aldivalloch (Cabrach) 5 Jan, c50 Ben Rinnes 23 Dec (1 there 17 Oct, 4 on 2 Nov and 2 on 8 Dec), 35 Lochan Tutach (Dava) 16 Nov and 1 Cairn Lochan (Cairngorms plateau) 6 Dec.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Very common resident breeder.

Territorial in the breeding season were 5 males Newforres and Muiry Woods 13 Jun and 2 pairs Todholes (Rafford) 6 May. First fledged young Tanzie (Ben Aigan) 1 Jun.

Flock counts (10 or more) were 47 Greshop wood (Forres) 8 Nov, 43 Loch Flemington 26 Jan, 30 Lhanbryde 7 Feb, 25 Cunninghaugh (Spey Bay) 29 Nov, 16 Dallas Dhu 9 Nov, 12 Scarffbanks 30 Apr and 11 Netherton 26 Nov.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Common resident breeder.

Present in the breeding season at Archiestown, Badentinan, Drybridge, Binsness, Glenallachie, Kinloss, Kingston, Loch Oire, Loch Spynie, Lochbuie, Stoneyford Pond (Rafford) and Tomintoul.

Highest autumn/winter counts were 15 Cunninghaugh 29 Nov and 11 Culbin Bar 13 Dec.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Scarce resident breeder.

Singing birds were heard at Brandston (2), Cunninghaugh, Nether Dallachy (3) and Portgordon (2). In the Cunninghaugh study area, 10-12 territories were located – the best since survey work began there in 2003 (HM).

As usual in recent years, a flock frequented the Clochan area in both winter periods – highest counts being 27 on 2 Mar, 54 on 25 Mar and 22 on 27 Dec (MJHC). Maximum flock elsewhere was 20 Tugnet 4 Dec.

RINGING REPORT 2008

BOB PROCTOR

Numbers of birds ringed in Moray and Nairn during 2008:

	FG	Pull.	Total		FG	Pull.	Total
Oystercatcher		1	1	Sedge Warbler	98	3	101
Little Ringed Plover		3	3	Reed Warbler	2		2
Purple Sandpiper	26		26	Treecreeper	7	7	14
Common Gull		6	6	Wren	34		34
Stock Dove	1	5	6	Starling	2	25	27
Collared Dove		4	4	Blackbird	17	12	29
Barn Owl		4	4	Song Thrush	3		3
Tawny Owl		2	2	Spotted Flycatcher	1		1
Grt.Spot. Woodpecker	4		4	Robin	36		36
Jay	2		2	Dunnock	14		14
Goldcrest	19		19	House Sparrow	49		49
Blue Tit	123	70	193	Tree Sparrow	1		1
Great Tit	72	45	117	Chaffinch	26		26
Crested Tit	1	9	10	Greenfinch	14		14
Coal Tit	73		73	Goldfinch	5		5
Swallow	4	18	22	Siskin	48		48
Long-tailed Tit	63		63	Bullfinch	4	1	5
Wood Warbler	1		1	Reed Bunting	10		10
Chiffchaff	23		23				
Willow Warbler	120	5	125	TOTALS	913	225	1138
Blackcap	7		7				
Garden Warbler	1		1				
Whitethroat	2	5	7				

FG = Fully Grown Pull. = Chick

Recoveries in 2008

All ringing recoveries reported for 2008 are included in this section with the more interesting ones given in full. Information was supplied by M.J.H.Cook, D.Gibson, R.F.Hewitt, R.Proctor and from Highland Ringing Group bulletins. 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

WHOOPEE SWAN

A4048	Ad.	100894	Geldingavatn, ICELAND
(3J34)	VV	041108	Milltown

The wintering area for this individual has been in the Lough Foyle and Lough Beg area of Ireland. Elsewhere, since it was initially ringed in 1994, it has been seen for single days in Caithness (2001) and Portmahomack (2004).

Individuals ringed more recently were seen at Penick, Auldearn (67Z), Invererne, Forres (C5U, 43J, 45J, N55 and P94) and Mid Mains, Lossiemouth (V76, NZ3, 33P and 41Y).

67Z – Ringed Martin Mere 2004 and re-sighted Martin Mere, Loch Leven and Montrose.

