



Forth Seabird Group

Forth Islands Bird Report 2015

Compiled by Bill Bruce

February 2016

SEABIRD SPECIES SUMMARIES

Notes:

- AOS / AOB / AON / AOT = *apparently occupied sites / burrows / nests / territories.*

FULMAR

This is the third consecutive year where we see an increase in the all-islands total AOS. However Craigleith, Inchcolm and Inchgarvie are the only islands showing an increase.

On Carr Craig last year a bird was seen probable AOS and this year it was confirmed that this pair are breeding.

CORMORANT

Between the mid-1990s and 2013 numbers dropped by approx. 50% so it is encouraging to see that there has been an increase (c+19%) again this year.

The count on Lamb is always tricky as many nests can be hidden in the tree mallow. In June 35 nests could be seen from the boat. However 69 nests were counted after landing on the island in September.

SHAG

The winter of 2012/13 saw breeding numbers crash by approx. 44%. This has been a better year with the total count up approx. 30% on last year and most islands are showing increased numbers of AON.

GANNET

No count this year

EIDER

Not counted on all islands

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

The steady increase (+12%) in the total number of AOT has continued with Craigleith showing the biggest individual increase (+16 AOT or +52%).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

On the islands where this species was counted, the number of AOT is down on last year. A count was carried out on Inchcolm this year and this showed numbers well down (c-30%) on the last count of 2,600 in 2009.

HERRING GULL

Where this species was counted, some islands show an increase while other show a decrease. Overall on these islands total numbers were down (c-8%) compared to last year. On Inchcolm numbers are down (-23%) compared to the last count of 650 in 2009.

KITTIWAKE

2013 saw the lowest count ever for this species (2832 AON) so another good year has seen numbers almost double since then, and are now similar to the average for the years 2001-2012.

COMMON & ARCTIC TERN

Common tern numbers are almost identical to last year's count with only one extra AON on each island. Arctic terns have done better with an increase of 21%.

ROSEATE TERN

There was a report of a possible mixed roseate/common tern pair nesting.

SANDWICH TERN

There are no reports of any breeding this year.

RAZORBILL

Compared to last year total numbers are up again (+4%) making it the 5th year out of the last six years where numbers of AOS increased. Individually,

May Isle, Bass Rock and Inchcolm are the only islands which actually had increased numbers.

GUILLEMOT

This is a tricky species to count but it has been another good year with the total number up (approx. +26%) compared to last year and this increase was seen on most islands. Numbers are now similar to the counts carried out between 1995 and 2005.

PUFFIN

Lamb is the only island where a burrow count was carried out this year and this was performed after the breeding season. Numbers of AOB were higher than expected and approx. four times the 150 estimated in the last count in 1995.

**A full report has been compiled
and although it is initially being
withheld it will be published
here in due course.**