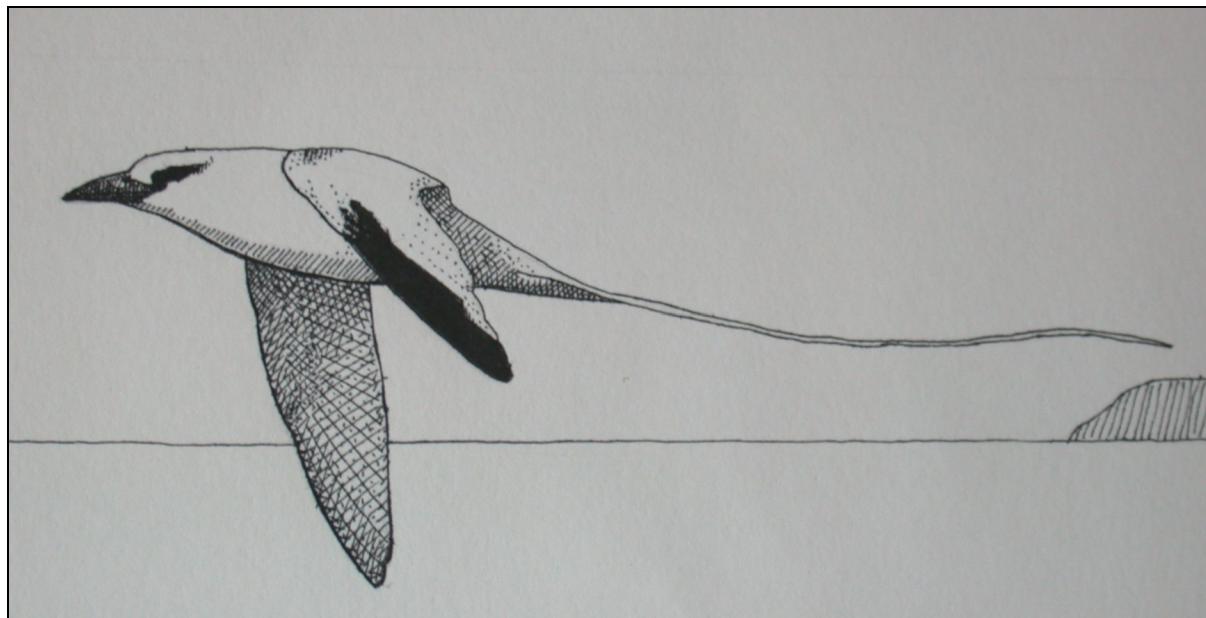


GUERNSEY BIRD REPORT

2001



Red-billed Tropicbird and Alderney – Jaonneuse Point – 16th September 2001 (M P Lawlor)

GUERNSEY BIRD REPORT

2001

EDITOR - MARK LAWLOR

*Based upon information supplied by the members of the Ornithological Section
of La Societe Guernesiaise.*

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Editorial

This is the second year that I have written a full systematic bird report for Guernsey. There has always been an excellent summary of the ornithological year published in the yearly Transactions of La Societe Guernesiaise, including an official report of the accepted rarities and a detailed ringing report. This will continue to be the case, and this bird report is intended to complement the Transactions, and make it easier for birders throughout the world to find the information they require. The bird report will be published on the internet, on the Societe Guernesiaise website [www.societe.org.gg] and on the Guernsey Bird News website [www.geocities.com/mplawlor/Guernseybirdnews], and paper copies will also be kept.

Many thanks go to the birders who have taken the time to send in their records. Having a detailed database, as well as a monthly 'Bird News' newsletter, from which to glean the information, made the task of compiling this report much easier, so thanks to the team involved – Barry Wells, Julian Medland, Rich Austin, Mike Bairds and Steve Brooks. Also thanks to Wayne Turner for writing a superb report in the 2001 Societe Transactions.

The structure of the report tries to follow the general accepted format. The systematic list is arranged in Voous order and follows the BOU, although Yellow-legged Gull is treated separately. The English names used for species are the commonly used names on the island. The scientific names are also given to avoid confusion.

I have made every effort to acknowledge the finders of the birds listed but have been unable to do so for some of the records as they are listed in the bird news and database as "SEV" indicating they have been reported by several observers

Please contact me if you want to offer suggestions for improvements to the report.

Records for 2002 and beyond should be submitted to myself, the recorder, at the address below.

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To make the report more accurate and detailed, more records are required of the commoner species. Information such as large flock sizes, visible migration, unusual places, plumage or behaviour would be very welcomed. Also, more records of escaped birds would be welcomed. At the end of the report, there is a list of rare species requiring a full description for acceptance.

Mark Lawlor

SYSTEMATIC LIST

2001 was especially memorable as a top year for seawatching, with many unusual species recorded amongst good passages of commoner species. Away from the sea, birds were less easy to come by, and there were very few rare birds that stayed long enough for birdwatchers to go see. This resulted in a total of **189** species recorded during the year, 13 species down on last year. The island bird list grew to **306** species with the addition of **Red-billed Tropicbird** and **Green-winged Teal**. The former was especially exciting as it was the first ever seen in Europe from land. The latter's arrival was good timing as this species had only just been split from normal Teal. Other highlights were the 3rd Red-footed Falcon for Guernsey, an unidentified eagle sp., a record 4 Rose-coloured Starlings, and a flock of genuine wild geese. Usual species which were not recorded included Red-throated Diver, Garganey, Little Ringed Plover, Hoopoe, Tawny Pipit, Aquatic Warbler and Lapland Bunting.

The abundance categories for each species in the systematic list give some indication of how likely you are to see each species if you visit the correct habitat at the correct time of year. Apart from the first category, they give no indication of the number of individuals to be seen, as some species never occur in large flocks even though they might be 'common'.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Very common | many should be seen each visit |
| Common | should be seen each visit |
| Quite common | should be seen most visits |
| Uncommon | will sometimes be seen, often depending on weather conditions |
| Scarce | maximum of a handful of records per year on the island |
| Rare | not usually seen every year on the island |
| Very rare | usually only seen once every few years |
| Vagrant | very few records for the island |

Species accounts in **bold type** indicate those records which have been accepted by the island's Rarities Committee, and which (in most cases) required a full written report to be submitted.

Black-throated Diver (*Gavia arctica*)

3 records

Uncommon to scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

During the mid-1990's this was the commonest diver, numbers having dropped considerably since then. 1, Rocquaine Bay, 1st Jan (LT, RJM) – 1, Rocquaine Bay, 20th Jan (MAG) – 1, Port Grat, 26th Nov to 7th Dec (LT, RJM).

Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*)

4+ birds

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

Much less common this year, especially later on. Diver sightings in the summer period are very unusual. 1 (possibly the same bird), Belle Greve Bay, 7th Jan (LT) and 28th Jan (JMA) – 1, L'Eree or Rocquaine, 13th to 22nd Jan (WRT) – 1, Rocquaine, 20th Feb (GDA) – 1, L'Eree, 13th Apr (MAG) – {2, East past Pleinmont, 3rd Jun (WRT,MAG), were either this species or Black-throated Diver} - 1, Grandes Havres, 31st Dec (MAG).

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)

20+ birds

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant. Has bred.

Up to 6 birds were seen during the first three months of the year - 2 at the Reservoir, 2 at Grande Mare, 1 at Vale Pond, 1 at Saumarez Park – with the final sighting at the former site on 23rd Mar (LT, RJM). The next bird was found at the Reservoir on 8th Jun (LT) with possibly the same one appearing at Gallotin Quarry on 18th Jun (IH). This one stayed throughout the summer joined by a second on 24th Jul. Further birds arrived slowly during the autumn at Claire Mare, Paradis Quarry and the Reservoir, peaking at 8 at the latter on 8th Nov (BK).

Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)

Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Wintering groups of up to 5 birds were recorded in most of the island's bays until the last at Cobo on 12th Mar (LT). Also on this date there was the only inland record with one at the Reservoir (LT). The first returning bird was at Pembroke on 3rd Nov (MPL), with flocks of up to 4 recorded thereafter.

Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*)

1 record

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Only one sighting in a year is very poor for this species.
1, Belle Greve Bay, 6th to 15th Jan (MAG).

Slavonian Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*)

18+ birds

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

Up to 5 birds could be found in Belle Greve Bay, and up to 3 in the L'Eree/Shingle Bank/Perelle area during January. Numbers dropped to 2 at each of these sites in February and March, with an additional bird in Grandes Havres until 19th Mar. A further record was of 2 breeding-plumaged birds feeding in front of Lihou Island on 8th Apr (MPL). The returning birds were seen from 3rd Dec (LT, RJM) at Perelle, where up to 5 could be seen. Another 2 returned to Belle Greve Bay on 30th Dec.

Black-necked Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*)

4 records

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.



The first two sightings may have been the same individual moving up the coast.
1, L'Eree, 28th Jan (LT, RJM) – 1, Rousse, 28th Jan (MAG) – 1, Grandes Havres, 23rd to 31st Dec (BGW) – 1, Perelle, 30th Dec (RJM).

Black-necked Grebe – Grandes Havres – B G Wells

Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*)

Quite common passage migrant and summer visitor. Breeds in small numbers.

All early records were from the south cliffs or from Herm, where up to 20 were seen. 9 nest sites were found on Herm on 16th May (GDA). From August, birds were observed passing the headlands, but no counts of more than 10 birds were recorded.

Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*)

1 record of 2 birds

Vagrant – 5 previous records.

On 5th August, after westerly winds and overnight rain, 2 birds were recorded passing west off Japonneuse Point – one at 8 am and one at 10 am. At this time of year, this species is present in the Atlantic just west of us, but suitable weather conditions are usually required for them to reach Guernsey.

(C. J. Mourant, W. R. Turner, M. A. Guppy, J. M. Medland)

Sooty Shearwater (*Puffinus griseus*)**99 birds**

Quite common to uncommon autumn passage migrant.

All records were of birds passing Jaoenneuse Point, during seawatches. The extreme dates were 1 on 22nd Jul (MAG) and 1 on 9th Nov (AJB). Peak passage was noted in September with 48 on 9th.

Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*)

Quite common to uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor.

Small numbers were observed during the summer, starting with 2 past Jaoenneuse on 8th Apr (RJM, LT). The largest number reported was 22 flying west past Pleinmont on 3rd Jun (WRT, MAG). Autumn migration peaked at 70 birds past Jaoenneuse on 5th Sep with a total of about 150 birds seen during seawatches from this headland. The last bird passed Vazon Bay on 8th Oct (MPL).

Balearic Shearwater (*Puffinus mauretanicus*)**43 birds**

Uncommon autumn passage migrant.

All sightings were of birds migrating past Jaoenneuse Point in autumn with a total of 43 birds recorded. This is a very good total indeed. The first of these records was 8 on 5th Aug (WRT) with the last on 20th Sep (PKV). Also, 3 birds were seen from a Pelagic trip 7 miles WNW of Guernsey on 3rd Aug.

Storm Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*)**15 birds**

Uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant.

8 were seen, on 4 dates between 14th May (WRT) and 3rd June from Jaoenneuse and Fort le Crocq. Storm Petrels will pass the north and west coasts every evening at this time of year but conditions are not always suitable for seeing them. A later bird was seen off Jaoenneuse on 22nd Jul (MAG), and 6 were noted during the pelagic trip on 3rd Aug.

Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethereus*)**1 record**

Vagrant – no previous records.

The most staggering birding event of the year occurred on 16th September when 7 observers were amazed to see a superb Red-billed Tropicbird fly past Jaoenneuse Point. Not only was it the first record for the Channel Islands, but this bird was the first recorded in Europe! The closest area that tropicbirds breed is the Cape Verde Islands off West Africa and it probably had wandered from there. Earlier in the year, in June, one was seen from a yacht near the Scilly Isles and this bird was quite likely the same one, summering in the English Channel.

(J. M. Medland, P. K. Veron, W. R. Turner, C. J. Mourant, M. A. Guppy,
D. J. R. Andrews, S. Linington).

