

milvus

The Journal of the Welsh Ornithological Society

VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 2 | 2025





www.birdsin.wales

Officers and members of Council, October 2025

President	Iolo Williams
Chair	Anne Brenchley chair@birdsin.wales
Secretary	Clare Ryland secretary@birdsin.wales
Treasurer	Huw Roberts huwgroberts@icloud.com
Membership Secretary	Alison Noble membership@birdsin.wales
Editor, <i>Milvus</i>	Rachel Taylor milvuseditor@birdsin.wales
Council members:	Emma-Louise Cole Daniel Jenkins-Jones Alun Llwyd Giles Pepler - Vice Chair web@birdsin.wales Rhion Pritchard Mike Shewring
Editor, <i>Welsh Bird Report</i>	Julian Hughes wbr@birdsin.wales
BTO representative	Gethin Jenkins-Jones
RSPB representative	Neil Lambert
WBRC Chair	Steve Stansfield
Published by the Welsh Ornithological Society	ISSN 2752-7999 (online) Charity no. 1037823

Scarce and rare birds in Wales 2024



WELSH BIRDS RARITIES COMMITTEE

Introduction	p 4
Systematic list of Accepted Records	p 6
First records for Wales in 2024	p 34

Editor: Jon Green

Front cover photo: Hudsonian Godwit by M. Barth.

Published on the internet in
December 2025 by
The Welsh Ornithological Society
ISSN 2752-7999

Introduction

This is the twenty ninth annual report of the Welsh Birds Rarities Committee (WBRC), formerly the Welsh Records Panel (WRP) covering the occurrence of rare and scarce bird species in Wales in 2024. The table below summarises the number of scarce and rare birds recorded in Wales, since 2020, in terms of their historical occurrence:

	0-1 records	2-5 records	6-10 records	11-20 records	21-50 records	51-100 records	100+ records	Total
2024	2	4	4	11	39	16	101	177
2023	6	10	6	13	31	34	104	204
2022	3	5	9	10	37	36	78	178
2021	2	8	8	21	15	17	62	133
2020	1	5	4	15	16	37	72	150

2024 was never going to emulate the previous year but it was notable for the large number of large shearwaters reported, yet again off the southwest, probably reflecting the increased water temperature of the SW approaches, and two firsts for Wales, a Hudsonian Godwit on the Dee Estuary and a Black-faced Bunting trapped & ringed on the Gower. The power of social media came to a head, with a Little Crake & Indigo Bunting in Pembroke and a Scops Owl on Anglesey, all reported on various platforms, with only the crake sticking around to be seen by any birders.

This report follows the taxonomy, names and systematic sequence of the new British Ornithologists Union British List (BOU 2023 and subsequent updates) but includes the decisions in the Unified Global Bird Checklist (AviList Core Team 2025) that BOU will adopt in due course. It includes all those records assessed by the WBRC along with those accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) (shown in *italics*). Descriptions of scarce species were received from the County Recorders for all Welsh Counties and occasionally directly from the observers. The report includes many digital photos and WBRC welcomes the submission of any photographic evidence, but this ideally should be accompanied by a written description. WBRC would like to thank everyone who submitted records, all the photographers, the County Recorders, Reg Thorpe, Phil Bristow and everyone else who has helped in the assessment process.

Rare and scarce bird species (assessed by WBRC) are defined as those occurring on average 5 times or fewer annually in Wales. WBRC consider species with an average of < 5 records per year over the previous 10 years. To be removed from the list of species considered by WBRC there has to have been an average of >5 occurrences per year in the previous 10 years with 5, or more, in 5 of those years and a combined total of more than 100 individuals. Any taxon that meets, or is close to, these criteria, will be considered for removal. The committee will also consider other factors such as population trends, distribution changes and identification issues. On occasions, if the rarity of a species increases nationally, BBRC takes over assessment of species previously considered by WBRC. As of 1st January 2024, the full list of species which WBRC consider is as follows:

Taiga Bean Goose	Tundra Bean Goose	American Wigeon	Green-winged Teal
Surf Scoter	Smew	Alpine Swift	Corncrake
Spotted Crake	Red-necked Grebe	Stone-Curlew	Black-winged Silt
American Golden Plover	Temminck's Stint	White-rumped Sandpiper	Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Pectoral Sandpiper	Red-necked Phalarope	Lesser Yellowlegs	Ring-billed Gull
Caspian Gull	White-winged Black Tern	Little Auk	White-billed Diver
Wilson's Petrel	Cory's Shearwater	Great Shearwater	Night Heron
Purple Heron	Golden Eagle	White-tailed Eagle	Montagu's Harrier
Black Kite	Rough-legged Buzzard	Bee-eater	Red-footed Falcon
Red-backed Shrike	Woodchat Shrike	Golden Oriole	Short-toed Lark
Shore Lark	Red-rumped Swallow	Greenish Warbler	Arctic Warbler
Dusky Warbler	Radde's Warbler	Pallas's Warbler	Barred Warbler
Icterine Warbler	Melodious Warbler	Marsh Warbler	Blyth's Reed Warbler
Nightingale	Bluethroat	Red-flanked Bluetail	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Penduline Tit	Citrine Wagtail	Olive-backed Pipit	Serin
Common Rosefinch	Corn Bunting	Cirl Bunting	Ortolan Bunting
Little Bunting	Redpolls - " <i>Mealy</i> ", " <i>Arctic</i> " <i>islandica</i> / <i>rostrata</i>		

Scarce races are considered on the same basis (i.e., all those occurring on average 5 times or fewer annually). However, it is acknowledged that the status, and in some cases the identification, of some races, is very uncertain. The WBRC welcomes well-documented submissions of races that observers consider to be scarce in Wales. Through this process we hope to establish the occurrence of these forms, but submissions will probably in most cases require detailed descriptions, photographic evidence and in some cases biometrics or a specimen.

BBRC have requested submissions of rare races (see Kehoe, C. 2006: Racial identification and assessment in Britain, *British Birds* 99: 619-645 for extra guidance) and the WBRC will forward any claims that are considered sufficiently rare for BBRC to assess. Examples of races for which the WBRC would like to receive submissions are:

Black Brant Goose – <i>nigricans</i>	Black-tailed Godwit – <i>limosa</i>	Bar-tailed Godwit – <i>tamyrensis</i>
Iceland Gull – <i>kumlieni</i>	Grey-headed Wagtail – <i>thunbergi</i>	Coal Tit – <i>ater</i>
Lesser Whitethroat – <i>blythi</i>	Robin – <i>rubecula</i>	Duncock – <i>modularis</i>
Jackdaw – <i>monedula</i>	Bullfinch – <i>pyrrhula</i>	Snow Bunting – <i>nivalis</i>

Any subspecies not on the Welsh List and which does not meet the BBRC criteria as a rare subspecies should also be submitted to WBRC.