C5U – Ringed Martin Mere 2006 and only sighted here, prior to Invererne, in October 2008.

43J – Ringed Fjallahofn, N-Thing, Iceland 2004. No other sightings until seen at Invererne in October 2008.

45J – Ringed Matbrunnvatn, N-Mul, Iceland August 2003, and seen nearby at Lonsfjordur in October 2003. Only seen twice since then: Rockcliffe, Cumbria in February 2005 and Invererne in October 2008.

N55 – Ringed Olvesvatn, Skagafjordur, Iceland and seen at Loch Tingwall, Shetland in early 2006. Seen twice in 2008: Rendall, Orkney in March and Invererne in late October.

P94 – Ringed Martin Mere January 2006 and seen there December 2006. Seen Invererne in late October 2008.

V76 – Ringed Caerlaverock April 2006 and seen there on several subsequent occasions. Seen Mid Mains, Lossiemouth in November 2008.

NZ3 – Ringed Caerlaverock March 2003 and seen there on several subsequent occasions. Sightings elsewhere included Lough Swilly (Co. Donegal), Hill of Fearn (Grampian), Loch Eye (Highland) and Mid Mains, Lossiemouth. These last three sightings may suggest a change in wintering area.

33P – Ringed 2004 at Sandvatn, S-Thing, Iceland and usually seen around Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. The sighting at Mid Mains, Lossiemouth is the first away from its main wintering area.

41Y – Ringed 2003 at Svartarvatn, S-Thing, Iceland. No other sightings of this individual had been recorded until Invererne in November 2008.

GREYLAG GOOSE

51824992	6m	140496	Loch Eye	
	+ shot	150208	Findhorn Bay	28 km

Two neck-collared individuals illustrate the movements undertaken by Greylag Geese. Occasional sightings can be well away from our local area (NZ), while others remain almost entirely within a small wintering area (7F):

NZ – ringed at Loch Eye in October 1995 and seen in Co. Donegal, Eire in November 1995 and January to April 1996, and then Iceland in July 1997. The majority of sightings since 1998 have been around the Moray and Dornoch Firths.

7F – ringed at Loch Eye in October 1996 with the vast majority of sightings around the Moray Firth, and only two sightings away from the area: Dornoch (1999 & 2002) and Alford (2002).

BRENT GOOSE (LIGHT-BELLIED)

4F	5m	140208	Killala Bay, Co. Mayo, EIRE	
	VV	280908	Lossie estuary	

JS	6m	100108	Dundrum Bay, Co. Down, EIRE	
	VV	290908	Lossie estuary	

Both of these birds have not been seen away from their wintering areas prior to these sightings. JS was back at Stangford Lough on 11 Oct.

WIGEON

FP26910	3m	231205	Kinloch, Collessie, Fife	
	+ shot	151106	Pittendreich, Elgin	149 km

CORMORANT

Eleven colour-ringed Cormorants from colonies in north-east Scotland were seen in Moray. Chicks from 2008 were mainly seen at Spey Bay and Lossiemouth. The furthest movements were from chicks ringed at Inverbervie.

SHAG

Nine chicks from the Isle of May were seen at Lossiemouth. A further nine from the Isle of May were recorded at Portknockie.

BUZZARD

GF73324	1	130601	near Inver	
	X	170908	near Nairn	30 km

GN10429	1f	110604	Lower Arbol, near Inver	
	X	140708	Duffus	34 km

OYSTERCATCHER

FA68076	7	290195	near Findhorn Bay	
	X	060607	Sandwick, Orkney	153 km

FA68419	3	300995	Findhorn Bay	
	X	290608	Effirth, Bixter, Shetland	317 km

BAR-TAILED GODWIT

DB48975	5	110301	Burghead	
	X shot	100508	Arkhangelsk, RUSSIA	2325 km

BLACK-HEADED GULL

6170462	1	160696	Froylandsvatnet, Rogaland, NORWAY	
	V	281008	Cooper Park, Elgin	541 km

ET78969	1	050699	near Durnain Bridge	
		121008	Duffus	45 km

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

FA83984 (Blue 550) was re-sighted at the Lossie estuary (15 May 2008) having spent the winter (6 Nov 2007 to 26 Jan 2008) around landfill sites in Gloucestershire. Interestingly it was resighted in Elgin on 20 Jul, suggesting that it was probably breeding nearby.