Gannet (*Morus bassanus*)

Common passage migrant and summer visitor, less common in winter.

The species was commonly seen off all coasts throughout the year, but greater numbers were noted during the autumn, with up to 100 birds per hour noted from Jaoenneuse Point on a few days. 320 were counted off here on 9th Nov (LT). Spectacular high-diving flocks can sometimes be watched out to sea when a productive feeding area is found.

Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)

Common year-round visitor. Breeds in small numbers.

The species was seen in small numbers all around the coast but, unlike the next species, was noted widely on inland lakes and ponds, and also flying overland to and from these areas. No large concentrations were reported.

Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*)

Common breeding resident.

The species was seen more regularly than the last and often in large flocks of over 100, especially around the northern limits of the islands. As usual, there were no inland records.

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)



Quite common year-round visitor, less common in spring.

Although seen very often by birdwatchers, no accurate counts of roosts were made, so the total number on the island was unknown. As usual, only a handful remained on the island during May and June. Numbers built up during the summer with 27 at Rocquaine on 20th Aug being the largest flock reported (MPL), although 14 birds on Herm on 1st Nov was a record total for that island (IH).

Little Egret – Vale Pond – M P Lawlor

Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)

Quite common year-round visitor, less common in spring and summer.

The species was seen mainly as single birds feeding in rockpools and ponds. Groups of resting birds did flock together, especially at high tide on offshore rocks and behind the Claire Mare reedbed. Only a very few birds spent the early summer here and the occasional migrating bird was noted in the autumn.

White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*)

1 record

Vagrant – 7 previous records

On 31st March, a bird was seen soaring high over a birder's house at Rue de la Ronde Cheminee, Castel. It actually spent a few days on the island but was never seen on the ground. It was noted over Rue des Bergers and over Rue du Tertre, SA on 1st April, and over St. Martins Village on 2nd April.

(B. G. Wells, J. M. Medland)

Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis fabalis*)

1 record

Vagrant – 2 previous records of Bean Geese

When the flock of wild White-fronted Geese (see below) was closely inspected on 14th December, it was clear that they had brought with them a Bean Goose. It spent a lot of the day feeding in a field at Mont Héault, but few birders were able to get to see it. It was considered to be of the 'Taiga' race of Bean Goose due to the extensive orange on a long bill.

(L. Thomson, R. J. Murphy, D. F. Murphy)

White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*)**1 record of 27 birds**

Very rare winter visitor, but feral breeding species.

On 13th December, a flock of geese were observed flying in over Saints Bay and were identified as White-fronts. They were located at Mont Herault the next day and 20 birds were counted. Another group of 7 birds flew in to join them in the afternoon. Unfortunately they were not present the next day. From the behaviour and records from elsewhere, it was clear that these were not part of the feral population on the island.

(C. J. Mourant, L. Thomson, R. J. Murphy, D. F. Murphy)

[20+ feral birds commuted between Marais Nord and Barras Lane fields during the year, with breeding noted at the former site. It is always difficult to pick out wild flocks due to local movements of these birds which can disperse more widely at times.]

Dark-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla bernicla*)

Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant.

As last year, there were up to 115 birds wintering in the first few months - c.50 in Herm, c.50 along the East coast, and up to 17 on the West coast. It would be interesting to know how much interchange there is between flocks. There were 72 birds counted on Herm on 16th Apr where the last 4 were noted on 24th May (GDA). The first returning bird was at the Shingle Bank on 28th Sep (RJM, LT), followed by a few individuals during October. Larger numbers arrived from the first week of November. December flock counts were about half those in January, except the West coast birds which numbered 25.

Pale-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla brota*)**1 record**

Very rare winter visitor – 6 previous records.

To complete a good series of goose records, one was present with other Brent Geese around Vazon and Perelle Bays, between 10th and 17th December.

(J. Hooper)

Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)**1 pair + 2 other records**

Uncommon year-round visitor and rare breeder.

The pair returned to the North-west corner of the island on 17th Feb (LT, RAF). They could be seen at various sites nearby all Spring with a few sightings further afield. They settled down again to nest on Lihou Island and 9 ducklings were noted on 28th May (GDA). A female on Herm on 16th May was clearly an extra migrant bird (GDA). There were no reports after August, so perhaps they all moved on. A bird at Jaonneuse on 10th Nov was probably another extra bird (WRT).

Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

A small flock wintered in the Claire Mare/Old Aerodrome area, consisting of 2 males and 4 females. These were last seen on 9th Mar, but may have moved further North, as 5 birds were at Marais Nord on 23rd Mar (RJM). There was clear migration noted on 15th Nov, with 37 past Jaonneuse (GDA) plus 4 birds resting in Perelle Bay (AJB). A single was at the Reservoir on 15th Dec (BGW), before 6 birds (4 male 2 female) returned to the Claire Mare on 30th Dec.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)**2 records of 3 birds**

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

As usual only a few records of this species were recorded.

1 male, Claire Mare, 18th Nov to 2nd Dec (AJB) – 1 pair, Vale Pond, 15th Dec (MPL).

Teal (*Anas crecca*)

Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Recorded at the main wetland sites in the first 3 months with peaks of 36 at Claire Mare, 24 at Rue des Bergers and 11 at Vale Pond. The last sighting of the spring was of a pair at Rue des Bergers on 10th Apr (AJB). Returning birds were at both at Claire Mare (RJM, LT) and Rue des Bergers (AJB) on 23rd Aug. Numbers built up again during December with a peak of 25 at Rue des Bergers, plus more unusually, regular sightings from the Reservoir and Lihou Island.

Green-winged Teal (*Anas carolinensis*)**1 record**

Vagrant – no previous records.

A Channel Island first, an American Green-winged Teal, was discovered at Claire Mare NR on 1st December. It was good timing, as the BOU had only just split this as a separate species from the



European Common Teal. It was a male in first-winter plumage, and it could be seen there until 8th December. It must have stayed hidden on the island somewhere, as it reappeared at the same location in early 2002.

(M. A. Guppy)

male Green-winged Teal (left) with female Teal – Claire Mare – W R Turner

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

Common resident breeding species, winter visitor and passage migrant.

As usual the species was encountered practically everywhere on the island, but pure pairs are becoming less common, as many birds show signs of hybridisation with domestic ducks.



eclipse male Mallard – Saumarez Park – M P Lawlor

Pintail (*Anas acuta*)**1 record**

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

This bird may have been the same as last year's, although it was not reported during January.

1 male, Claire Mare, 2nd Feb to 15th Mar (RJM), visiting the Reservoir on 4th Mar (WRT).

Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)

Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant in small numbers.

Good numbers were seen in the first winter period with maximum counts of 11 at Claire Mare, 20 at Marais Nord, 2 at Grand Pre and 2 at Vale Pond. The highest count was 30 on the Old Aerodrome on 30th Jan (GDA). Unlike last year, there was evidence of spring migration in April and May consisting of about 7

birds at 3 sites. The last was a male at Claire Mare between 20th and 22nd May (WRT, LT). A juvenile at Rue des Bergers on 12th Aug was the first back of the autumn (AJB). Recorded at the usual sites in the second winter period in small numbers, with 1 at Silbe NR on 15th Nov being the most unusual (LT).

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) | 1 record |
|---|-----------------|

Uncommon to scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

No winter records – this bird had probably dispersed from a breeding site in northern France.
1 juvenile, Grande Mare G.C., 25th Aug (MPL).

| |
|---|
| Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) |
|---|

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant. One breeding record.

There were wintering birds at two sites early on - with up to 10 birds at Marais Nord and up to 5 at Saumarez Park. - although one visited Claire Mare on 3rd Jan. In March and April there was a wider spread of records as birds migrated North for breeding. These were noted at Grande Mare, the Reservoir, Mare de Carteret, St. Pierre Park Hotel and Gallotin Quarry. As last year, Gallotin Quarry hosted birds throughout the breeding season, but no sign of nesting was reported. These birds wandered to various sites until August. Returning birds were seen from 25th Sep with sightings from most of the above mentioned sites, with a peak of 10 at Gallotin Quarry on 23rd Nov (IH).

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Eider (<i>Somateria mollissima</i>) | 4 records |
|--|------------------|

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

These records may be the same, wide-ranging individual.
1 male, Rocquaine, 19th to 21st Jan (sev) – 1 male, Belle Greve Bay, 27th and 28th Jan (LT, DWS) – 1 male, Perelle, 29th Jan (LT) – 1 male, Pulias, 18th Feb (LT, RJM).

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) | 11 records of 54 birds |
|---|-------------------------------|

Uncommon year-round visitor and passage migrant.

The sightings were mainly in autumn this year, with some long-staying birds present.
1 male, Town Harbour, 9th Oct (GDA) – 1 male, Vazon, 22nd Oct (MPL, AJB) – 3 females, Grandes Rocques, 4th until 26th Nov (MPL), one staying until the end of the year, also visiting Vazon on occasion. Also 49 were seen on seawatches from Jaonneuse, on 8 dates between 15th Jul and 10th Nov.

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) | 1 record |
|--|-----------------|

Rare winter visitor.

This is the first record since 1998, and spent most of the time with a Common Scoter.
1 1st-winter female, Vazon, 15th to 20th Dec (MAG), also seen at Grandes Rocques on 21st Dec.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) | 6 records |
|--|------------------|

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

6 records is the lowest total for quite a few years and may indicate a future reduction in numbers wintering.
1 male, Grandes Havres, 1st Jan (from last year) – 1 male, Belle Greve Bay, 14th Jan (PAC) – 1 female, off the Shingle Bank, 17th Mar (MAG) – 1 female, Fort le Crocq, 31st Mar (BGW) – 1 female, Grandes Rocques, 11th Dec (MPL) – 1 female, Vazon 16th Dec (MPL).

Goosander (*Mergus merganser*)**1 record**

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A single record reflects the current trend.
1 male, Fort le Crocq, 23rd Nov (LT, RJM).

Honey Buzzard (*Pernis apivorus*)**3 records of 5 or 6 birds**

Scarce passage migrant.

Three together is unusual, especially during mid-summer, rather than the more typical autumn records.
1 in the morning, followed by 3 together in the afternoon, Reservoir, 24th Jul (JH) – 1, Calais Lane, St Martins, 5th Aug (MAJR) – 1, Fauxquets Valley, 11th to 15th Sep (TDCE, MAG)

Eagle sp. (*Haliaeetus/Aquila* sp.)**1 record**

During lunch hour on 20th November, an eagle was seen flying high over the town centre. Because of distance, lack of prolonged views and no telescope to use, an identification was not at all possible. It was quite likely a young White-tailed Eagle (especially considering the date), but other species such as Spotted Eagle could not be ruled out. It quickly disappeared north-east.

(W. R. Turner, J. M. Medland)

Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*)**7 records of 8 birds**

Scarce passage migrant.

4 birds through on 6th May was an excellent passage, the best ever single-day count. All birds this year were 'cream-crowns'.

1, Claire Mare, 12th Apr (LT, RJM) – 1, Claire Mare, 30th Apr (WRT) – 1, Mont Herault, 2nd May (AJB) – 2, Claire Mare, 6th May (DAJR) – 1, Pleinmont, 6th May (AJB et al) – 1, Track Marais, 6th May (RAF, AJB et al) – 1, Lihou Headland and Lihou, 20th May (JMA, AJB).

Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)**3 records**

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

3 records in the favoured location with none seen on Guernsey itself.
1, Herm, 5th Sep (GDA) – 1, Herm, 17th Nov (CMK) – 1, Herm, 8th Dec (AG)

Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*)

Uncommon to quite common resident breeding species.

Widely seen in all areas of the island, with pairs displaying at a number of woodland sites, indicating breeding. 5 birds were seen together in the air together above Fermain Valley on 4th Jun (MAG).

Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)**4 records**

Scarce passage migrant.