The report follows the format introduced last year and that printed in “Birds of Wales” (2021). Where two records probably relate to the same bird then only one is added to the total, while if two records are only possibly of the same bird, then both are added into the totals. In some cases, the figures suggest changes in occurrence in the last twenty years, although it should be noted that some apparent declines may be due, to some extent, to a decline in the habit of observers submitting descriptions or some apparent increases in improved identification criteria and better optics or cameras. Status comments have come from Birds of Wales 2021 and the main references of rarities and scarcities in the UK come from the BBRC report (Bacon et al 2023) and British Bird’s Report on scarce migrant birds in Britain (White & Kehoe).

The names that appear after individual records are of those observers who sent in descriptions (if the finder is known then his /her name is included in italics) and are included here to show recognition of the time taken to produce a description and the observer’s commitment to the nationally recognised system of rare bird record assessment, unless there is a specific request that their name is not shown.

The Panel consists of seven voting members. In 2024 they were: Steve Stansfield, Bardsey (Chairman), Richard Brown – Skokholm & Pembroke, Steve Culley – Anglesey, Chris Jones – Denbigh, Simon Murray – E & W Glamorgan, Paul Roberts E. Glamorgan, Robin Sandham – Caernarfon and a non-voting Secretary, Jon Green - Ceredigion. The longest serving member of the Panel retires, and a new member is elected annually by the Welsh County Recorders and the Council of the Welsh Ornithological Society. At the end of 2024 Chris Jones retired from the Panel and was replaced by Alex Humphreys-Jones (Denbigh). Potential candidates are proposed by County Recorders and anyone who is interested should contact their County Recorder or the WBRC Secretary.

Descriptions, photos, videos and any other relevant evidence of WBRC species should be submitted as soon as possible after the sighting (WBRC description forms are available from the Secretary / County Recorders and downloadable from the WOS Website), preferably via the County Recorder or alternatively direct to the **WBRC Secretary: Jon Green, Crud yr Awel, Bowls Road, Blaenporth, Cardigan. Ceredigion. SA43 2AR. (01239 811561)**. The Panel are keen to receive any descriptions or photographs in electronic form at wrp@birds.wales.

As of August 2024, results of circulation are posted on Bluesky.

Details of records submitted, but not found acceptable or currently pended for further information are found in Appendix 1.

Systematic list of accepted records in 2024

Baikal Teal *Sibirionetta formosa*

Corhwyaden Baical

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

Breeds E. Siberia from Yenisey River east to Anadyr & Kamchatka, north to 70°N, although breeding range believed to have contracted in recent years. Most winter South Korea and lower Yangtze River, China, with small numbers regular E. & S. Japan.

2023 Caernarfon:

2CY+ male, Foryd Bay 5 Feb – 22 Mar (J. Tragen, T. Williams *et al*).

Photo right by JM Jones.

Second accepted Welsh record, following the one at Llangorse Lake, **Brecon**, 9 – 18 Jan 2023, assumed to be different individuals. The Llangorse one, probably from Somerset, was with Teal, while the Foryd one was with Pintail.



American Wigeon *Maraca americana*

Hwyaden Wyllt

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
27	1	0	0	2	2	6	7	5	2	2

This species breeds widely across northern North America and winters in the USA, Central and northern South America. The annual number of British records increased to 15-20 during 1990-2018, with the majority seen in Scotland and northern England (White and Kehoe 2020). It is a rare visitor to Wales and shows no sign of becoming more frequent. Several individuals are presumed to have returned annually and visited the same or neighbouring sites in successive years.

Flint: Male, Connah's Quay NR, 11 – 12 Feb (photo PS Haslem, per county recorder).

Denbigh: Male, "storm" type, River Clwyd, 10 – 11 Nov (B. Myerscough), presumed same returning male from last year that was seen on Anglesey, photo below by A. Humphreys-Jones.

E. Glamorgan: 1CY male, Kenfig NNR from 28 Nov into 2025 (N. Donaghy *et al*), photo below right on X by M. Cram.



Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca carolinensis**Corhwyaden Asgell-werdd*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
52	0	0	2	2	5	6	21	10	3	3

Breeds in North America, winters from southern US south to Argentina. Regular vagrant to Britain. Rare vagrant to Wales with a total of 50 accepted records, all of males.

- Pembroke:** Male, Nevern Estuary, Newport 15 Feb – 19 Mar (S. O'Donnell *et al*).
Presumed returning male, Nevern Estuary, 19 Dec until 13 Mar 2025 (C. Hurford *et al*), photo below left by T. Evans.
- Male, Dwr Cleifion, St. Davids, 15 Dec until 2 Feb 2025 (S. Jones *et al*), photo below right.
- E. Glamorgan:** Male, Kenfig 25 Feb (RH Taylor *et al*).
- E. Glam / Gower:** Male, Kenfig Saltmarsh, 27 Apr (R. Jones, D. Black), presumed same as above.

**Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis**Hwyaden Benddu Fechan*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
13	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	4	1

Breeds from central Alaska through eastern Canada to Hudson Bay and south to Wyoming in the USA. It winters along both coastlines of North America, as well as Central America and the Caribbean. A rare visitor to Wales with only twelve records.

- Pembroke:** 1CY female, Penberi Res., St. Davids, 27 Nov 2023 – 18 Mar 2024 (S. Jones, C. Ryland *et al*).
1CY male, Bosherton Lakes, 8 Dec 2023 – 18 Feb 2024 (C. Pickett, A. Sims *et al*).
- E. Glamorgan:** 2CY male, Cardiff Bay 31 Mar, 4 – 17 Apr & 19 Apr (G. Stamp *et al*), same Lisvane Res., 1 – 3 Apr & 18 Apr (P. Bristow, S. Lawrence *et al*).



Bosherton February by B. Haycock.



Lisvane Res., April by P. Bristow.

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata**Mor-hwyaden yr Ewyn*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-09	2010-9	2020-3	2024
89	0	0	0	4	16	15	15	24	10	5

Breeds northern North America, winters on the Atlantic coast, south to North Carolina.

Denbigh:

Male at Old Colwyn - Llanddulas, from 25 Oct 2023 until 30 Mar 2024.

