



Forth Seabird Group

Forth Islands Bird Report 2017

Compiled by Bill Bruce

March 2018

SEABIRD SPECIES SUMMARIES

Notes:

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

FULMAR

After a drop of 4% last year, this species has had a better year with breeding numbers up by 14% in total with all islands showing increases. This brings numbers up to where they were in the early 2000's.

CORMORANT

Cormorants have had a good year, especially on Craighleith where 63 AON were counted which is an increase of approx. 50% on last year. The total for all islands is up 6% on last year and is the highest count since 2007.

SHAG

Overall numbers are up this year by 12% continuing the generally upward trend of the last few years. However, in the buildings on Inchmickery, many of the usual nests on the ground were unoccupied leaving only the few that are raised up being used. RSPB are currently trying to determine whether this is being caused by rats or human disturbance.

GANNET

Bass Rock gannets were not counted this year. St Abb's Head NNR reported that a pair laid and hatched an egg though the chick didn't survive.

EIDER

Not counted on all islands.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

There was no gull count on May Isle this year. Craighleith has the next highest number of breeding GBB gulls and here the number of AOT was down by a third. Of the other islands, some show increases while others show decreases.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

On the islands where gulls were counted, Fidra showed a decrease (-17%, -35 AOT) while there were increases on Inchmickery (+26%, +46 AON) and Inchgarvie (+22%, +5 AON).

HERRING GULL

Numbers decreased on Fidra (-17%, -190 AOT), Carr Craig (-34%, -16 AON) and Inchmickery (-17%, -81 AON) while there were increases on Haystack (+22%, +4 AON) and Inchgarvie (+18%, +50 AON)

KITTIWAKE

Generally this species has had a good year with an increase of 14% (+613 AON) compared to last year. The biggest increases were on May Isle (+20%, +595 AON) and Fidra (+47%, +121 AON).

COMMON & ARCTIC TERN

On May Isle both of these species did well with Common Tern up 58% (+11 AON) and Arctic Tern up 58% (+304 AON).

ROSEATE TERN

There were reports of single birds in the area.

SANDWICH TERN

Once again Sandwich Tern were breeding on May Isle though only 4 AON this year compared to 21 AON last year.

RAZORBILL

This is the eighth year that this species has shown an increase in numbers (+9%, +329 AOS), and is the highest total since 1995.

GUILLEMOT

Although the counts on some islands have shown increases, others have shown decreases. However this is the third year in a row that the total number of birds on the breeding ledges has remained steady.

PUFFIN

There were no puffin burrow counts this year however the May Isle are reporting that numbers appear to be stable.

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