Again, quite a poor total. Summer seems to be better than winter for sightings at the moment.
1, over St. Martins village, 28th Jan (TDCE) - 1, in low over the sea, Cobo, 16th Jul (MAG) – 1, Fauxquets Valley, 26th Jul (MAG) – 1, in off the sea, Jaonneuse Point, 27th Aug (WRT).

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)**2 records*****Scarce passage migrant.***

The species continues its good series of records, no doubt due to the increase in the British population.
1, Reservoir, 26th Mar (MAG) – 1, over Bordeaux, 13th May (RAF, CJM).

Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)***Common resident breeding species.***

Breeding was proved at a number of sites and the species continues to make use of the nestboxes provided.

Red-footed Falcon (*Falco vespertinus*)**1 record*****Vagrant – 2 previous records***

An adult female bird was seen well as it perched in a dead tree at the top of the Val des Terres during the evening of 30th July. Unfortunately, after it rested for a while, it continued on its way, leaving birders disappointed. This was only the third record for the island, the first two were in the same year – 1989.

(C. J. Mourant)

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)**4 records*****Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.***

Unusually, there were no autumn records of this species which is being seen less often recently.
1 male, Heritage Walk, 14th Jan (WRT, MAG) – 1 male, Vazon, 21st Apr (LT) – 1 female, Port Grat, 28th Apr (MPL) – 1 female, Mont Herault/Pleinmont, 6th May (RAF et al).

Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*)**6 records*****Uncommon to scarce passage migrant.***

The autumn bird was very late and stayed an unusual length of time - unless more than one bird was involved.
1, Herm, 6th May (AJB et al) – 1, Richmond, Vazon, 6th May (MPL, WRT, MAG, CJM) – 1, Reservoir, 12th May (MAG) – 1, Bordeaux, 13th May (RAF, CJM) – 1, Icart, 25th May (MAG) – 1 juvenile, Mont Herault/Pleinmont, 13th to 20th Oct (MPL, WRT).

Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*)***Uncommon year-round visitor. Rare breeding species.***

Peregrines were noted in all parts of the island throughout the year, with up to 3 birds seen together. The breeding pair on the island were present again in the usual location, but whether they were successful is not known. Most sightings were probably of these birds although other migrants must have been seen.

Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*)***Uncommon introduced species to Herm – not thought to be self-supporting.***

The maximum count reported from the introduced birds on Herm was 4.

Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)

Quite common introduced resident species.

This introduced species was regularly seen in numbers, especially on Herm and in the SE corner of Guernsey. The birds make use of feed put down for them.

Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*)

Quite common passage migrant and winter visitor. Has bred.

Water Rails were present at all suitable sites in both winter periods, with a maximum count of 5 at Marais Nord in November (RJM). The last of the spring was seen at Claire Mare on 6th Apr (LT) and the next bird was seen at Vale Pond on 10th Aug (LT, RJM).

Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)

Very common resident breeding species and winter visitor.

Commonly seen around all lakes, ditches and marshy areas

Coot (*Fulica atra*)

Uncommon resident breeding species, common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Seen in small numbers around freshwater ponds and lakes. 70 were counted at Grande Mare GC on 16th Nov (LT, RJM).

Coot – Vale Pond – M P Lawlor



Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)

Quite common resident breeding species. Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

The maximum of 765 during the wader-counts was in the usual peak month of November, but about 25% down on last year.

Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Breeds in small numbers.

A commonly seen bird of the shoreline, with a wader-count peak of 225 birds on the island in August.

Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)

Uncommon to quite common winter visitor and passage migrant.



Golden Plover – Pleinmont – M P Lawlor

Counts at or near the Portinfer roost peaked at 149 on 1st Jan (PAC) but birds suddenly disappeared at the end of the month. The next record was an unusual summer bird, at Pleinmont on 13th Jun (WRT). The first of the autumn migrants was also there on 26th Aug (AJB) with another 10 or so sightings before the wintering birds reappeared. 54 on 26th Nov was the late peak for the Portinfer flock.

Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

127 birds were counted on the January wader-count and numbers tailed off during the spring until the last lingered at Fort le Crocq on 20th May (JMA). 3 at Miellette on 16th Aug were the first autumn birds reported (GDA) with about 70 birds staying to winter on the island after migration.

Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)

Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Despite there being large flocks in December 2000, few birds continued to winter, with about 20 each at the Airport and Vale Pond. This may have been because they disappeared on 1st Jan, as a southerly movement was observed – 52 over Old Aerodrome, 28 over Rue des Bergers, 11 at Portinfer. After the last bird was seen on 4th Feb, there were only 3 sightings until October – 1, Old Aerodrome, 12th Mar (WRT) – 4, L'Eree, 22nd Jun (AJB) – 1, Pulias, 28th Jul (AJB). There were regular sightings of small numbers from 10th Oct, and a maximum flock of 50 was seen at the Airport on 29th Dec (GDA).

Knot (*Calidris canutus*)

3 records of 4 birds

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

Two mid-winter records, and only one autumn record is an unusual pattern.

1, Old Aerodrome, 4th Jan (MPL) – 1, Vazon, 19th Jan (LT, RJM) – 2, Vazon, 26th to 30th Aug (MCS).

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)

Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant.

54 birds were counted island-wide in the January wader-count with most big flocks reported at Grandes Havres. No large flocks were seen on spring migration this year and the last birds were on Herm on 6th Jun (GDA). Herm also had the first returning flock when 18 birds were counted there on 20th Jul (GDA). Groups of up to 30 were observed in autumn migration, mainly at Vazon, and about 30 birds stayed to winter, again usually in Grandes Havres.

Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*)

2 records of 3 birds

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

The number of individuals seen is unclear, but there were probably three.

2, Vazon, 21st and 22nd Sep (AJB, LT, RJM) – 1 juv, Vazon, 30th Sep to 5th Oct (MAG, MPL, RJM)

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)

5 records of 15 birds

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

A good series of records, all from the same site. Perhaps more individuals were involved.

6, Vazon, 18th Aug (MAG) – 1, Vazon, 29th Aug to 3rd Sep (MCS) – 4, Fort le Crocq & Vazon, 30th Sep (MAG) – 2, Vazon, 7th Oct to 9th Oct (LT, AJB) – 2, Vazon, 19th Oct (LT)

Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*)

20+ birds

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

Up to 4 birds were seen in the Vazon/Fort le Crocq area during January and early February, but none were reported from any other site. Spring migrants were seen at Fort le Crocq and Bordeaux on 11th Mar, and a flock of 6 were at Grandes Rocques on 8th Apr. The final one of the spring was at Vazon on 27th Apr

(RJM, LT). Autumn migration consisted of a single bird past Jaonneuse on 11th Aug (WRT), before the next sighting on 21st Oct at Vazon (TDCE, PAC). Winter records were from Fort le Crocq, Jaonneuse Bay and Lihou Island, adding up to just 5 birds.

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

371 birds recorded on the January wader-count was a good winter total and the peak count of the year. It was not uncommon to see flocks of over 200 during migration, especially at Vazon. Single-figures could be seen during the summer.

Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*)

4 records

Scarce passage migrant, rare in winter.

A much improved showing from the single bird last year.

1, Claire Mare, 29th Jul (CJM) – 1 male, Pulias, 29th Jul (LT, RJM, AJB) – 1 male, Claire Mare, 29th Aug (WRT) – 1, Fort le Crocq/Vazon, 30th Sep (WRT, MAG)

Jack Snipe (*Lymnocryptes minimus*)

1 record

Uncommon to scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

The species is under-recorded as it probably winters in small numbers in wet areas throughout the island. The number of sightings also depends on water levels and luck.

1, Grande Mare, 14th Jan (AJB)

Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Regular counts were not reported from many sites early on, but up to 36 birds were seen at Claire Mare in January (MAG). The last bird lingered at this site until the 7th May (WRT). After the first autumn migrant on 27th Jul at Pulias (AJB) birds were regularly noted migrating south over the island. No large numbers were seen wintering at the end of the year – 19 birds being the maximum count.

Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

Woodcocks are under-recorded due to their secretive nature. The species was seen at 7 sites by birders during the months of January, October, November and December. Birds seen away from woodland, and presumably cold-weather migrants, were on Lihou on 7th Dec (AJB) and at Clos des Pecqueries on 18th Dec (MPL). 8 birds were ringed during the year (JH).

Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)

3 records of 4 birds

Scarce passage migrant, rare in winter.

There was a sighting of single juvenile Black-tailed Godwit on 15 dates in the autumn. It was presumably the same wandering bird but it did go missing for a week or so at a time.

1 juv, Vazon, then various sites between Vale Pond and Rocquaine, 3rd Aug to 24th Oct (MPL, LT, RJM) – 1, L'Eree, 2nd Dec (BK) – 2, L'Eree, 26th Dec (GDA)

Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)

Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant.

A handful of birds were present in the early winter, including one unusual sighting, slightly inland at Barras Lane Fields with Curlew on 12th Feb (MPL). Spring migration was not very strong this year, with a peak flock size of 14, although birds were seen right up to 14th Jun (GDA). On 24th Aug birds returned to the island (LT, RJM) with groups of up to 20 seen on autumn migration. Again single figures were present during the winter period.

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)

Quite common passage migrant.

A bird on the beach at Grandes Havres on 17th Apr was the first reported of the year (MPL), with migrant birds recorded up until the 25th May. A maximum spring flock size of 12 was recorded. Birds returned on 6th Jul (LT, RJM) with the last lingering on Herm on 7th Nov (GDA). A very large migrant flock of 100 birds was observed roosting on La Capelle on 18th Aug (WRT).

Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Smaller numbers in summer.

Wader-count data showed a peak of 154 in January, but the species is difficult to monitor as many feed inland. Very few spent the early summer period on the island.

Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*)

2 records

Scarce passage migrant, very rare winter visitor.

No autumn records this year.

1, Claire Mare, 24th Apr (AJB) – 1, Belle Greve Bay, 5th May (DJRA)

Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Smaller numbers in summer.

This species was very scarce in May and June but was much commoner at other times of the year. No large flocks were noted and 37 birds in November was the largest wader-count figure, although the wintering population will be larger than that number suggests.

Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)

Uncommon passage migrant.

Unusually, no birds were recorded on spring passage this year. This meant the first of the year was at Vale Pond on 8th Jul (MAG). This site was the prime location for the species with a peak count of 7 on 13th Sep (MPL). Elsewhere, there were brief sightings of single birds during the autumn. The last was at Vale Pond on 1st Nov (WS).

Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*)

16+ birds

Uncommon passage migrant. Rare in winter.

One spring record, at Claire Mare on 21st to 23rd May (WRT, LT, AJB). All autumn records were from either Claire Mare or Rue des Bergers between 23rd Jul (LT) and 4th Sep (AJB). The most seen was 7 over Claire Mare on 21st Aug (MAG).

Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

Quite common passage migrant, scarce in winter.

The wintering bird at the Reservoir was still present at the end of March, but the first definite migrant was seen at Vale Pond on 12th Apr (RJM, LT). Groups of up to 3 birds were widely distributed on spring migration, with the final bird at Claire Mare on 24th May (WRT). Birds returned from 6th Jul, when 5 were seen at Miellette (RJM, LT), and groups of up to 7 were commonly noted until 28th Sep. The wader count on 19th Aug revealed a total of 25 birds in the coastal bays. Later birds were seen at Pezeries on 19th Oct (AJB), and presumably the same Reservoir bird from 11th Nov (LT).

Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Small numbers in summer.

Wader-count data shows that 349 birds on the island in March was the largest count. These included migrant birds and the mid-winter counts gave a wintering population of about 200 birds. Even taking into account the difficulties of counting this rocky-shore species, the number of wintering birds visiting the island has dropped considerably in recent years.

Grey Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*)

1 record

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

A very showy bird pausing for a few hours on autumn migration.
1, Portinfer, 15th Sep (LT).

Pomarine Skua (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

15 birds

Scarce autumn passage migrant. Very rare in winter.