Returning male there from 3 Oct until 2025 (R. Sandham *et al*), increasing to two males from 25 Dec (M. Boa on Whatsapp, *et al*) [increased further in early 2025, to two males, a sub-adult male and a female, from 2 Jan - 18 Apr 2025].

Carmarthen:

Male, off Gilman Point, Carmarthen Bay, 12 Dec (L. Gravett), increasing to three males and a female/imm. 28 Dec, into 2025 (T. Phelps *et al*).

The last record from Carmarthen Bay was of three males and a female in March 2022. The above record could possibly relate to one of these earlier individuals, but as there were no records for 2023, it goes down as a different bird in the statistics. Same sort of story with the Denbigh birds, only one male was recorded in 2023-4 winter and the extra individuals may have been returning birds from earlier years but go down as new birds in the statistics.

Smew *Mergellus albellus**Lleian Wen*

Total 1967-2023	1967-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
369	23	35	75	129	67	34	4	2

Breeds central Europe, mainly a winter visitor to the UK. Added to WBRC list as of 1st Jan 2018 after many years of declining occurrence in Wales. The table above shows the number of Smew reported in the Welsh Bird reports since 1967, when the first Welsh Bird Report was published.

Flint:

Male, Point of Ayr, 10 Jan – 1 Feb (S. Kent *et al*).

Anglesey:

Male, Llyn Alaw, 11 Mar (B. Walsh).

Additional record 2021

Gwent:

Male, River Usk, Llanbadoc, 13 Feb (V. Picken).

Thought to refer to the same returning bird that had been seen previously in this area since 2019.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba**Gwennol Ddu'r Alpau*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
62	4	2	6	5	10	9	6	3	15	2

Breeds discontinuously around the Mediterranean, Turkey and east as far as the Himalayas.

E. Glamorgan:

Kenfig 19 Apr (N. Donaghy *et al*), also seen in Gower.

Gower:

as above, also seen at Port Talbot (Rob Jones *et al*), his photo right.

Caernarfon:

Bardsey 14 May (NJ Phillips).



Corncrake *Crex crex**Rhegen yr yd*

Total 1967 - 2024	1967-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09	2010-19	2020 - 23	2024
173	26	75	8	33	9	16	2	4

Since 1967, when the Welsh Bird Report began, a total of approximately 167 breeding and passage birds have been recorded in Wales. Passage peaks are in April/May, as breeding birds make their way north to Scotland, and in September as adults and juveniles disperse south to Africa.

- Caernarfon:** Singing male, Bardsey, at the “Wetlands”, from 11 - 13 Apr and 20 Apr – 28 May (J. Dodds *et al*).
 Second singing male, Bardsey, at the “Lowlands”, 5 – 10 May (SD Stansfield, K. Fox *et al*).
 Third singing male, Bardsey, at “Nant”, 6 – 24 May (SD Stansfield, J. Wragg, R. Layton).
- Pembroke:** One, probably a juvenile, Skokholm, 24 Oct (R. Brown).

Although direct evidence of breeding is hard to obtain due to the species’ elusive nature, the observed behaviour suggests at least one breeding attempt occurred in the “Wetlands”. The first time since 2005 that a singing male remained on the island throughout the spring, and the first instance of multiple territorial males there since 1956.

Little Crane *Zapornia parva**Rhegen Fach*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
8	3	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	1

Breeds locally in western and central Europe and is more widespread through eastern Europe and Central Asia. It winters in sub-Saharan Africa, Iran and Pakistan.

- Pembroke:** 1CY, Bosherton Lily Ponds, 9 – 15 Oct (A. Braham, J. Etherington *et al*, per County Recorder). The first record for that county. Photo below on X by H. Tudball.



Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena**Gwyach Yddfgoch*

Total since 1950	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1988-89	1990-99	2000-09	2010-19	2020-23	2024
416	6	30	63	133	100	54	24	3	3

Breeds central Europe, mainly a winter visitor to the UK. Red-necked Grebe was added to the WBRC list as of 1st Jan 2017.

E. Glamorgan: Lisvane Res., 11 Jan – 11 Feb (P. Bristow *et al*), photo below by NP Roberts.

Ceredigion: New Quay, 26 – 27 Nov (B. Hughes *et al*).

Carmarthen: Kidwelly, 24 Dec, also seen in 2025, (N. Femandel *et al*).

**Stone-Curlew** *Burhinus oedicnemus**Rhedwr yr Moelydd*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
53	8	1	1	6	7	11	4	10	4	1

Its breeding range extends from southern and eastern England east to Central Asia and south to North Africa.

Ceredigion: Ynyslas, 10 – 21 July (Rus. Jones *et al*).

American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica**Corgwtiad Aur*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
32	0	0	0	0	2	0	9	10	9	2

Another long-distance migrant, the American Golden Plover breeds on coastal tundra from extreme NE Siberia, east across N Alaska and Canada to Baffin Island. It migrates over the western Atlantic to wintering grounds in southern South America.

E. Glamorgan: Adult, Sker Point, 2 – 5 Apr (P. Stephens *et al*).

Denbigh: Adult, Aled Isaf, 21 – 25 Sept (T. Pope *et al*), photo below by finder.

The first county records for both counties.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa limosa**Rhostog Gynffonddu*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0

2021 Pembroke: 3CY, colour-ringed individual, Gann, 18 – 26 Mar (DJ Astins), ringed as a chick in the Netherlands in 2019).

The only other confirmed occurrence in Wales was of a similarly colour-ringed bird at WWT Penclacwydd, 1 June – 1 Aug 2011.



Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*

Rhostog Hudson

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Breeds locally Alaska & N Canada, from Mackenzie River delta to W Hudson Bay. After breeding, most birds stage in James Bay before non-stop migration flight to wintering grounds in S Chile & S Argentina.

Flint: 3CY+ male, Connah's Quay NR, 12 Aug – 11 Sept (G. Robinson, J. Rogers *et al*).

A first record for Wales. It was found on the bunded pools with Black-tailed Godwits on the evening of 12 Aug before it flew across the river to RSPB Burton Mere where the identification was confirmed the following day. It returned to Connah's Quay Reserve on the 14th where it consorted with the Black-tailed flock most days (apart from 18 – 19 Aug when it went to RSPB Burton Mere) until 11 Sept. A short article on the finding of this bird is on p 34.



Photo above by A. Humphreys-Jones taken at RSPB Burton Mere.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scalopaceus*

Giach Gylfinhir

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
23	0	0	1	1	3	3	6	7	2	0

Breeds primarily in Arctic Siberia. In North America, its range is restricted to the coastal tundra of western and northern Alaska and to the east in Canada. They winter on the coast of southern USA and northern South America.