HERRING GULL

ES006630	1	090798	Kandalashskiy Nature Reserve, Murmansk, RUSSIA	
(K811)	VV	230304	Lossie estuary	2080 km
	VV	100207	Loch Spynie	2083 km
	VV	311208	Loch Spynie	2083 km

NS002829	1	090706	Kandalashskiy Nature Reserve, Murmansk, RUSSIA	
(KX02)	VV	210107	Cooper Park, Elgin	
	VV	241207	Loch Spynie	
	VV	160208	Loch Spynie	
	VV	281208	Loch Spynie	2107 km

YZ6545	7	191299	Longman, Inverness	
	VV	230308	Cooper Park, Elgin	56 km

Note that both K811 and KX02 returned to winter in Moray. There has been one other Herring Gull movement from Murmansk: to Findhorn on 24 April 1948.

A chick from Golspie was seen in Nairn (45 km) while chicks from Dunbeath were seen in Elgin (66 km) and found dead at Lossiemouth (58 km).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

A total of six colour-ringed individuals from various Cathness colonies were seen in Moray (mainly at Lossie estuary).

Only one movement over 100 km was reported:

MA08781	1	150706	Eilean Hoan, Durness	
(H8Y)	VV	010407	Fraserburgh	186 km
	VV	090908	Lossie estuary	136 km

One interesting record concerned an individual over 14 years old:

HT50849	1	280694	Nigg Ferry	
	VV	281208	Burghead	31 km

GUILLEMOT

R21663	1	170601	North Sutor	
	X	060508	Portgordon	57 km

R81623	6	170601	North Sutor	
	X	060508	Lossiemouth	44 km

X99856	1	200699	North Sutor	
	X	080708	near Nairn	14 km

STOCK DOVE

EL01942	1	290408	Loch Spynie	
	X	250708	Woodside Park, Forres	21 km

This individual hit overhead electricity wires. Stock Doves are a relatively sedentary species and the average distance travelled is only 6 km: at almost four times the average this individual was quiet adventurous!

JACKDAW

ES24774	6	210697	Bishopmill, Elgin	
	XF	010808	Bishopmill, Elgin	Local

At just over 11 years and 2 months, this individual was short of the British longevity record by only 4 years.

GREAT TIT

T292339	3J	170806	Loch Spynie CES	
	XF	140408	Loch Spynie	Local

SEDGE WARBLER

V142877	3	240708	Loch Spynie CES	
	V	070808	Helton Tarn, Witherslack, Cumbria	381 km

WAXWING

NW24568	3f	311004	Pilmuir, Forres	
	X	210305	Dublin, EIRE	503 km

An onward movement from the big invasion in 2004.

STARLING

CL31232	5f	030301	Wick	
	X	150508	Nairn	107 km

CT 13972	1	210508	Clochan, Buckie	
	V	230608	Carse of Ardersier, Nairn	60 km

BLACKBIRD

CT69020	6m	130306	Elgin Cemetery, Elgin	
	XF	220808	Elgin Cemetery, Elgin	Local

CHAFFINCH

V142660	6f	010208	Elgin Cemetery, Elgin	
	XF	241208	Elgin	0 km
	5f	020203	Clochan, Buckie	
	X	060508	Cairnie, Huntly	16 km

BRAMBLING

V027715	5f	280106	Corgarff	
	V	240308	Inchberry, Fochabers	49 km

GREENFINCH

TE22060	6m	130206	Elgin Cemetery, Elgin	
	XF	310108	Elgin	3 km

SISKIN

R860411	5f	120404	Clochan, Buckie	
	V	110108	Harpsdale, Halkirk	99 km
T850977	3J	110507	Clochan, Buckie	
	V	160208	Warsop, Nottinghamshire	504 km

LINNET

V147243	5m	230107	Blackpark, near Nairn	
	V	100208	Balaldie, Loch Eye	25 km
V147296	4m	230107	Blackpark, near Nairn	
	V	020208	near Ardersier	12 km
V147333	5f	230107	Blackpark, near Nairn	
	V	170108	Fearn Drome, Balintore	22 km
V147494	5f	050208	Blackpark, near Nairn	
	V	111108	Fearn Drome, Balintore	22 km
V148013	5f	090207	Blackpark, near Nairn	
	V	020208	near Ardersier	12 km

A series of localised movements from an ongoing study, undertaken by Highland Ringing Group, on farmland finches.