With more intensive seawatching during the last five years, the species has been shown to be a regular migrant in autumn off the north coast during good passage periods. There was a record total of 15 birds reported this year, all from the seawatching location of Jaonneuse Point. One was seen on 22nd Jul (MAG), with the remainder noted between 31st Aug and 31st Oct, with a maximum of 3 seen on the former date (GDA). A late bird on 26th Dec was much more unusual (MAG).

Arctic Skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

165 birds

Uncommon autumn passage migrant.

A total of 165 Arctic Skuas flew past Jaonneuse Point on autumn migration. The peak day was 9th Aug when 34 flew past the headland, and this was a record day-count for Guernsey, one better than the best day last year. The first was noted on 5th Aug, and the last two were recorded on 31st Oct.

Long-tailed Skua (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)

2 records of 3 birds

Vagrant – 5 previous records.

On 27th August, two Long-tailed Skuas flew West past Jaonneuse Point – an adult at 7:10 am, then a juvenile at 8:50 am.

(M. A. Guppy, W. R Turner, C. J. Mourant)

On 17th September, a juvenile passed the same spot, but this time in the evening at 5:46 pm.

(P. K. Veron)

Great Skua (*Catharacta skua*)**101 birds**

Uncommon autumn passage migrant. Very rare in winter.

101 Great Skuas passed Jaonneuse Point this year. 31 birds on 9th Sep being the maximum day count. One on 5th Aug was the first of the passage, with the final 3 migrating through on 9th Nov.

Mediterranean Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*)**7 records of 4-7 birds**

Scarce visitor, mainly from summer through to winter.

The adult records may possibly all relate to the regular wandering individual. Belle Greve Bay is clearly the top location for finding this species.

1 2nd-winter, Belle Greve Bay, 2000 until 23rd Feb, returning as an adult, 8th Nov (MPL) until year-end – 1st-summer, Pulias, 8th Jul (AJB) – 2nd-summer, Belle Greve Bay, 15th to 27th Jul (AJB) – adult, Belle Greve Bay, 11th Aug to 3rd Sep (BGW) – adult, Vazon, 19th Oct (LT, RJM) – second adult, Belle Greve Bay, 10th Nov (TDCE) - adult, Shingle Bank, 16th Dec (WRT, BGW).

Little Gull (*Larus minutus*)**7 records of 13 birds**

Scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor.



More of a spread of records than last year with the winter birds lingering for a few days.

2, adult + 1st-winter, Belle Greve Bay/Havelet, 15th to 19th Jan (WRT) – 1, adult/2nd-summer, Vazon, 29th Jul (RJM, DM) – 1 adult, Grandes Rocques, 1st Oct (MPL) – 2 adults, past Jaonneuse, 9th Oct (AJB) – 1, Chouet, 9th Nov (LT) – 4, past Jaonneuse, 10th Nov (WRT) – 2, past Jaonneuse, 11th Nov (WRT).

adult Little Gull – Grandes Rocques Beach – 1st Oct – M P Lawlor

Sabine's Gull (*Larus sabini*)**3 records of 6 birds**

Vagrant – 3 previous records.

During an excellent seawatching period, a juvenile bird flew past Jaonneuse Point on 17th September. Showing that Sabine's Gulls are probably regular visitors to local waters in suitable weather conditions, another 4 juvenile birds flew past Jaonneuse the next day – 18th September – 2 in the morning, 2 in the evening.

(S. Linington, W. R. Turner, P. K. Veron, A. J. Bisson)

Later in the autumn, on 23rd October, a further juvenile was much more obliging on the beach at L'Eree. It appeared either exhausted or sick, and was gone the following day.

(L. Thomson)

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)

Very common year-round visitor, but uncommon in late spring and early summer.

The species was commonly noted in large flocks in the winter and migration seasons, but as usual, it was very difficult to find any in May and June, whilst they were away breeding.

Common Gull (*Larus canus*)**9 records of 10 birds**

Uncommon to scarce visitor, mainly in winter.

Just one was seen early in the year, and the species was scarce enough for all records to be listed. Taking into account wanderings, 10 birds may be a maximum figure.

1, Belle Greve Bay, 8th Jan (TDCE) - 1st-winter, Vazon, 30th Oct to 2nd Nov (AJB) – adult, Belle Greve Bay, 9th Nov (RJM, LT) – 1, Fort Saumarez, 11th Nov (TDCE) – 2 1st-winters, Grandes Havres, 15th Nov (MPL) – 1st-winter, Vazon, 15th Nov (AJB) – adult, Grandes Rocques, 23rd Nov (MPL) – adult, Belle Greve Bay/Havelet, 12th to 25th Dec (BGW) – adult, Lihou/L'Eree, 12th to 15th, Dec (AJB).

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)

Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. Uncommon in mid-winter.

The species was observed flocking in the largest numbers during poor weather in passage periods, mainly on beaches. During mid-winter single-figure counts were most common.



Lesser Black-backed and Herring Gulls resting at Chouet - M P Lawlor

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)

Very common resident breeding species, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The commonest gull on the island and abundant throughout the year. Flocks of 1000+ were often noted at Chouet Rubbish Tip and stormy weather out to sea brought many birds to shelter on the West coast. Breeding birds were mainly nesting on the South cliffs, Lihou and off Herm.

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*)**3 records of 4 or 5 birds**

Scarce visitor, mainly summer and autumn.



The birds in February are the first for that month, most being seen late summer and autumn.
2, adult + 3rd-winter, Rocquaine, 18th Feb (WRT) – 1 or 2, Chouet, 9th to 16th Aug (BGW) – adult, Belle Greve Bay, 26th Sep (BGW).

Adult Yellow-legged Gull – B G Wells

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucopterus*)**1 record**

Vagrant – 11 previous records.

A 2nd-summer bird was found roosting at the Old Aerodrome late afternoon on 19th April. It was also seen feeding along the beach at L'Eree later in the evening.

(W. R. Turner)

Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*)**2 records**

Vagrant – 7 previous records, including one regular wintering individual.

The regular wintering adult bird was seen around the Town Harbour and nearby areas until the 12th March. It was located again on 7th November and could be found regularly until the end of the year.

(W.R.Turner)

A second-winter bird was resting on the beach at L'Eree on 16th February for a short period in the morning.

(R. J. Murphy, L. Thomson)

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)

Common resident breeding species, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The species does not flock in as large numbers as other large gulls but is still common throughout the year, with groups of a few hundred together not uncommon.

Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)

Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Small numbers were widely seen in the first half of the year and during early autumn. It was not until November when significant passages of over 100 birds were recorded by birders. The peak movement occurred on 26th Dec, when 318 birds passed Jaonneuse Point in an hour (MAG).

Sandwich Tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*)

Quite common passage migrant and summer visitor. Uncommon winter visitor. Former breeder.

There seemed to be slightly less wintering birds present during January and February than last year, with 5 in Belle Greve Bay being the maximum count. As usual, small flocks could be encountered during the spring and summer periods. Larger counts were made during autumn migration, peaking on 5th Sep with 121 past Jaonneuse. During seawatches from here in autumn, 826 birds were logged. Sightings at the end of the year were mainly along the East and North coasts where up to 4 birds could be seen.

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

Quite common passage migrant and summer visitor. Small numbers breed.

The first bird was seen relatively early off Jersey on 15th Apr (MAG). After this bird, there was only one further sighting until the second week of May, quite a late migration. Birds were recorded during the summer and probably bred in the Herm area, and possibly at Jersey, although this was not confirmed. Autumn migration was seen from Jaonneuse Point with 383 birds passing the headland altogether (although a small proportion of these were probably Arctics). The last 6 birds were recorded here on 21st Sep.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)**3 records of 7 birds***Scarce passage migrant.*

All those identified this year were juvenile/first-winter birds.

2, past Jaonneuse, 1st Sep (MPL, WRT) – 4, L'Eree, 7th Oct (WRT) – 1, Vazon, 8th Oct (AJB).

Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*)**1 record***Scarce passage migrant.*

A typical, brief, autumn sighting of a difficult species to catch up with on the island.

1, past Jaonneuse, 17th Sep (WRT)

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)**13 birds***Uncommon to scarce passage migrant.*

All birds this year were recorded whilst seawatching from Jaonneuse Point, where the many hours put in resulted in a good total of 13 birds recorded. These were recorded in the few weeks between 26th Aug and 17th Sep, with a maximum day-count of 6 on 1st Sep (WRT).

Guillemot (*Uria aalge*)*Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant. Uncommon summer visitor, a few breed.*

Between 1 and 4 noted irregularly throughout the year at most coastal locations except the South coast. Auk passage observed whilst seawatching included many of this species. There were no details received of numbers of breeding birds but Guillemots were present during the summer round Jethou and Herm. A more unusual record concerns an oiled bird which circled the Claire Mare NR on 28th Mar (WRT).

Razorbill (*Alca torda*)*Quite common winter visitor and passage migrant. Uncommon summer visitor, a few breed.*

Between 1 and 3 noted irregularly throughout the year at most coastal locations except the South coast. Auk passage observed whilst seawatching included many of this species. There were no details received of numbers of breeding birds but Razorbills seemed more common than Guillemots during the summer round Jethou and Herm.

Little Auk (*Alle alle*)**2 records***Rare winter visitor and migrant.*

The first record for 5 years was noted on 11th November as it flew west past Jaonneuse Point during a seawatch.

(A. J. Bisson, W. R. Turner, M. A. Guppy)

A ‘wrecked’ bird was found floundering in a garden near the Dehus Dolmen, Vale on 14th November. It survived and was released at Grandes Rocques the next day.

(N. J. & J. J. Warr)

Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*)

Uncommon summer visitor and breeder. Rarer on passage and in winter.

Most records received were from the breeding areas around Jethou and Herm with 40+ on 25th Jun being the peak count, similar numbers as seen last year. A single record from Guernsey at Fort le Marchant on 10th Jun (JMA).

Feral Pigeon (*Columba livia*)

Common resident breeding species.

Large flocks were noted at a few sites, especially around the harbour and town, or in certain favoured fields. Tired racing pigeons were often seen exhausted and resting on the island's headlands.

Stock Dove (*Columba oenas*)

Uncommon resident breeding species and passage migrant.

The species was not recorded in any numbers, with groups of up to 6 being usual. The largest flock reported was just 11 at Pleinmont on 21st Sep (RJM). No evidence of migration was reported.

Woodpigeon (*Columba palumbas*)

Very common resident breeding species and passage migrant.

Widely recorded from all parts of the island, with visible migration noted especially during the autumn. The largest counts reported were generally during November and December.

Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

Common resident breeding species.

Present in all areas of the island, flocking in numbers at a few sites.

Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*)

Quite common passage migrant and summer visitor.

The first of the summer was feeding on a lawn along Rue des Valinquets, Pleinmont on 28th Apr (MPL). After another on 6th May, the main arrival took place from 10th. During the summer, small numbers were reported from the quieter areas of the island, with migrant birds returning from August. Autumn migration seemed very light this year, and the last of these was on 20th Sep - apart from a late sighting in Saumarez Park on 2nd Oct (GDA).

Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*)

Uncommon to quite common passage migrant and breeding species.

A bird at Grande Mare on 23rd Apr was the first of the summer (AJB). An additional 30 or so birds were recorded during the year, with a few lingering birds no doubt breeding. This was proved at Rue des Bergers where a nestling was found on 16th Jul (AJB). There was only one further record, at Chouet on 24th Jul (R & MA).

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba alba*)

Uncommon resident breeding species.

Many pairs of owls are using the nestboxes erected around the island, but they are still frustratingly difficult to see. About 20 pairs were probably breeding (VEF).

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*)

Uncommon resident breeding species. Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Although 2 traditional breeding sites were vacated this year, 2 new ones were used. A total of 6 territories were found however, the largest number yet recorded for this increasing species. Good locations where Long-eared Owls may be seen are Jerbourg Point, Petit Bot, Pleinmont and the Reservoir.

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

7 records of 8 birds

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A selection of migrant birds. The wintering birds are the first for quite a few years.