2023 Flint: 2CY, RSPB Burton Mere, 11 Jan – 2 May (per BBRC report), presumed as below.

2022 Flint: 1CY, RSPB Burton Mere, 29 Oct – 1 Nov (per BBRC report).

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Llydandroed Gyfgoch

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
73	12	10	9	4	5	3	12	12	5	1

Pelagic during non-breeding season. Breeds northern Europe. A rare breeder in northern Scotland.

Carmarthen: WWT Penclacwydd, 26 – 29 Aug (D. Westmacott, S. Thomas *et al*), photo below by D. Westmacott.



Spotted Sandpiper *Acitis macularius**Pibydd Brych*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
14	0	0	1	5	3	0	2	1	1	1

Breeds in North America from western Alaska east to Newfoundland and south to California, Texas and North Carolina. Some birds winter in the coastal USA but most winter in Central and South America.

Pembroke:

1CY, 20 – 29 Aug, Marloes Mere (C. Pickett *et al*), photo by finder.
Third county record.

**Lesser Yellowlegs** *Tringa flavipes**Melyngoes Bach*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
32	0	1	3	2	2	2	6	10	5	1

Lesser Yellowlegs breed in northern North America and winters from the USA south to southern South America. Dropped off BBRC's list onto WBRC's as of 1st January 2019.

Pembroke:

Castlemartin Corse, 17 Nov (photo C. Pickett).

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii**Pibydd Temminck*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
68	3	1	4	3	9	10	15	15	7	1

The Temminck's Stint, which breeds from northern Scandinavia eastwards across northern Siberia and winters in west and central Africa and south Asia, is a regular but rare passage migrant to Wales.

Ceredigion:

RSPB Ynyshir, 24 May (Rus. Jone *et al*).

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii*

Pibydd Baird

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
24	0	0	1	5	3	3	5	6	0	1

Breeds in extreme northeast Siberia, across northern Alaska and Arctic Canada as far as northern Baffin Island and northwest Greenland. This species migrates through North American interior to winter on the high Andean grasslands of South America.

Gwent:

2CY+, Goldcliff, GWR, 2 - 4 Aug (J. Garside *et al*), also seen in Lothian 7 – 8 Aug and Lincolnshire 21 Aug – 4 Sept.

Photo right, on X by L. Gregory.

The third record for Newport Wetlands and the fourth for Gwent, the other record was from Llandegfedd Res. in 1997.

**White-rumped Sandpiper** *Calidris fuscicollis*

Pibydd Tinwyn

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
17	0	1	0	4	1	3	3	3	0	2

Breeds in the high Arctic of Alaska and northern Canada on marshy tundra, and winters in southern South America. It is one of the most frequently recorded Nearctic waders in Britain, yet remains very rare in Wales.

Pembroke:

Skokholm, 2 Nov (R. Brown), photo below left by finder.

Nevern Estuary, Newport, 14 – 24 Nov (A. Bookless *et al*), photo below right by DJ Astins.



Only the 3rd & 4th records for Pembroke, previous records were from the Gann 1977 and on the Teifi Estuary 1991.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Mor-wennol Gawraidd

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
18	0	0	1	2	3	3	1	1	4	3

This global seabird breeds on five continents, but in Europe is limited to the north coast of the Black Sea and the coasts of the northern Baltic Sea. The latter population winters in West Africa, as far south as the Gulf of Guinea. A total of 331 were recorded in Britain up to the end of 2020, about five a year on average over the last 30 years (Holt *et al.* 2021). There have been just 18 in Wales, all between 11 April and 6 August, except for one record off Bardsey in October.

Carmarthen:

3CY+, Llangennech, 8 June (B. Beck *et al.*), also seen in Gower.

Two, 3CY+ & 3CY, WWT Penclacwydd, 12 – 15 June (J. Parfitt, D. Rogers *et al.*). Photo opposite by L. Gravett.

Gower:

3CY+, Castell ddu Farm, Pontarddulas, 8 June (CD Brewer), also seen in Carmarthen.

The first multiple bird record for this species in Wales.



The Penclacwydd two were ringed, one of which, Red KA88, had been ringed at Risskaren, Sodermanland, Sweden 10 June 2022, the other couldn't be read. Observers couldn't tell whether the Llangennech / Pontarddulas bird was ringed or not, as it was roosting in the saltmarsh. Quite possibly it was one of the Penclacwydd two, but who knows, so is counted as a different bird.

Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus Philadelpha*

Gwylan Bonaparte

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
34	1	0	0	0	2	5	7	11	6	2

Breeds widely across N North America from W and C Alaska through Canada to James Bay. Winters locally on ice-free rivers and lakes in N USA, and S along both coasts of USA to Mexico and Caribbean.

Ceredigion:

2CY, Teifi Estuary, 26 – 27 Mar (M. Hughes, HA Williams *et al.*).

Carmarthen:

3CY+, Sandy Water Park, 7 – 21 Apr (D. Davidson *et al.*), photo right by B. Stewart.

**Franklin's Gull** *Leucophalus pipixcan*

Gwylan Franklin

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
5	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	1

Breeds locally throughout the interior provinces of temperate Canada and the northern USWA and winters along the Pacific coast of South America.

Carmarthen: 2CY, Kidwelly, 25 June (B. Beck *et al.*), photo right by B. Beck.

All five accepted Welsh records have come from the same area of SW Wales. Eglwys Nunydd Res, **Gower** 1998, Blackpill, **Gower** 1999, Pentre Davis, **Carmarthen** 2005 and Loughor / Penclacwydd / Crofty, **Carmarthen** / **Gower** 2014.



Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*

Gwylan Fodrwybig

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09	2010-19	2020-3	2024
424	0	0	0	24	99	194	92	12	1	2

Breeds N. America and Canada. Winters south of breeding range to S. Mexico, Gulf of Mexico and on the Great Lakes. This species was on the BBRC list from the first UK record at Blackpill Gower 14 – 31 Mar & 7 Apr 1973 until 1987. It was only added onto the WBRC list as of 2011 following declines in Wales and the rest of the UK. Decadal totals above, wherever possible only include new birds. This was not possible during the 1990s when so many individuals were seen at Blackpill. There is also the issue of birds moving from one county to another.

Gower: 2CY, Blackpill, 9 Feb (M. Hipkin).

Pembroke: 2CY, Angle Bay, 6 Mar (DJ Astins).