GRID REFERENCES OF LOCALITIES MENTIONED IN THE SPECIES ACCOUNTS
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Aldivalloch	NJ3626	Boar's Head Rock	NJ2867
Aldunie	NJ3626	Boat o' Brig	NJ3251
Altyre Woods	NJ0253	Boath	NH9155
Alves	NJ1362	Bogmoor	NJ3562
Archiestown	NJ2344	Boldow	NJ1740
Ardelach	NH9545	Bow Fiddle Rock	NJ4968
Ardgye	NJ1563	Braes of Enzie	NJ3959
Ardivot	NJ2267	Braidbog	NJ4963
Arthur's Bridge	NJ2567	Brandston	NJ2865
Auchindoun Castle	NJ3437	Bridge of Avon	NJ1835
Auchlochan	NJ0241	Bridge of Brown	NJ1220
Auchmair	NJ3828	Bridgend	NJ3731
Auchnarrow	NJ2123	Broadley	NJ3961
Auchroisk	NJ3351	Brodie Castle	NH9757
Auchtertyre	NJ1858	Brodieshill	NJ1059
Auldearn	NH9155	Broom of Moy	NJ0159
Badcheer	NJ3532	Broombank	NH9255
Badentinan	NJ2957	Brown Muir	NJ2555
Ballindalloch Castle	NJ1736	Buckie	NJ4165
Ballnellan Burn	NJ1326	Buckpool	NJ4165
Ballochford	NJ3633	Burghead	NJ1169
Balvalley Moss	NJ3725	Burghead Bay	NJ0867
Balvenie	NJ3242	Burgie Wood	NJ0958
Banchor	NH9140	Burnside of Dipple	NJ3256
Bank of Corinacy	NJ3829	Burnside of Enzie	NJ3960
Bardonside	NJ2154	Burnside of Geddes	NH8851
Bauds of Cullen	NJ4766	Byres	NJ3562
Beatshach	NJ2737	Cabrach	NJ3827
Beinn a' Chaorainn	NJ0401	Cairn Ballantruan	NJ1524
Beinn a' Chruinnich	NJ2313	Cairn Gorm	NJ0003
Beinn Mheadhoin	NJ0201	Cairn Lochan	NH9802
Bellie cemetery	NJ3561	Cairn Uish	NJ1750
Ben Aigan	NJ3048	Calcots	NJ2563
Ben Macdui	NN9999	Cantsford	NJ0754
Ben Main	NJ3535	Cardhu	NJ1843
Ben Rinnes	NJ2435	Cardnach Fm	NJ1942
Berryburn	NJ0545	Carn Allt a' Chlaiginn	NJ3230
Bin of Cullen	NJ4764	Carn Daimh	NJ1824
Binn Hill	NJ3065	Carn Liath	NJ2515
Binns	NJ3164	Carron	NJ2241
Binness	NJ0362	Catherinebraes	NJ2544
Birchfield	NJ1614	Caysbriggs	NJ2466
Bishopmill	NJ2163	Charlestown of Aberlour	NJ2642
Blackhillock	NJ2044	Clackmarras	NJ2458
Blacksboat	NJ1838	Clashach Cove	NJ1570
Blackwater Lodge	NJ3328	Clochan	NJ4060