1, Mont Herault, 21st Apr (MAG, WRT) – 1 in-off sea from South, Pleinmont, 6th May (CJM, WRT, MAG, MPL) – 1, near Le Chene, 10th Jun (LT) – 1, Pleinmont, 27th Aug (CJM) – 1, Pleinmont, 13th Oct (GDA) – 1 in-off sea, Portinfer, 28th Oct (TDCE) - 2, Lihou Island, 11th Dec to the year end (AJB).

Swift (*Apus apus*)

Very common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first birds of the Spring were seen on 27th Apr over The Rohais (RAL, TJB) and also Vazon (LT, GDA, RJM). Numbers of migrating birds built up slowly during the next few weeks with good numbers passing through on a few days. Many flocks were present during the summer with birds breeding in many a roof-space. Numbers dropped off in August with the final regular sighting at Pleinmont on 28th Aug (WRT). Unusually, no birds were reported during September at all, but two very late birds migrated over Lihou Island on 19th Oct (AJB).

Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant. Has bred.

There were very few birds reported at the start of the year, with a maximum of 6 birds present. They also left early with no reports after one at Claire Mare on 24th Feb (WRT). The first returning bird was seen on 4th Aug at the Reservoir (GDA) with 1 or 2 seen at many locations during the main passage period between late August and October., with smaller numbers in the final two months. 2 young birds met an unfortunate end when they flew into a window on Bulwer Avenue on 6th Sep.

Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*)

1 record

Vagrant – 9 previous records.

Two birds flew over Saints Bay, calling to each other, on 3rd July.

(L. Thomson)

Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*)

3 records

Scarce passage migrant. Formerly common breeder.

Quite a poor year for this species, the latter record being the latest sighting recorded in the database.
1, Les Villets, Forest, 26th to 28th Aug (GV) – 1, Le Bigard, 21st Oct (MAG) – 1, Claire Mare, 3rd Nov (DL)

Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)

3 records

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

The number of wintering birds seemed to double to two this year, with a third unusual flyover record. 1 female, Reservoir, from last year until 11th Feb – 1 East over Pleinmont, 20th Jan (WRT, MAG) – 1 female, Saumarez Park, 10th Nov until year-end (TG) – 1, Reservoir, from 17th Nov (TDCE).

Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)

Quite common passage migrant and winter visitor. Uncommon breeding species now.

Birds were present during the breeding season at L'Ancresse Common and Port Soif and presumably bred there in small numbers. Small flocks were widespread during the winter periods, but larger numbers were seen in late autumn such as 40 at L'Ancresse G.C. on 20th Oct (MAG) and 30 at Icart on 5th Nov (RJM).

Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*)

Quite common passage migrant. Uncommon summer visitor.

After the first three at Grande Mare on 14th Mar (AJB), light spring passage took place from about the 25th Mar. As usual, a few birds wandered around the island during the summer months and autumn passage was light, ending with 5 through Pleinmont on 24th Sep (LT).

Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Very common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

An early bird fed over Vale Pond on 17th Mar (MAG) with further passage noted from 23rd Mar, continuing for the next two months, with heavy passage noted on 27th Apr. Return passage was evident throughout the autumn, with 20th and 21st Sep being the peak days when hundreds of birds were noted passing through. There were three November records with the final bird at Les Grands Moulins, Castel on 26th (RRC). A bird caught at the Claire Mare on 19th Apr had been ringed in South Africa the previous year.



Swallows and House Martins resting on Autumn migration – Clos des Pecqueries – M P Lawlor

House Martin (*Delichon urbica*)

Very common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

A very early bird was seen over The Rohais on 7th Mar (LT). There were no others reported until the late date of 11th Apr and spring passage was noticeably very light. Also autumn passage was very poor and the last 2 were at Havelet on 17th Oct (TDCE). 2001 seems to have been a very poor year for the House Martin.

Richard's Pipit (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*)**1 record**

Scarce autumn migrant, very rare in spring.

A typical late autumn record but very short-staying, flying off South soon after it appeared.
1, Herm Common, 27th Oct (MPL).

Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*)**12 records**

Uncommon passage migrant.

Most Spring records were migrant birds at Pleinmont starting with 5 on 22nd Apr (MAG, MPL). The species was only recorded on a further 3 dates – 6th, 12th and 13th May. Autumn migration was also very weak, with birds on 7 dates, mainly in August, apart from the final bird at Pleinmont on 29th Sep (WRT).

Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*)

Common resident species and passage migrant. Declining breeding bird.

No unusually large groups or heavy passage was reported this year, but flocks did build up at various headlands and fields during the migration season. A poor breeding season was estimated.

Rock Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*)

Common breeding species, with additional wintering birds.

Birds were seen in all coastal areas, the largest flock reported being 12 at Vazon on 1st Mar (RAL).

Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava flavissima*)

Quite common passage migrant. Former breeder.

The first sighting of the year was at the Grande Bouet on 4th Apr (RJM), but no others were seen until 14th. Migration was noted until the first week of May but only in very small numbers, with no groups of over 5 being reported. The final Spring record was on 23rd May. Birds returned from 23rd Aug but there were no large counts this year. Most had passed through before the end of September, with only one sighting after mid-October – at Soldiers Bay on 27th Oct (LT).

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*)

Quite common winter visitor and migrant.

1 to 2 were seen wintering at various sites on the island, although there was some evidence of movement with 6 birds watched flying in at Jerbourg on 11th Feb (RAL) and 5 feeding at Vazon the day before (BK). One bird lingered at the Reservoir until 4th Apr (RAL). Autumn migrants appeared from 15th Sep when one was at Vale Pond (LT). Thereafter, 1 or 2 birds were recorded at various sites until the end of the year.

Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla alba yarrellii*)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Sometimes breeds.

Commonly seen during the winter and passage periods. No actual roost counts were made but 40 'alba' wagtails went over St' John to roost on 23rd Oct (R&MA). This race of Pied Wagtail generally disappears during April and returns to the island during October to winter in large numbers.

White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba alba*)

Quite common passage migrant. Sometimes breeds.

On 17th Mar, the first White Wagtails were noted at Pleinmont (WRT). Passage peaked during April and flocks of up to 30 were noted at sites such as the Old Aerodrome. Numbers petered out during May but a male was present at Pulias Pond on 11th Jun (MPL). A juvenile at Claire Mare on 24th Jul may have been locally bred (AJB). Numbers again passed through in August and September before they vacated the island for their winter quarters.

Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)

Very common resident species.

Commonly noted at all sites.

Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)

Very common resident species.

Commonly noted at all sites.

Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)

Very common resident species, also passage migrant and winter visitor.

Commonly noted at all sites, numbers augmented by continental birds arriving from the last week of September to winter in the island.

wintering Robin, L'Ancresse G.C. – M.P.Lawlor



Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor, rare in summer. Bred once.

1 or 2 birds were noted wintering at various sites during the first three months of the year. Passage was noted in mid-March when, for example 6 birds were together at the Shingle Bank on 17th (MAG, WRT). Also, between 14th Feb and 31st Mar, a male bird regularly sung from waste ground by Clos des Pecqueries, St. Sampson (MPL). At least 2 different females accompanied it during this time, but there was no sign of nesting. None were reported in summer this year, so the next birds were at Jaonneuse Bay on 14th Oct (MPL). 1 or 2 were noted regularly on migration at many sites, with many of these staying to winter around the island.

Common Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*)

Uncommon passage migrant.

The arrival date of 12th Apr at Pleinmont (RJM, LT, AJB) was rather late for the species. Approximately 23 birds were noted up until 6th May, with 5 birds at Pleinmont on 27th Apr (RJM, LT). A male bird in the Fauxquets Valley on 19th Aug was the first of the returning migrants (AG). About 20 birds were seen during the autumn season, with a first-winter male bird lingering very late in gardens in St. John, SPP until 2nd Nov (R&MA).

Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*)

Passage migrant – uncommon in spring, quite common in autumn.

Very few were seen on spring passage this year. After the first 3 at Pleinmont on 27th Apr (LT, RJM), only 3 more males were encountered – all at Pleinmont on 28th Apr, 6th May and 12th May. Autumn migration started on 2nd Aug with a single at Pulias Pond (MPL). Although more birds were seen during this season, the passage was not at all large, peaking with 9 at Clos des Pecqueries on 29th Aug, and ending with one on Herm Common on 27th Oct (MPL).

Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*)

Common breeding resident and passage migrant.

Many pairs bred in suitable habitat, mostly around coastline. During the non-breeding season birds were more dispersed in other habitats. 20 birds at Fort Doyle on 21st Oct was evidence of migration.

Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)

Common passage migrant, irregular breeder.

The first arrival occurred on 6th Mar when 4 birds fed on Vazon beach (JMA). From the 10th Mar to 28th May, migrant Wheatears were a regular sight on the island. 28th Apr seemed to be the peak date but there was no huge numbers seen. On 10th and 11th Jun, a handful of late birds were recorded (AJB, LT). Autumn migration began on 28th Jul at Chouet (CJM) with birds present for the next three months. No passage of more than 25 birds was recorded at any one site, and numbers in September seemed especially low. The last of the regular migrants was at Portinfer on 30th Oct (MPL), with unusually, no November record. However, a further bird was recorded at Fort Doyle on 6th Dec (LT).

Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*)

10+ birds

Uncommon passage migrant.

On the last day of March, 4 birds arrived at Pleinmont (MAG), with 2 remaining the next day. One or two male birds were in the Fort le Marchant/Fort Doyle area on 17th Apr (MPL), and a single bird was seen on Herm on 6th May (MAG, CJM, WRT). There was a series of record in mid-October, with singles at Pleinmont on 13th and 14th (BGW, MAG), at Marais Nord on 14th (LT) and on Herm on 14th (TDCE, JMA). A very late bird was seen at Fort Saumarez on 11th Nov (TDCE).

Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)

Very common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Commonly noted at all sites, with additional influxes recorded during the autumn and winter months.

Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*)

Quite common passage migrant and winter visitor – numbers vary.

There were very few birds present on the island at the start of the year, with only a handful of reports until the last at Les Vauxbelets on 9th Feb (LT). Migrating birds turned up from 28th Oct at Icart (AJB) with larger numbers moving through during November. The largest flock reported was 70 at Marais Nord mid-month (RJM, LT). Small flocks were reported until the end of the year.

Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)

Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Commonly noted at all sites, with additional influxes recorded during the autumn and winter months.

Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*)

Common passage migrant and winter visitor – numbers vary.

Flocks of up to 30 birds were recorded during January and February, but few were recorded afterwards, until 2 late birds were at Torteval Church on 13th Apr (LT). Return passage began over Pleinmont on 13th Oct (WRT, MPL) with a sudden movement of over 100 birds. From this date until the end of the year, flocks of up to 200 were seen at various sites on the island.

Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*)

Uncommon breeding resident and passage migrant.

Observed infrequently, mainly in parkland, with groups of up to 5 birds recorded.

Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cettia*)

2 records

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Has probably bred.

Only a very short period for this species to be recorded singing, indicating it may have just arrived.
1 singing bird, Grande Mare/Rue des Bergers, 5th to 15th Apr (AJB)
[Another bird was ringed at Claire Mare NR.]

Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella naevia*)

16 records

Uncommon passage migrant.

After the first was singing at Les Tielles on 13th Apr (RJM, LT), another 10 birds were recorded during the next 16 days – at Jerbourg, Pleinmont, Icart, Chouet, L'Eree, Rue des Bergers and Clos des Pecqueries (MAG, MPL, AJB, RJM, LT). A further 5 birds were ringed during the year (JH).

Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*)

Quite common passage migrant but not easily seen. Occasionally breeds.

An early bird was recorded at the Trinity Cottages ringing site, Pleinmont on 31st Mar (LT, CMK). The main passage of birds was recorded through the island's wetter areas between 6th Apr and 27th May. There were a few records in June and July, before birds started passing through again during autumn migration. The last records were at Claire Mare and Pezeries/Portlet on 19th Oct.

Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*)

Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

Recorded late this year, with the first in the reedbed at Vale Pond on 17th Apr (MPL). Good numbers passed through, with singing and breeding birds located at most reedbed sites, even quite small ones. Good migration was noted in August and early September, but there were no October records.

Dartford Warbler (*Sylvia undata*)**c.7 pairs*****Uncommon breeding resident.***

Breeding birds on the south-western cliffs were seen throughout the year. A maximum of only 3 birds were counted at Pleinmont in Spring, indicating perhaps a reduction in breeding pairs there. Also cliff-top birds were present at Corbiere, Prevote and Le Gouffre during the breeding season indicating probable pairs there. The breeding pair in the north at Fort le Marchant produced at least one young, but there may have been further pairs in the extensive Gorse. Further range expansion was suggested late in the year with birds recorded at Fort Doyle and on Herm, which bodes well for the next breeding season.

Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*)**3 records*****Uncommon passage migrant and scarce breeding summer visitor.***

Again a poor year - unless birders are not recording all their sightings. A few pairs probably breed in the scrub but are very difficult to find and prove.

1, Clos des Pecqueries, 28th Apr (MPL) – 1 singing, Pleinmont, 6th May (MAG, CJM, WRT) – a breeding pair, Pleinmont, 10th Jun to at least 1st Jul (AJB).

Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*)***Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.***

Birds were first recorded on the island on 14th Apr, with sightings at both Jerbourg and Pleinmont (MAG, AJB). The species seems very common around the island with hundreds of singing birds and breeding pairs. The last record this year was on 30th Sep at Pleinmont (WRT).

Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*)***Quite common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, uncommon winter visitor.***

Equal numbers of male and female birds were reported wintering at the start of the year, but singing males were in evidence during March. Spring passage peaked in late April. Autumn migrants were commonest in mid to late October, but few were recorded in November. Single figures were recorded in December.

Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*)***Uncommon breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.***

The first Garden Warbler of the year was recorded at Pleinmont on 12th Apr (RJM,LT), with a second on 27th. The majority of the spring migrants were recorded in May, with the species being especially visible in the last week. Breeding was proved at Pezeries and Corbiere (LT, RJM), but clearly occurred elsewhere. Autumn migration was poor and few birds were seen.

Pallas's Warbler (*Phylloscopus proregulus*)

2 records

Recently, a rare autumn passage migrant – 8 previous records, all since 1991.

A bird was trapped and ringed at Trinity Cottages, Pleinmont on 27th October.

(J. Hooper, C. M. Kinnersly)



Pallas's Warbler – Pleinmont – B G Wells

Another bird seen in a private garden at La Couperderie, St. Peter Port on 23rd November, was described perfectly by the observer. This is now the latest date for the species.

(G. G. Chan)

Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*)

2 records

Scarce autumn passage migrant.

A typical pair of records. 31 have now been ringed in the Bailiwick.

1 trapped and ringed, Trinity Cottages, Pleinmont, 21st Oct (JH, CMK) – 1, Track Marais, 28th Oct (LT).



Yellow-browed Warbler – Pleinmont – C M Kinnersley/J Hooper

Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*)**1 record**

Scarce passage migrant, mostly in spring.

Not a very productive year for this species with no singing birds recorded.
1, Herm, 6th May (WRT, MAG, CJM, MPL)

Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*)

Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, uncommon winter visitor.

1 to 3 birds were noted at many sites during January and February. Spring migrants arrived from mid-March, with a good passage noted on 1st Apr. Chiffchaffs were very common during the autumn migration, with many birds choosing to stay for the winter.

Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)

Common passage migrant, uncommon breeding summer visitor.

On 21st Mar, an early bird was present at the Reservoir (JH). More birds arrived from 1st Apr and numbers peaked during that month. As usual, the species was not very common during the summer until migrants appeared during August. Numbers fizzled out during September, with only a single October record - on Herm, on the rather late date of 27th (MPL).

Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*)

Common passage migrant and winter visitor, uncommon breeding resident.

Commonly reported, especially during autumn migration in October and November. Only small numbers can be seen during the summer in suitable habitat.

Firecrest (*Regulus ignicapillus*)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Has probably bred.

Widespread during January and February in small numbers. Four records in March, plus 3 in April were spring migrants, with an additional record at Kings Mills on 31st May (LT). An early autumn bird was seen at Maurepas Road on 9th Sep (LT), before the majority arrived from 24th Sep. During October and November migrants were not difficult to find in all suitable habitats. In December there were very few reported, compared to the early winter period. 47 Firecrests were ringed on the island during the year.

Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*)

Uncommon to quite common passage migrant, scarce breeding summer visitor.

The first arrival was on 6th May when many birds were noted on Herm and at Pleinmont, with migration continuing throughout that month. As usual, a few birds spent the summer here, with breeding proven at Pleinmont and probably at Saumarez Park and Fauxquets Valley. Autumn migration was noted from mid-August with counts of up to 8 birds made. There were 3 October records, including a very late bird on Lihou Island on 29th Oct (AJB).

Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*)

Uncommon to Quite common passage migrant.

There were two very early males recorded on 1st Apr – at Le Gouffre and the Reservoir (LT, RJM). These equalled the earliest ever record for the island. Another 10 birds were seen between 19th Apr and 6th May.

Autumn birds arrived from 20th Aug (MPL) with another 15 recorded up until 5th Sep. After that, there was one at Pleinmont on 22nd and 23rd Sep, then the final bird at Silbe on 26th Oct (AJB).

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Bearded Tit (<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>) | 10+ birds |
|---|------------------|

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

As is usual nowadays, all records were from the Claire Mare NR, where they can be very elusive. Up to 4, 19th Jan to 15th Mar (LT, RJM) – 2 on 27th Oct (LT), with 6 (3 males, 3 females) there the next day

| |
|---|
| Long-tailed Tit (<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>) |
|---|

Uncommon to quite common resident breeding species.

Commonly recorded on the island, the largest count reported was 49 at Portlet on 24th Nov (MAG).

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Coal Tit (<i>Parus ater</i>) | 1 record |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|

Scarce, irregular winter visitor and passage migrant – has bred.

The species is very difficult to catch up with at the moment.
1, Saumarez Park, 19th Nov (TDCE)

| |
|--|
| Blue Tit (<i>Parus caeruleus</i>) |
|--|

Very common resident breeding species.

Very commonly seen throughout, but no large flocks were reported.

| |
|---|
| Great Tit (<i>Parus major</i>) |
|---|

Very common resident breeding species.

Very commonly seen throughout, but no large flocks were reported.

| |
|--|
| Short-toed Treecreeper (<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>) |
|--|

Common resident breeding species.

Commonly seen in suitable habitat. 12 were in Saumarez Park on 19th Nov (TDCE).

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Golden Oriole (<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>) | 1 record of 2 birds |
|---|----------------------------|

Scarce to rare spring migrant

Again, as last year, a pair of Orioles was seen in late Spring, this time at their most favoured location.
2, Fauxquets Valley, 1st Jun (DC)

| |
|------------------------------------|
| Magpie (<i>Pica pica</i>) |
|------------------------------------|

Very common resident breeding species.

Very commonly seen throughout, but no large flocks were reported.

Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*)**8+ birds**

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Recently rare breeder.

All reports were either from the South cliffs between Pleinmont and Icart, or flying to the corvid roost in the Fauxquets Valley. The largest count was 8 birds at Les Tielles (GDA) where at least one pair probably bred.

Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*)

Very common resident breeding species.

Very commonly seen throughout. Often, large flocks of over 100 built up, especially in the central valleys.

Raven (*Corvus corax*)**2 breeding pairs**

Uncommon resident breeding species.

The Guernsey pair were successful as 5 juveniles were seen at Les Tielles in April. The pair on Herm must also have been successful as the adults could be seen bringing in food to the nest site. Birds wandered widely all over the island, and flock sizes of 6 were not uncommon, although the juvenile birds seemed to leave the island in the autumn.

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Very common resident breeding species, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Flocks of up to 1000 were not uncommon in winter, with equally large migrant flocks passing through the island in the autumn.

Rose-coloured Starling (*Sturnus roseus*)**4 records**

Rare autumn passage migrant – 16 previous records.

The first of a record year, was also the most interesting as it was the first pink-plumaged adult bird recorded on the island since 1972. It was seen briefly on the grass verge at Les Banques, St. Sampsons on 7th August, but did not stay around.

(T. D. C. Earl)

A juvenile appeared on rocks at Jaonneuse Point on 31st August, and stayed in the area until 2nd September.

(L. Thomson)



juvenile Rose-coloured Starling (second left) – Jaonneuse – 1st September 2001 – M P Lawlor

Another juvenile was seen in exactly the same area as the earlier adult bird – at Les Banques – on 28th September.

(R. J. Murphy)

A final juvenile was videoed in a garden near Vazon on 27th October, reappearing around Cobo village on 30th October. These sightings show Guernsey to be one of the top places to see this species in the whole of Western Europe with 10 records in 5 years.

(R. R. Cave, M. P. Lawlor)

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Common resident breeding species.

Commonly seen throughout, but no large flocks were reported.

Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*)

Common resident breeding species, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Commonly recorded all year, with an increase in numbers during the migration and winter periods. The largest flocks were in the fields around Camp du Roi where 500+ were estimated on 24th Feb (RAF).

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

15 records of 26 birds

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

There were 2 records in the early part of the year - 1, Rue des Landes, St Peters, 13th Jan (TDCE, PAC) – 1, Reservoir, 11th Feb (RJM, LT). Between late October and mid November there was evidence of autumn migration with 15 birds reported from 9 sites – the first of these being at Le Bigard on 21st Oct (MAG). There were 3 further records at the end of the year.

Serin (*Serinus serinus*)

6 records of 7 birds

Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor. Has bred on occasion.

Quite a good spread of records. The June birds may indicate that there was a breeding pair somewhere in the South or West of the island.

1 female, Jerbourg, 14th Apr (MAG) – 1 singing male, Reservoir, 23rd Apr (RAL) – 1 male, Le Bigard, 4th Jun (LT) – 1 male, near St. Peters Church, 19th Jun (LT) – 1 juv, near Rocquaine. 8th Oct (JH) – 2, Pleinmont, 4th Nov (TDCE)

Greenfinch (*Carduelis chloris*)

Common resident breeding species and passage migrant.

Commonly recorded, with flocks of up to a few hundred present in the autumn and winter.

Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)

Common resident breeding species and passage migrant. Less in winter.

Commonly recorded with flocks of up to 50 present throughout the year. Most common during autumn migration, and least common in mid-winter.

Siskin (*Carduelis spinus*)

Scarce to uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

At the start of the year the main sites for records were The Reservoir (max of 20) and Saumarez Park (max of 30), with other records at Le Vauquiedor, Les Vauxbelets, La Ruette des Norgiot, Le Villocq and the Dell Nursery. The last of these wintering birds was at Saumarez Park on 1st Mar (GDA). An early autumn migrant was recorded at Pleinmont on 22nd Sep (MAG), with other birds following from 10th Oct. Small groups were observed widely during October, but numbers soon decreased with few birds remaining to winter – max in December was 10 at Saumarez Park.

Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*)

Common resident breeding species and passage migrant. Less in winter.

Commonly recorded, with flocks of up to 200 reported throughout the year but less common during the mid-winter.

Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)**2 records of 3 birds**

Scarce irregular migrant.

Just three brief migrants passing through the island.

Pair, Saints Bay, 2nd Nov (RJM) - 1, over Portlet, Pleinmont, 18th Nov (WRT)

Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)

Uncommon resident breeding species.

Widely reported in small numbers at various sites throughout the year.

Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*)**1 record**

Rare visitor, usually in autumn or winter

An unexpected sighting was a single bird visiting a bird table at Bas Capelles, St. Sampsons on 8th and 9th July. It was not unpreceded however, as the last record of Hawfinch was at the very same bird table in June 1995.

(R. A. Ferbrache)

Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)**2 records**

Scarce to uncommon autumn passage migrant and winter visitor.

Only 2 brief sightings is a very poor year.