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

Gwylan Caspia

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	14	8

Resident in much of the Black Sea and Caspian Sea. It also seasonally breeds from the Black Sea, across the north of the Caspian Sea to eastern Kazakhstan, and on the central Asian steppes. More recently the species appears to be spreading westwards in Europe and now breeds in small numbers in The Netherlands. Wintering grounds include the coast of south-west Asia (breeders from the steppes), the north-west coast of Africa, and around the Arabian Peninsula up to north-west India.

Ceredigion:

2CY, Teifi Estuary, 26-27 Mar (M. Hughes, HA Williams *et al*).

Angle/Caern:

2CY, Menai Strait, 7 June (D. Shepherd, S. Prettyman).

Flint:

Adult, Gronant 11 Aug (M. Hughes, R. Sandham), photo right by R. Sandham.
A different adult, Gronant 25 Aug (L. Evans, D. Shepherd).

Caernarfon:

1CY, Bardsey, 3 Aug (E. Betteridge), ringed as a chick in Holland.

Denbigh:

1CY, Old Colwyn, 15 Dec (R. Sandham, Z. Spaul).

Pembroke:

Adult, Gann, 21 Dec (DJ Astins).

Gwent:

3CY Llanwenarth, near Abergavenny, 30 Dec (C. Dyson).

**Little Auk** *Alle alle*

Carfil Bach

Total since 2020	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
6	2	2	1	0	1

Breeds in the high Arctic, where it has a circumpolar distribution, from north-eastern Canada to the Severnaya Zemla archipelago in Russia. It is thought to be the most abundant auk in the Atlantic, with a world population estimated at around 12 million pairs. In Wales it is close to the southern limit of its winter distribution. Added to WBRC list, in 2023, following a decline in Welsh records in recent years.

Anglesey: one off Cemlyn, 19 Dec (D. Wright).

Wilson's Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*

Pedryn Drycin Wilson

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
26	0	0	0	0	2	7	4	0	9	4

Regarded as one of the world's most abundant seabirds, with a population of 4 – 10 million breeding pairs.

It breeds on islands in the southern hemisphere. Outside the breeding season it occurs in all the world's oceans.

Pembroke:

Four, at Sea, Celtic Deep Pelagic, 26 July (DJ Astins, S. Murray *et al*), photos below by DJ Astins.

**Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris borealis*

Aderyn Drycin Cory

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
227	0	0	1	3	29	41	25	17	59	52

Breeds on Berlengas Islands (West Portugal) west to the Azores and south to the Canary Islands. It is pelagic outside the breeding season, most often seen off British and Irish coasts in late summer. Cory's Shearwaters are scarce passage migrants off the Welsh coast. The similar Scopoli's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea* which breeds on Mediterranean Islands and Cape Verde Shearwater *Calonectris edwardsii* from the Cape Verde Islands have never been recorded in Wales.

Caernarfon:

Two off Bardsey, 4 Sept (SD Stansfield).

Pembroke:

50 logged passing Strumble Head, 10 Sept (L. Gravett, C. Grayell, SE Berry), the largest ever day count from there.

Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis*

Aderyn Drycin Mawr

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-19	2020-3	2024
329+	0	1	3	5	51	111	61	57	27	13+

Late summer / autumn passage migrant that breeds in the south Atlantic. Pelagic during non-breeding season, completes clockwise migration around Atlantic Ocean occurring in British and Irish waters mainly during late summer and early autumn.

Pembroke:

Four, at Sea, Celtic Deep Pelagic, 7 Sept (O. Erasmus, A. Champion, DJ Astins).

Six logged passing Strumble Head, 10 Sept (L. Gravett, C. Grayell, SE Berry).

One off Skomer, 10 Sept (M & T Wallen).

Large group, numbering over a hundred large shearwaters, off Grassholm, 12 & 15 Nov (P. Rees), photo right of two. Unfortunately, there is no definitive number of birds involved, so WBRC has accepted 2+ and there were no details of Cory's, so none of that species were accepted either.



Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

Creyr Melyn

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-19	2020-3	2024
16	3	1	0	0	1	1	2	5	2	1

Occurs locally across southern Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia. It winters in Africa south of the Sahara.

Pembroke: 3CY+, Skokholm, 14 – 15 Apr (E. Jatta per R. Dobbins *et al*).

**Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*

Crëyr Porffor

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
87	5	0	3	14	15	8	8	19	10	5

Dispersive migrant, from warmer temperate to tropical zones, southern Europe.

Brecon: Llangorse, 16 – 24 Apr (C. Parry *et al*).

Anglesey: Llyn Coron, 19 Apr – 7 May (M. Thackeray *et al*), photo below by finder.

Ceredigion: Teifi Marshes, 20 Apr (W. James).

Clettwr, Dyfi Estuary, 26 Apr (T. Kistruck, D. Anning *et al*).

E. Glamorgan: Kenfig, 16 May (M. Cram *et al*).



Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus**Boda Llwydwyn*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	3

Breeds mainly in southeast Europe and Central Asia. It winters mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia but breeding records in Finland are now regular.

Carmarthen: 1CY female, WWT Penclacwydd, Carmarthen, 10 Dec 2023 – 14 Apr 2024 (B. Beck *et al*).

Gower: 1CY female, as above, Llanrhidian Marsh 30 Nov 2023 – 14 Apr 2024.

2CY+ female, Llanrhidian Marsh 21 Sept (P. Larkin), possibly the returning individual.

Pembroke: 2CY male, Castlemartin Corse, 5 Jan – 29 Feb (R. Lewis, A. Seaton, D. Ord *et al*).

2CY male, Dowrog, from 8 Oct until March 2025 (S. Jones *et al*), presumed returning individual, as above.

1CY male, Skokholm 19 – 21 Sept (G. Eagle, R. Brown, R. Dobbins *et al*).

Anglesey: 2CY female, Skerries, 3 May (D. Higgins, F. Jarzynski).



Castlemartin Corse, left by C. Pickett, right by A. Merrett



Left at Dowrog by D. Ord, right on Skokholm by G. Eagle & R. Brown, below Skerries by F. Jarzynski.



White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla**Eryr Mor*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-23	2024
22	18	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0

Widely distributed across northern Europe and Asia, from Greenland to the Pacific Ocean. European strongholds are Norway and Russia. Over 120 pairs breed in Scotland following the reintroduction program there. There has also been a similar program of reintroduction into Ireland. More recently the Isle of Wight project has released individuals carry tracking devices. The totals in the table above do not include the Isle of Wight birds or those which are suspected of being escapes.