Clockeasy	NJ2962	Dufftown	NJ3239
Cloddach	NJ1958	Duffus	NJ1668
Cloddymoss	NH9860	Duffus Castle	NJ1867
Clovenside	NJ0459	Dulsie	NH9341
Cluny Hill	NJ0458	Dulsie Bridge	NH9341
Cnoc Lochy	NJ1621	Dunearn	NH9341
Coire Raibeirt	NJ0003	Dunphail Ho	NJ0047
Coldburn	NJ1449	Dykeside	NJ1159
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	Feakirk	NJ0344
Craigmill Lodge	NJ1052	Fèith Buidhe	NJ0909
Craigroy	NJ1250	Ferniefield	NJ3064
Cran Loch	NH9459	Findhorn Bay	NJ0462
Croftglass	NJ2530	Findochty	NJ4668
Crofts of Dipple	NJ3259	Findrassie	NJ1965
Cromdale Hills	NJ1226	Fochabers	NJ3458
Crooked Wood	NJ2762	Fogwatt	NJ2357
Culbin Bar	NH9662	Foresterseat	NJ2562
Culbin Forest	NH9862	Forres	NJ0358
Cullen	NJ5167	Garbh Uisge Mòr	NH9900
Cummingston	NJ1368	Garlinebeg	NJ1741
Cunninghaugh	NJ3564	Garmouth	NJ3364
Dallas	NJ1252	Garmouth viaduct	NJ3464
Dallas Dhu	NJ0356	Gateside	NJ3647
Dallas Lodge	NJ1052	Gervally	NH9948
Dallasbraughty	NJ0346	Gilston	NJ2066
Darnaway Castle	NH9955	Glack Harnes	NJ2836
Dava	NJ0038	Glacks of Balloch	NJ3534
Delmore	NJ2442	Glass	NJ4239
Delnabo	NJ1617	Glen Avon	NJ1006
Delnies	NH8356	Glen Gheallaidh	NJ1338
Deskford	NJ5061	Glen Latterach	NJ1951
Drainie	NJ2168	Glen Lossie	NJ1347
Drumdivan	NH8454	Glen Rinnes	NJ2834
Drumfurrich	NJ2944	Glenallachie	NJ2741
Drumin	NJ1830	Glenfarclas Distillery	NJ2138
Drummuir	NJ3844	Glenferness	NH9443
Drybridge	NJ4362	Glenlatterach Reservoir	NJ1952
Drynachan	NH8639	Glenmullie	NJ1916

Gollachy Burn	NJ4064	Loch Allan	NH9939
Gordonsward	NJ2564	Loch Belivat	NH9547
Gownie	NJ2842	Loch Flemington	NH8152
Half Davoch	NJ0451	Loch Kirkaldy	NH9641
Hardmuir	NH9556	Loch Loy	NH9358
Heldon Wood	NJ1257	Loch of Blairs	NJ0255
Hill of Mackalea	NJ3638	Loch Oire	NJ2860
Hill of Maud	NJ4662	Loch Park	NJ3543
Hill of Mulundy	NJ1053	Loch Spynie	NJ2366
Hillhead	NJ2058	Lochan Tùtach	NH9840
Hillpark	NJ4360	Lochbuie	NJ2153
Hills of Cromdale	NJ1226	Lochindorb	NH9736
Hopeman	NJ1469	Lochs of Bogmussach	NJ1347
Howford Bridge	NH8753	Lochyhill	NJ0559
Humbrack	NJ2556	Logie	NJ0150
Hunt Hill	NJ2346	Logieburn	NJ2656
Inchberry	NJ3155	Longmorn	NJ2358
Inchnacape	NJ2020	Lossie estuary	NJ2469
Innes House	NJ2764	Lossiemouth	NJ2370
Innesmill	NJ2863	Lower Auchenreath	NJ3763
Inveravon	NJ1837	Lower Blairnain	NJ2738
Invererne	NJ0360	Lower Bogrotten	NJ4861
Inverharroch Fm	NJ3831	Lower Hempriggs	NJ1064
Johnstripe	NJ0447	Lyne of Knockando	NJ1745
Keith	NJ4250	Lynemore	NJ1438
Kellas	NJ1754	Macbeth's Hillock	NH9656
Kerrow	NH9941	Machattie's Cairn	NJ3547
Kilravock	NH8149	Mains of Kirdells	NJ1739
Kinermory	NJ2541	Mains of Moyness	NH9553
Kingsteps	NH9057	Manachie Fm	NJ0356
Kingston	NJ3365	Manbeen	NJ1959
Kinloss	NJ0661	Marypark	NJ1938
Kinneddar	NJ2269	Maviston	NH9458
Kirdellbeg	NJ1741	Meikle Balloch Hill	NJ3534
Kirkhill	NJ2462	Meikle Coire Riabhach	NJ2513
Knock of Braemoray	NJ0141	Mid Mains	NJ1966
Knock of Gownie	NJ2942	Midwood	NJ4261
Kylnadrochit Lodge	NJ1419	Mill of Grange	NJ0460
Ladder Hills	NJ2719	Millhill	NJ3158
Ladycroft	NJ2444	Milltown	NJ2758
Laggan	NJ2026	Milltown of Laggan	NJ2834
Lecht Road	NJ2413	Miltonduff	NJ1860
Leids Hill	NJ4126	Miltonhill	NJ0963
Lein	NJ3365	Monadh an t-Sluich Leith	NJ2617
Lethen	NH9351	Monahoudie Moss	NJ2243
Lethenhill	NJ1058	Monaughty	NJ1260
Lhanbryde	NJ2761	Moniemouies	NJ2756
Little Aitnoch	NH9640	Montgrew	NJ4551
Little Pitlurg	NJ4245	Moor of Tore	NJ1054

