



Forth Seabird Group

Forth Islands Bird Report 2016

Compiled by Bill Bruce

February 2017

SEABIRD SPECIES SUMMARIES

Notes:

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

FULMAR

For the previous three years there have been slight increases in numbers of AOS. This year some islands are showing increased numbers however the total for all islands has fallen (-4%) slightly compared to last year. This year's count is only a few sites different to the average for the previous ten years.

CORMORANT

This year's total is only 3 AON more than last year though the islands show some variation ie Inchkeith is up by 22 AON (+21%) while Lamb is down by 27 AON (-39%). Overall numbers are up 17% on the average for the previous five years.

SHAG

Numbers are down on most of the islands (-67 AON, -6%) though still well above the low figures following the storms in the winter storms 2012-13.

GANNET

No count this year. It is interesting to note that the first AON has been recorded at St Abbs Head.

EIDER

Not counted on all islands

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

This species continues its dramatic increases. In 1996 there were 24 AOT recorded for all islands. By 2006 there were 52 AOT and by this year 164 AOT.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

On the islands where these were counted this year and last year, most islands are showing increased numbers however on Inchcolm numbers have halved this year.

HERRING GULL

On most islands, including Inchcolm, numbers have increased with the total AOT being up 22% on the average for the previous five years.

KITTIWAKE

Most islands are showing a decrease in AON since last year, though Inchkeith is showing an increase (+83 AON, +32%). Overall numbers are down (-657 AON, -13%), however this year's count is exactly on the average for the previous ten years.

COMMON & ARCTIC TERN

Numbers of both species have increased again this year, common tern by +42 AON (+29%) and arctic terns by +43 AON (+9%).

ROSEATE TERN

There were two reports of mixed roseate/common tern pairs nesting.

SANDWICH TERN

This species has not been recorded as breeding on the islands for some years: May Isle had 151 AON in 2004, then 3 AON in 2005 followed by a single AON in 2008. It is therefore good to see that 21 AON were recorded there this year.

RAZORBILL

The picture for each island varies but overall numbers are up this year by 311 AOS (+8%). This continues the upward trend since 2009.

GUILLEMOT

May Isle numbers are showing an increase (+1440 IND, +7%) while the other islands show decreases. Overall numbers are down since last year (-299

IND, -1%). This is still well up (+29%) on the average for the previous ten years.

PUFFIN

Burrow counts were carried out on Craigleith and Fidra this year. Compared to the previous counts in 2014, Craigleith showed a decrease (-25%) while Fidra showed an increase (+2%). After discussions with the experts on May Isle it is felt that the Craigleith count was carried out before all of the puffins had returned to the island.

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