Meirionnydd: Cwm Prysor, Trawsfynydd, from 6 Dec 2023 until 17 Jan 2024 (G. Elias, J. Shrimpton *et al*).

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus**Bod Baccsiog*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-19	2020-23	2024
76	24	4	12	13	12	4	3	3	0	1

Breeds northern Norway and Finland. Winters mainly in Eastern Europe with small numbers reaching the UK, primarily on the east coast. Rarer further west. Table above gives totals since this species was added onto WRP list.

Caernarfon:

Cwm Eigiau, 20 May (A. Clarke, S. Dorman).

**Scops Owl** *Otus scops**Tylluan Sgops*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-9	2000-09	2010-19	2020-23	2024
3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Breeds across southern and eastern Europe, the Middle East and southern Russia as far east as Mongolia, and winters in Africa south of the Sahara.

Anglesey:

1CY+, Beaumaris 19 Nov (T. Jones per County Recorder).

Photographed roosting in Beaumaris town and posted on social media. Unfortunately, no locals picked up on the posting until it was too late.

The only two previous records were from **Pembroke**, of one caught near Pembroke in spring 1868 and the other trapped & ringed on Skokholm 25 Apr 1955.



Bee-eater *Merops apiaster**Gwybedog Gwenyn*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-99	2000-9	2010-19	2020-23	2024
87	5	3	1	8	11	5	14	20	16	4

Breeds in southern Europe, northwest Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. European birds winter in the Sahel zone in West Africa. Another population is resident in southern Africa (HBW). The species is a scarce migrant visitor to Britain, usually as a spring overshoot, although some have occasionally remained to breed in England. The number of records in Britain has increased, with the annual mean in 2010-18, 73 records, almost double that of 1990-99 (White and Kehoe 2020). Sightings in Wales have mirrored this trend, although the species remains a scarce visitor here.

Anglesey:

Single at Bodorgan, 24 Apr (N. Brown *et al*).

Two, South Stack, 6 May (C. Brookes), photo right.

Pembroke:

One at Martin's Haven, 9 June (D. Watson).

**Red-footed Falcon** *Falco vespertinus**Cudyll Troedgoch*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-9	1970-9	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09	2010-9	2020-23	2024
22	3	2	0	6	4	2	1	3	0	1

A rare visitor which breeds in warmer central Europe and Asia, wintering in sub-tropical savannah and grassland of Africa.

Pembroke:

1CY, Skokholm 3 Oct (G. Eagle, R. Brown).

Tenth record for Pembroke and the second for Skokholm, the previous one was in 1975.



Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus**Fireo Llygatgoch*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
11	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	1

Trans-Atlantic vagrant breeding from Canada south through the central and eastern USA and wintering in northern South America.

Anglesey:

1CY, Breakwater Country Park, Holyhead, 26 Oct (L. Evans, D. Shepherd *et al*), photo JM Jones.

Of the previous ten records, three were on Bardsey (**Caernarfon**) and two on Skokholm (**Pembroke**), with singles at Aberdaron & Porth Meudwy (**Caernarfon**), Sker (**E. Glamorgan**), Porth Clais (**Pembroke**) and South Stack, **Anglesey**.

**Golden Oriole** *Oriolus oriolus**Euryn*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
233	22	4	10	37	27	51	43	25	9	5

Scarce visitor, usually as spring overshoot, from Mediterranean Europe. Breeds NW Africa throughout Europe from Mediterranean north to southern Sweden & southern Finland, Russia, Turkey & Caucasus to NW Iran. Winters equatorial & southern Africa. A scarce summer visitor to Wales, recorded in all counties and particularly in Pembrokeshire. Most of the records fall in May and June as is to be expected with a species overshooting its continental breeding areas.

Anglesey: Male, Holyhead Breakwater Country Park, 13 Apr (D. Shepherd, L. Evans *et al*), photo below left.

Gower: Male, Cwm Ivy 14 – 16 Apr (K. Chandler *et al*).

Second male, Cwm Ivy, 15 – 16 Apr (S. Evans *et al*), photo below right.

2CY male, Kenfig Saltmarsh, 2 June (M. Hipkin).

Caernarfon: Female Bardsey, 10 May (E. Betteridge).



Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*

Cigydd Pengoch

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-69	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-09	2010-19	2020-23	2024
136	6	11	24	12	12	13	14	32	10	2

Breeds from France and northwest Africa east to Ukraine and southern Iran. Winters in Africa south of the Sahara.

Ceredigion: Male, Tanybwllch, Aberystwyth, 12 – 14 Apr (R. Hicks *et al*), photo below left on X by E. Turner.

Pembroke: Male, Skomer, 25 June (per Skomer warden), photo below right.

**Red-backed Shrike** *Lanius collurio*

Cigydd Cefngoch

Total 1967-2023	1967-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
175	14	23	22	33	37	29	15	2

Breeds throughout most of mainland Europe. Table above shows data from 1967 onwards, with those from 1991 assessed by WBRC.

Pembroke:

1CY, Skokholm 27 – 31 Aug (R. Brown *et al*), photo right by finder.

Ceredigion:

Female /immature, LLanrhystud, 21 – 22 Sept (R. Liford, M. Hughes *et al*).



'Nordic' Jackdaw *Corvus monedula**Jac-y-do Llychlyn*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	8	1

Individuals showing features of the Nordic form *C. m. monedula*, include:

Anglesey: Llangefni, 27 Oct photos by S. Culley.

The panel is not certain whether these records relate to genuine Scandinavian birds or whether the plumage characteristics they show are within normal variation for British Jackdaws. Therefore, the panel requests as many photographed records as possible to try to solve this dilemma.

Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla**Ehedydd Llwyd*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
40	0	2	3	3	3	5	13	8	2	1

This migratory lark breeds in southern Europe, North Africa, Central Asia and parts of the Middle East, on open dry plains and arable fields.

Anglesey: South Stack, 3 May (B. Aspin).

European Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis rufula**Gwennol Dingoch*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
39	0	0	0	3	7	4	6	12	5	2

Breeds Iberia, southern France and northwest Africa; Balkans east to Japan and south to Sri Lanka; central Africa. The Western Palearctic population winters in Africa, south of the Sahara. A very rare migrant to Wales with 37 accepted records. Within the UK as a whole, numbers of accepted records increased steadily during the 20th Century, particularly since 2000, resulting in this species dropping from the BBRC's list onto the WBRC's.

Anglesey:

1CY, Cemlyn, 25 May (H. Smith).

Beaumaris, 2 Dec (A. Cassidy), presumed same as below.

Caernarfon:

1CY, Aber Ogwen – Spinnies NR, 29 – 30 Nov (R. Eades *et al*, photo JM Jones).