1 female, Chouet, 14th Feb (WS) – 1 female, Vazon, 29th Oct (IH).

Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortulana*)**1 record**

Scarce autumn passage migrant.

September is the peak month for this regular visitor.

1 or 2, Pleinmont, 22nd Sep (AJB)

Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)**6 records of 7 birds**

Uncommon resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Sometimes breeds.

A poor year - the total lack of male birds in reedbeds indicates no chance of breeding at the moment.
1 female, Grande Pre, 19th Feb (LT) – 1 female, Claire Mare, 18th Mar (RJM) – 1 female, Pleinmont, 20th May (AJB) – 2, Herm, 14th Oct (TDCE, JMA) – 1, Fort Doyle, 21st Oct (TDCE) - 1 female, Claire Mare, 3rd Dec (LT)

ESCAPES AND EXOTICA

Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*)

At least one bird was at large during the year.

Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*)

Up to 55 feral birds, including many farmyard and hybrids, spent most of their time at the Old Aerodrome. The numbers are set to increase quickly now that they have started to breed in the area.

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)

Small flocks commuted between Marais Nord, Vale Pond and Barras Lane fields during the year. Also there are a few strange-looking birds which are probably hybrids between Barnacle and White-fronted Goose.

Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)

One was noted on Herm on 16th May (GDA).

Black-throated Laughing-thrush (*Garrulax chinensis*)

An escaped cage bird from SE Asia, one individual was at large during the late summer, visiting various gardens in the north of the island (RAF, RLC).



Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)

An adult male bird visited a garden on La Route de la Charruee, Vale on 27th and 28th July (AGR, VEF).

List of Observers mentioned in the systematic list

| | |
|------|------------------------|
| DJRA | David Andrews |
| GDA | Geoff Atkinson |
| JMA | Joan Anderson |
| R&MA | Rich & Margaret Austin |
| AJB | Tony Bisson |
| TJB | Trevor Bourgaize |
| DC | Dave Corbin |
| RLC | Rodney Collenette |
| PAC | Pauline Chapman |
| RRC | Ralph Cave |
| TDCE | Tim Earl |
| VEF | Vic Froome |
| AG | Tony Grange |
| MAG | Mark Guppy |
| IH | Ian Hall |
| JH | Jamie Hooper |
| BK | Barbara Kendall |
| CMK | Catherine Kinnersly |
| DL | Dee Langmead |
| MPL | Mark Lawlor |
| RAL | Rob Lihou |
| CJM | Chris Mourant |
| JMM | Julian Medland |
| RJM | Bob Murphy |
| MAJR | Mike Rogers |
| MCS | Mary Simmons |
| WS | Win Symons |
| LT | Liz Thomson |
| WRT | Wayne Turner |
| GV | Graham Vaudin |
| PKV | Paul Veron |
| BGW | Barry Wells |

sev Several people were present at the time the bird appeared

Plus thanks to all other observers who contributed records used in this report.

WADER COUNT DATA

Table showing the total number of selected waders at Guernsey coastal sites during 2001
(taken from the monthly Wetland Bird Survey)

Compiled by the wader count co-ordinator, Wayne Turner

| Date of count | Oystercatcher | Ringed Plover | Golden Plover | Grey Plover | Sanderling | Purple Sandpiper | Dunlin | Bar-tailed Godwit | Whimbrel | Curlew | Redshank | Turnstone | Uncounted Sectors |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|------------|------------------|--------|-------------------|----------|--------|----------|-----------|-------------------|
| 28 Jan | 692 | 101 | | 127 | 54 | | 371 | | | 154 | 16 | 181 | 0 |
| 25 Feb | 555 | 92 | | 120 | 24 | 1 | 237 | | | 82 | 16 | 214 | 0 |
| 11 Mar | 514 | 25 | | 24 | 2 | 1 | 35 | | | 45 | 17 | 349 | 1 |
| 8 Apr | 482 | 28 | | 9 | 1 | 6 | 39 | | | 6 | 3 | 122 | 0 |
| 7 May | 257 | 41 | | 2 | 2 | | 81 | 2 | 20 | 9 | | 88 | 0 |
| 3 Jun | 267 | 10 | | | 5 | | 30 | | 2 | 8 | | 3 | 0 |
| 22 Jul | 384 | 6 | | | | | | | | 26 | 3 | 21 | 0 |
| 19 Aug | 539 | 225 | | 31 | 33 | | 87 | | 9 | 21 | 30 | 196 | 0 |
| 16 Sep | 337 | 132 | 5 | 5 | 5 | | 41 | 16 | | 55 | 11 | 107 | 1 |
| 7 Oct | 223 | 30 | | 1 | 39 | | 15 | 6 | 1 | 10 | 23 | 102 | 1 |
| 4 Nov | 765 | 93 | 3 | 73 | 64 | 5 | 35 | 3 | | 70 | 37 | 207 | 1 |
| 16 Dec | 525 | 121 | 52 | 72 | 21 | 1 | 299 | 4 | | 53 | 21 | 87 | 0 |

Contributors:- Wayne Turner (Local Organisers).

Pat & Vera Webb, Steve Brooks, Bob Murphy, John Aslett, Julian Medland, Mary Simmons, Tony Bisson, Pete Vaudin, Wayne Turner (Sector Counters).

Chris Brown, Julie Coquelin, Tony Grange, Chris Mourant, Anne Seebeck, Liz Thomson (Relief Counters).

SEAWATCHING LOG

The table below shows seabird passage off Jaoenneuse Point, Vale during Autumn 2001. Seawatching was carried out on approximately 35 days during the autumn, and so this table just picks out the most interesting 10 days. Hence, the 'total' row at the bottom is the whole autumn passage total, rather than the total from these 10 days.

Compiled by Wayne Turner.

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Wind Direction</i> | <i>No. of hrs watched</i> | <i>Cory's Shearwater</i> | <i>Sooty Shearwater</i> | <i>Manx Shearwater</i> | <i>Balearic Shearwater</i> | <i>Pomarine Skua</i> | <i>Arctic Skua</i> | <i>Long-tailed Skua</i> | <i>Great Skua</i> | <i>Unidentified skua sp.</i> | <i>Sandwich Tern</i> | <i>Common/Arctic Tern</i> | <i>Black Tern</i> |
|---------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 5/8 | W3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 8 | | 2 | | 1 | | 5 | 1 | |
| 27/8 | NNE4 | 6 | | | 1 | | | 22 | 2 | 2 | | 22 | 39 | |
| 31/8 | NW4 | 7.5 | | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 12 | | 7 | | 19 | 10 | |
| 4/9 | NW4 | 4.25 | | 12 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | | 6 | | 58 | 21 | |
| 5/9 | N3 | 5 | | 7 | 70 | 1 | | 27 | | 3 | | 121 | 73 | 1 |
| 9/9 | NW4 | 7 | | 48 | 36 | 7 | | 34 | | 31 | | 75 | 4 | 1 |
| 10/9 | NW3 | 2 | | 5 | 4 | | 2 | 12 | | 4 | | 27 | 4 | 1 |
| 16/9 | NNW4 | 4.5 | | 10 | 5 | | | 3 | | 5 | 1 | 50 | 35 | |
| 17/9 | N4 | 6.5 | | 4 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 10 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 68 | 69 | 1 |
| 18/9 | NNW4 | 4.5 | | | | 2 | 1 | 10 | | 9 | 1 | 39 | 43 | |
| totals | | 110 | 2 | 99 | 143 | 43 | 11 | 165 | 3 | 101 | 8 | 826 | 383 | 13 |

REPORTS OF RARITIES

These reports are edited versions of the descriptions submitted to the Guernsey Rarities Committee by the finders of the birds involved and were all accepted. If more than one description was submitted, I have picked out one of them to include in this report.

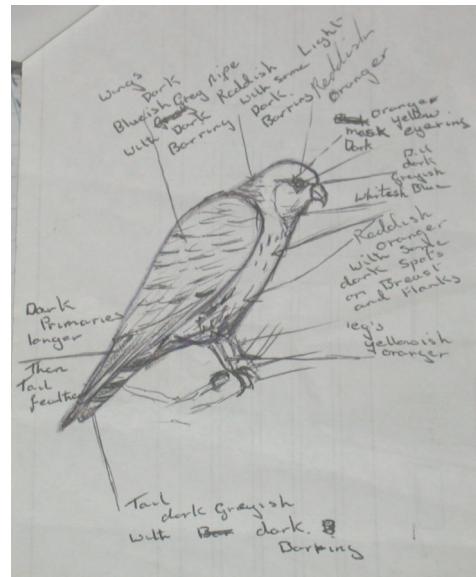
RED-FOOTED FALCON – *Val des Terres* – 30th July 2001

By Chris Mourant

At about 7:50 pm on 30th July I was driving home from work when I noticed a dark falcon flying in front of me at the top of the Val des Terres. The bird landed on a dead tree on the slip road to Fort George and I turned around and went back to where the bird had landed. I observed the bird for about 4 to 5 minutes perched on the dead tree.

I noticed that the bird was not a Kestrel or Hobby as its breast and flanks were of an orangey-reddish-buff colour with some slight speckling on the flanks. The tail and wing were dark bluish-grey with even darker barring. The primary feathers were dark and slightly longer than the tail. There was some barring to the nape and the head was an orange-buff colour with a black highwayman mask to the eye. The chin and throat and the rest of the ear coverts were white. The bill was a greyish blue with a slight orange top. The eye-ring was yellowish-orange. The legs were yellowy-orange.

After a few minutes the bird flew off much like a Kestrel but with proportionately longer wings and shorter tail. It then perched on a telephone mast where I observed it for another 2 to 3 minutes before flying off towards Colman Road. Whilst in flight I noticed the underwing coverts were of an orange-buff colour.



After ruling out other falcon species, I came to the conclusion that it was definitely a Red-footed Falcon and so I notified other birders. Mark Guppy, Wayne Turner, Barry Wells and myself looked for the bird for another hour or so in the surrounding area but could not relocate it. By this time the light had gone and visibility was not good.

RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD – Jaonneuse Point – 16th September 2001

By Wayne Turner

Autumn 2001 was already becoming a memorable year for seabird passage off the north coast of Guernsey, with long spells of onshore winds providing good numbers of skuas, shearwaters and terns. On 16th September, a seawatching friend from Sussex was visiting (Simon Linington), and we arrived in position at La Jaonneuse at 7:30 a.m. Julian Medland, Mark Guppy, Chris Mourant and David Andrews were already 'on watch' and had been there half an hour. Two minutes later Paul Veron arrived.

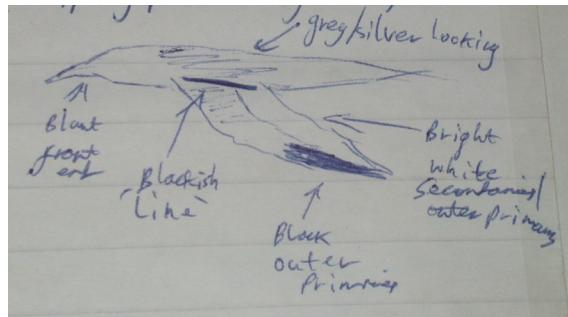
Just 6 minutes after our arrival, a shout went up from Julian – “What on earth’s this coming!?!”. Julian is a very good and experienced seawatcher, and I realised he must be onto something very special indeed. I quickly found the bird through my ‘scope and immediately knew it was the one to which Julian was referring just by its distinctive jizz. It was flying west close to an adult Gannet about 1 km out. There was a deafening silence, then when Mark saw it he cried out “TROPICBIRD!” and Paul instantly agreed.

This ID certainly made sense to me as the bird was quite unlike any other I had ever seen on a seawatch. In fact after the initial shock of the enormity of the sighting, it was quite unmistakable. The perfect light making the plumage detail easy to see even at this distance.

Head – ‘Blunt’ and white. I was unable to pick out any specific bill detail or markings.