Moss of Barmuckity	NJ2461	Rinour	NJ1740
Moss of Birnie	NJ2051	Rosarie	NJ3849
Mosstodloch	NJ3360	Roseisle Forest	NJ1166
Moycroft	NJ2362	Salterhill	NJ2067
Muir of Holmie	NJ4161	Sanquhar Loch	NJ0458
Muir of Miltonduff	NJ1859	Scabbed Hill	NJ4160
Muir of the Clans	NH8352	Scarffbanks	NJ2366
Muirhead	NJ0863	Scaut Hill	NJ3331
Muirton	NJ2268	Scotstonhill	NJ2662
Muiry Wood	NJ0558	Shaw Hill	NH9748
Mulben	NJ3550	Sheanspark	NJ3645
Muldearie Mains	NJ3950	Shearleat	NH8641
Mundole	NJ0156	Shelter Stone	NJ0001
Myreside	NJ2164	Sherriffmill	NJ2062
Nairn	NH8856	Sheriffston	NJ2561
Nairn Bar	NH9260	Sluie	NJ0052
Nether Bellandy	NJ2833	South Darkland	NJ2661
Nether Birnie	NJ2059	Spey Bay	NJ3564
Nether Dallachy	NJ3663	Speymouth	NJ3465
Nether Meft	NJ2764	Spynie Canal	NJ2366
Netherbyre	NJ1557	Spynie Palace	NJ2365
Netherton	NJ0361	St. John's Meads	NJ0155
Newbold Wood	NJ0558	Stoneyford pond	NJ0455
Newforres Wood	NJ0657	Strath Avon	NJ1425
Newton nursery	NJ1663	Strathlene	NJ4467
Newton of Darnaway	NH9853	Stronachavie	NJ1318
Newton of Innes	NJ2866	Strondow	NJ1644
North Darkland	NJ2662	Strypes	NJ2758
Ordiquish	NJ3357	Succoth	NJ2935
Orton	NJ3153	Surradale	NJ1665
Overton	NJ2745	Tanzie	NJ3146
Paddockhaugh	NJ2058	Tapp	NJ1447
Parks of Innes	NJ2763	Tarras	NJ0659
Paul's Hill	NJ1140	Teindland	NJ2655
Penick	NH9356	Tervieside	NJ2330
Philaxdale	NJ1667	Tips of Corsemaul	NJ3939
Pitairlie	NJ2465	Todholes	NJ1054
Pitgaveny Ho	NJ2465	Tomachar	NJ2432
Pittendreich	NJ1961	Tombreck	NJ1218
Pluscarden	NJ1456	Tomcork	NJ1349
Portgordon	NJ3964	Tomintoul	NJ1618
Portknockie	NJ4868	Tomnavoulin	NJ2126
Quarrywood	NJ1864	Tormore Distillery	NJ1534
Rafford	NJ0656	Torrieston	NJ1658
Recletch	NJ2834	Tronach Head	NJ4768
Redhill	NJ1661	Troves	NJ2459
Refouble	NH9540	Tugnet	NJ3465
Relugas	NH9948	Tynet	NJ3861
Rhinturk	NJ3632	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