**Pallas' Leaf Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus**Telor Pallas*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
55	0	0	0	1	7	11	11	19	4	2

A scarce migrant to Wales, which breeds in the coniferous taiga forests of southern Siberia east of the Ural Mountains and in mixed forest as far south as Mongolia. It winters in southeast China and adjacent countries. Not surprisingly, the majority of British records are from the east coast of England and Scotland. Far fewer make it to the west.

Anglesey: South Stack, 11 Oct (L. Evans, D. Shepherd *et al*), photo below left.

Caernarfon: Bardsey, 25 Oct (E. Turner, RI Thorpe), photo below right.

**Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

Telor Crys Mawr

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
12	0	0	1	4	1	2	2	1	0	1

Breeds across much of continental Europe and Fennoscandia, extending east to Mongolia. It winters in tropical and southern Africa.

Ceredigion:

2CY+ male, Cors Fochno, Borth, 1 June (C. Harding).
Photo right by finder.

First record for Ceredigion.

Of the previous 11, two each for Skomer & Skokholm, both **Pembroke** and three from Bardsey, **Caernarfon**. Singles from Penmaenpool, **Meirionnydd**, Llangynog, **Montgomery**, RSPB Conwy, **Denbigh** and RSPB Cors Ddya, **Anglesey**.

**Marsh Warbler** *Acrocephalus palustris*

Telor y Gwerni

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
34	0	1	0	2	6	4	6	9	5	1

A small population breeds in south and east England, however the main breeding grounds are in Eastern Europe. A rare vagrant to Wales with 33 accepted records. All records are assessed by WBRC. Within the UK numbers of records appear to be stable or showing a slight decline, with annual means declining from 53 in the 1990s to 44 in the 2010s.

Pembroke:

trapped & ringed, Skokholm 13 Sept
(R. Dobbins *et al*), DNA confirmed identity.



Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglottal*

Telor Pêr

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
237	0	16	51	30	39	27	26	33	14	1

Breeds in open deciduous woodland and scrubby habitats in northwest Africa and western Europe and winters in Africa, south of the Sahara (HBW). In Britain it occurs more frequently in the south and west and is a scarce migrant to Wales, with almost twice as many records as Icterine Warbler, which tends to occur farther east and north.

Pembroke: Grassholm, 16 Aug (DJ Astins).

**Icterine Warbler** *Hippolais icterina*

Telor Aur

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
130	0	2	20	14	26	30	16	12	9	1

This species replaces Melodious Warbler in northern and eastern Europe, and consequently occurs less frequently in Wales. It breeds in woodland from northeast France to western Siberia and north to Fennoscandia and winters in Africa south of the Sahara. It is a scarce migrant to Wales, where records increased during the second half of the 20th Century but have fallen since a peak in the 1990s. These trends mirror those for the rest of Britain, with an annual mean of 139 during 1990-99 but 78 in 2010-18 (White and Kehoe 2020).

Caernarfon: Bardsey, 6 June (K. Fox).



Barred Warbler *Curruca nisoria*

Telor Rhesog

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
121	1	2	20	6	13	18	22	29	7	3

The Barred Warbler nests in scrub and woodland across the farmed landscape in Europe, east of a line from Denmark to the Adriatic, through southern Russia and Central Asia to Mongolia. The southern edge of Fennoscandia is the northern limit of the breeding range. It winters in a fairly discrete area of east Africa, centred on Kenya. It is a scarce autumn migrant to Wales, although the number of records has increased during the last 30 years. Such a pattern has been evident across Britain, where the annual number of records was 84% higher in 2010-18 than in 1968-89 (White and Kehoe 2020b). It is believed that those found here are part of extended post-juvenile dispersal.

Pembroke: Skokholm, 6 Sept (A. Rosenfeld *et al*), photo by R. Brown.

Anglesey: Cors Ddyga, 18 Sept (T. Williams, I. Hawkins).

Caernarfon: Great Orme, 12 Oct (M. Hughes).

**Western Subalpine Warbler** *Curruca iberiae*

Telor Brongoch y Gorllewin

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-2	2023
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	1

Race *iberiae* breeds Iberian Peninsula, S France and NW Italy, race *inornata* breeds Morocco, N. Algeria, Tunisia & NW Libya. Winters Sahel from Senegal to Sudan.

Pembroke:

2CY+ male, Ramsey 17 Mar
(A. Perry, N. Stephens).

Previous Welsh records include individuals on Bardsey 18 Apr 2009 & 29 Apr 2011 and at Uwchmynydd, 19 – 30 Apr 2013, all **Caernarfon**, and in **Pembroke**: 2CY female Skomer, 20 May 2018, 2CY female Skokholm 8 May 2020, another 18 July 2021 and 2CY male 24 June 2023.



Eastern Subalpine Warbler *Curruca cantillans*

Telor Brongoch Dwyrain

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-99	2000-09	2010-19	2020-22	2023
21	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	12	2	1

There are two subspecies, the nominate form that breeds in Sicily and southern Italy, and *C.c. albistriata* that breeds in the very northeast of Italy, the Balkans and western Turkey. Both are presumed to winter in the eastern part of the Sahel. There were 111 records in Britain up to end of 2020 (Holt *et al.* 2021).

Caernarfon:

2CY male, Bardsey 17 May (E. Betteridge *et al.*).

**Western / Moltoni's / Eastern Subalpine Warbler** *Curruca iberiae /subalpina/cantillans*

Rhywogaeh Telor Brongoch

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-99	2000-09	2010-19	2020-22	2023
60	0	1	0	3	9	17	16	11	3	0

2021 Pembroke: 2CY+ male, Skomer 30 May (DJ Astins *et al.*).

All records of Subalpine Warbler, including those that can be sub-specifically identified are now assessed by BBRC.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Eos

Total 1967-2023	1967-9	1970-9	1988-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
130	21	39	21	26	8	8	5	2

The Nightingale breeds in a broad band across much of central and western Europe, south to northwest Africa, and east in a scattered distribution to northwest China. In Britain it is now restricted to southern and eastern England, south of a line from the Severn to the Humber. It occupies a variety of habitats, including scrub and open woodland with thickets and dense patches of vegetation. Nightingales are migratory, wintering in tropical Africa south of the Sahara.

Nightingale is now recorded as a scarce migrant in Wales, though there have been no ringing recoveries to indicate the likely origins of passage birds. Since 1967 at least 128 individuals, including a few breeding birds, have been recorded in Wales.