Upperparts – Silver/grey ‘shadow’ on mantle spreading onto wing-coverts with thin black line roughly where wings joined body. Black outer primaries contrasting with pure white inner primaries and secondaries (for me this was by far the most striking plumage detail – shining out brilliant white like the rear part of the upperwing on a Sabine’s Gull and juvenile Kittiwake)

Underparts – Appeared all white



Tail – White, but I was unable to discern the long streamers that Mark, Chris and Paul saw “undulating” using their superior ‘scopes.

Wings – Pointed and tern-like, but sturdier.

Flight action – Stiff-winged, similar to Fulmar or Sandwich Tern, but with a peculiar ‘robotic’ beat which was constant. The body was tilted back slightly in flight with the head higher than the tail, as if coming in to land all the time. (reminiscent of a harrier jump-jet coming to land on an aircraft carrier). It maintained a steady height of perhaps 20 metres above the surface of the water for almost the whole 3 minutes of our viewing, before dipping down towards the end as it went behind some rocks that impeded our view.

Although we regretted the bird not being closer, we were grateful that it was at least at an identifiable distance and an adult! Immediately following the sighting we were all both euphoric and bewildered. In the past we had discussed fantasy birds such as Little Shearwater and Fea’s Petrel passing in front of us one day, but never had Red-billed Tropicbird entered our wildest dreams!

[N.B. descriptions were received from all the people mentioned in the above account]

EAGLE sp. – over St. Peter Port Harbour – 20th November 2001

By Wayne Turner

Having checked St. Peter Port Harbour in my lunch hour, I was walking between the Crown Pier and the Weighbridge when all of a sudden, the gulls that had been roosting on the pontoons (perhaps 50+) took flight and began to circle in a tight group over the harbour. I realised the most likely cause was a large bird of prey and Hen Harrier, Buzzard or a late Osprey all sprung to mind.

Initially I scanned the melee but became increasingly frustrated at not spotting the type of bird I was searching for. I suddenly noticed with the naked eye a huge, dark bird soaring well above the flock of gulls. The silhouette screamed at me “eagle!”. It was difficult to judge its size due to it being a lone bird, and consequently it was also difficult to judge its height; but my initial impression was that it was nearly the size of the Griffon Vulture that visited us in August 2000, and its height I would estimate to have been approximately 1000 feet.

I watched the bird soar for a couple of minutes gradually drifting north, then ran to a nearby phone box and rang my wife who phoned Julian Medland (who’s office overlooks the harbour) and Barry Wells (who often checks Belle Greve Bay at lunchtime). Barry was away that day, but Julian did eventually manage to get distant views as it glided off north-east in the direction of Alderney between St. Sampsons and Herm.

Summary of features noted:

Size and shape – classic ‘eagle’

Head and neck – strong but not ‘huge’. Dark brown. Bill seemed substantial but not ‘massive’.

Wings – Long and square-ended with long ‘fingers’. Underwing colour dark brown, darkest on flight feathers, slightly warmer, rufous-toned coverts. No pale or white patches were visible, even on axillaries. Inner primaries and secondaries worn and dishevelled.

Body – Dark brown below.

Tail – Dark brown with no apparent translucence or pale feathers. Although only seen against deep blue sky. Not particularly long or short, at some angles appearing wedge shaped.

Flight – soared on flattish wings. Glided effortlessly with very few wingbeats seen during whole sighting.

Editor’s notes:

It is worth noting that on the very next day, three observers independently saw a very large bird of prey on Sark (with another sighting there on 21st Dec).

Although there is no doubt the bird was an eagle of some description, the observers feel that they cannot narrow it down to a definite species. This was due to the lack of a telescope, the height of the bird, the mainly silhouette views and the short time period of observation. White-tailed or Spotted Eagles are possibilities but a few other species could also be included as outside chances.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL – La Claire Mare NR – 1st December until April 2002

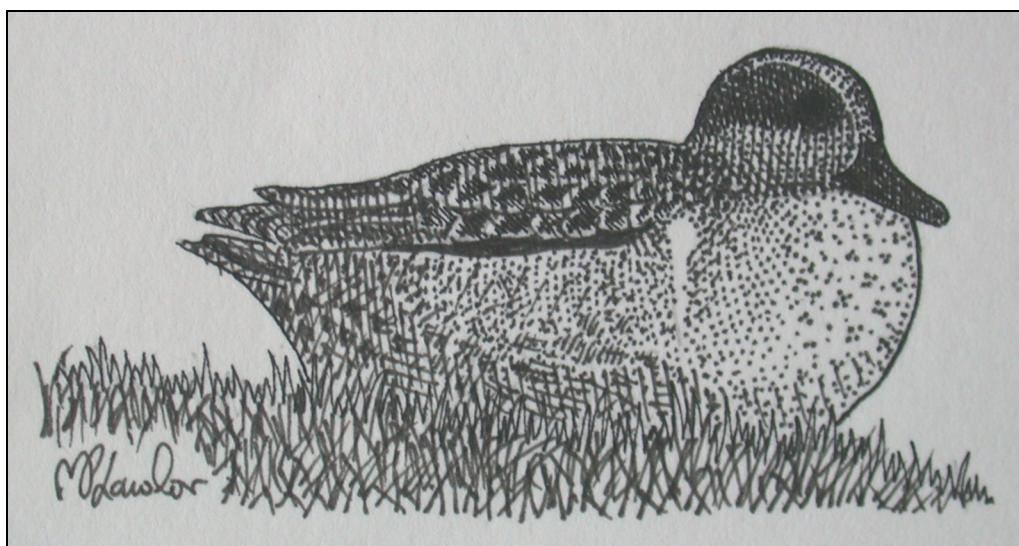
By Mark Guppy

I noticed the bird with ten or so Eurasian Teal within a few minutes of entering the hide at Claire Mare. I picked it out from the other Teal by its vertical breast stripe. Although, it being a first-winter male, the white stripe was not very well pronounced and was broken half way through.

The next diagnostic feature was its pale border around the green head pattern. This was more indistinct than on the Eurasian Teal. It had no horizontal scapular line and its back was quite patchy with brown feathers rather than an adult’s greyish back.

I phoned Wayne Turner on the mobile and he arrived 15 minutes later. After a look and a chat for a few minutes, we decided it was definitely a 1st-winter drake Green-winged Teal – the first for Guernsey. The news was then spread on the grapevine and many other people saw the bird.

When I observed the bird on 9th February 2002 at the same site, its plumage had advanced a great deal. The white vertical line was much more pronounced and the patchy back feathers were less in evidence. The black edging round its yellow vent was stronger than before. The green speculum appeared larger than on a Eurasian Teal.



Green-winged Teal – M P Lawlor

LIST OF SPECIES REQUIRING A WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

If you see any of the following species, please fill in a rarity form, write a full description and send it to the recorder. If you need a form, contact the recorder.

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cory's Shearwater | Long-tailed Skua | Common Rosefinch |
| Great Shearwater | Sabine's Gull | Hawfinch |
| Leach's Petrel | Ring-billed Gull | Cirl Bunting |
| Red-billed Tropicbird | Iceland Gull | Little Bunting |
| American Bittern | Glaucous Gull | Yellow-breasted Bunting |
| Little Bittern | Roseate Tern | Black-headed Bunting |
| Night Heron | White-winged Black Tern | Corn Bunting |
| Green Heron | Little Auk | Rose-breasted Grosbeak |
| Squacco Heron | Pallas's Sandgrouse | |
| Cattle Egret | Great Spotted Cuckoo | |
| Great White Egret | Snowy Owl | |
| Black Stork | Tawny Owl | |
| White Stork | Nightjar | plus |
| Spoonbill | Alpine Swift | any species that has not |
| Mute Swan | Little Swift | occurred in Guernsey before |
| Bewick's Swan | Bee-eater | |
| Whooper Swan | Roller | |
| Bean Goose | Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | |
| Pink-footed Goose | Short-toed Lark | |
| White-fronted Goose (wild) | Woodlark | |
| Greylag Goose (wild) | Shorelark | |
| Canada Goose | Red-rumped Swallow | |
| Barnacle Goose (wild) | Water Pipit | |
| American Wigeon | Citrine Wagtail | |
| Green-winged Teal | Waxwing | |
| Scaup | Dipper | |
| Long-tailed Duck | Alpine Accentor | |
| Velvet Scoter | Nightingale | |
| Smew | Bluethroat | |
| Black Kite | Black-eared Wheatear | |
| Red Kite | Desert Wheatear | |
| White-tailed Eagle | Fan-tailed Warbler | |
| Griffon Vulture | Savi's Warbler | |
| Montagu's Harrier | Aquatic Warbler (untrapped) | |
| Goshawk | Paddyfield Warbler | |
| Rough-legged Buzzard | Marsh Warbler | |
| Red-footed Falcon | Great Reed Warbler | |
| Gyrfalcon | Icterine Warbler | |
| Quail | Subalpine Warbler | |
| Spotted Crake | Sardinian Warbler | |
| Corncrake | Barred Warbler | |
| Crane | Greenish Warbler | |
| Little Bustard | Pallas's Warbler | |
| Black-winged Stilt | Dusky Warbler | |
| Stone Curlew | Western Bonelli's Warbler | |
| Kentish Plover | Red-breasted Flycatcher | |
| Temminck's Stint | Treecreeper | |
| Pectoral Sandpiper | Penduline Tit | |
| Buff-breasted Sandpiper | Red-backed Shrike | |
| Upland Sandpiper | Woodchat Shrike | |
| Solitary Sandpiper | Jay | |
| Spotted Sandpiper | Chough | |
| Wilson's Phalarope | Rose-coloured Starling | |
| Red-necked Phalarope | Tree Sparrow | |

GAZETTEER

All the main birdwatching sites on the island – see the map for approx. locations.

| BAYS | | Other sites |
|------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A | Pezeries | 1 Pleinmont |
| B | Portelet | 2 Lihou Headland/Fort Saumarez |
| C | Rocquaine | 3 L'Eree Aerodrome |
| D | L'Eree | 4 Claire Mare NR |
| E | 'Shingle Bank' | 5 Le Catioroc |
| F | Perelle | 6 Fort le Crocq |
| G | Vazon | 7 Richmond |
| H | Albecq | 8 Fort Hommet |
| I | Cobo | 9 Le Guet |
| J | Grandes Rocques | 10 Mare de Carteret |
| K | Port Soif | 11 Pulias Pond |
| L | Portinfer | 12 Rousse |
| M | Pecqueries | 13 Vale Pond |
| N | Port Grat | 14 L'Ancrese Common & Golf Course |
| O | Grandes Havres | 15 Chouet |
| P | Jaonneuse | 16 Fort le Marchant |
| Q | Pembroke/L'Ancrese | 17 Fort Doyle |
| R | Fontenelle | 18 Le Miellette |
| S | Bordeaux | 19 Marais Nord |
| T | Belle Greve | 20 Grand Pre |
| U | Havelet | 21 St. Sampsons Harbour |
| V | Fermain | 22 Track Marais |
| W | Petit Port | 23 Town Harbour |
| X | Moulin Huet | 24 Bouvee |
| Y | Saints | 25 Jerbourg Pt. |
| Z | Petit Bot | 26 Icart Point |
| | | 27 Airport |
| | | 28 Le Gouffre |
| | | 29 Le Bigard |
| | | 30 Corbiere |
| | | 31 Prevote |
| | | 32 Les Tieles |
| | | 33 Mont Herault |
| | | 34 Silbe NR |
| | | 35 The Reservoir (St. Saviours) |
| | | 36 Grande Mare (inc. Golf Course) |
| | | 37 Rue des Bergers NR |
| | | 38 Fauxquets Valley |
| | | 39 Talbot Valley |
| | | 40 Saumarez Park |
| | | 41 Heritage Walk |
| | | 42 Vingtaine de l'Epine |
| | | 43 Barras Lane Fields |
| | | 44 Paradis Quarry |
| | | 45 Gallotin Quarry |
| | | 46 Dell Nursery |
| | | 47 Petit Bot Valley |