Caernarfon:

Bardsey, 12 – 16 Apr (E. Betteridge *et al.*).

Pembroke:

Skokholm, 16 May (R. Brown), photo right.



Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva**Gwybedog Brongoch*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-99	2000-9	2010-19	2020-23	2023
186	2	9	24	29	34	21	24	34	7	2

Breeds from southern Sweden south to Austria and Bulgaria eastwards across Siberia. Winters in Pakistan, India and southeast Asia.

Gower: 1CY, Overton, 5 – 6 Oct (M. Hipkin *et al*), photo below left by finder.

Caernarfon: 2CY+ male, Great Orme, 3 Nov (P. Alderson *et al*), photo below right by R. Sandham.

**Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina**Tinwen Isabelline*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
7	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	1	0

Breeds in western and central Asia. Winters from north-east Africa to central India. An extremely rare vagrant to Wales with seven accepted records, all since 1997. A total of 51 UK records to end of 2019, on average one or two a year.

1997 Pembroke: 1CY, Skokholm 24 Sept, no longer acceptable, following BBRC review.

Grey-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava thunbergi**Siglen Benlwyd*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
21	0	0	0	3	5	5	1	3	3	1

Breeds in Fennoscandia, European Russia and northwest Siberia and winters in sub-Saharan Africa, South and Southeast Asia.

Anglesey:

Male, Cemlyn, 11 May (J. Dyda, photo S. Culley).



Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

Corhedydd Gyddfgoch

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
15	0	0	0	1	2	4	6	1	0	1

Breeds in Eurasia and western Alaska around the Arctic Circle, and winters to the south, birds from Fennoscandia and Russia migrating to the Sahel zone of Africa. Numbers recorded in Britain have fallen since the turn of the 21st century.

2023 Anglesey: 1CY+, South Stack, 1 Oct (A. Clarke).

First accepted record for Anglesey. Of the previous 14 recorded in Wales, four each were on Skomer, Skokholm & Bardsey. The only mainland individuals were at Kenfig, **E. Glamorgan** in 1992 and at Colwyn Bay, **Denbigh** in 2018.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Llinos Goch

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
186	2	0	3	7	23	42	41	45	19	4

Breeds central Europe, spring and autumn migrant to UK. Rare passage migrant to Wales with a total of 165 individuals recorded in the Principality. There has been a large increase in accepted records over the past fifty years, mirroring an increase in UK records, but numbers appear to be stable for the last thirty years (annual mean of around 150 records a year over the last three decades in the UK).

Gwent: Immature male, Brynithel, Abertillery, 4 June (L. Parsons), photo below.

Pembroke: Female / immature, Skokholm 15 June (R. Brown).

Female /immature, Skomer, 17 Sept (DJ Astins, J. Banks, R. Thatcher *et al*).

Female /immature, Skokholm 22 Sept – 1 Oct (G. Eagle *et al*).

Additional record 2019

Caernarfon: Male, Aberdaron 25 & 26 May (J. Jackson).

**"Mealy" Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea flammea*

Llinos Bengoch

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09	2010-19	2020-23	2024
271	11	0	1	1	80	112	44	20	0	2

Circumpolar distribution, generally breeding farther south than "Arctic" Redpoll.

E. Glamorgan: Pontypridd, 6 – 8 Mar (B. Williams).

Flint: Trapped & ringed, Bagillt, 17 Apr (G. Pepler).

Serín *Serinus serinus*

Llinos Frech

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-9	1970-9	1980-9	1990-9	2000-9	2010-9	2020-3	2024
38	4	2	1	6	3	5	10	3	3	1

Resident in southern Europe and France, and in the breeding season extends its range into the rest of continental Europe west of Russia.

Pembroke: singing male, St. Ishmaels, 6 June (S. Votier).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis nivalis*

Bras y Eira

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09	2010-19	2020-3	2024
14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	2	1

The nominate subspecies is widespread: Nearctic birds winter across North America, while the Fennoscandian population migrates south as far as central and eastern Europe in winter, with some wintering on the east coast of Britain. There have been seven records of a total of 14 individuals in Wales. The WBRC believes that this subspecies occurs frequently in Wales, but it is rarely documented owing to the difficulty of identification in the field.

Anglesey: Soldier's Point / Holyhead Breakwater Quarry Country Park, 27 Feb – 1 Mar (KG Croft et al), killed by a Peregrine on last date.

WBRC is looking into the occurrence of this race of Snow Bunting in North Wales, as initial research seems to suggest that *nivalis* is the more prevalent race of late. The panel welcomes images of Snow Buntings in Wales, even historic ones, to get a better insight.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

Bras Bychan

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-09	2010-9	2020-23	2024
38	0	3	2	0	7	4	10	7	3	2

The Little Bunting has a broadly similar breeding range to that of Rustic Bunting, although slightly farther north through Fennoscandia and across Russia to the Pacific coast (HBW). It winters in southern China and adjacent territories.

Caernarfon:

Bardsey, 15 Oct (E. Turner *et al*), photo opposite.

Porth Rhuol, 15 Nov (NJ & VE Phillips).



Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*

Bras Wynebdu

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-9	1990-9	2000-09	2010-9	2020- 3	2024
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Breeds in Siberia, from Ob River east to the Sea of Okhotsk, south to Baikal region, Russian Altai, N Mongolia, Amurland, North Korean Peninsula & extreme NE China. Winters Japan, Taiwan, South Korea & S China, south to North Indochina, NE India and west to Nepal.

Gower:

1CY, Oxwich NNR, 26 Oct
(O. Gabb, Gower Ringing Group).

First accepted record for Wales,
an article about its finding is on
page 36.

**Indigo Bunting** *Passerina cyanea*

Bras Gleulas

Total	Pre 1950	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-9	1990-9	2000-09	2010-9	2020- 3	2024
3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1

Breeds throughout the eastern states of USA and in Utah, Arizona and New Mexico. It winters in Central America and the Caribbean.

Pembroke: 2CY male, in a Rosemarket garden, 22 May (D. Taylor per County Recorder).



The second record for **Pembroke**, following the 1cy male on Ramsey in October 1996. The only other Welsh record came from Llansadwrn, **Anglesey** in May 2013.

Additional records of species no longer assessed**White Stork** *Ciconia Ciconia**Ciconia Gwyn*

Total	Pre 1950	1950-9	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990 –99	2000-9	2010-19	2020 - 22	-
76	3	0	0	12	14	8	12	25	2	-

Migrant in warmer boreal to warm temperate zones, Russia, China and central Europe. WBRC has decided that unringed individuals are probably wild birds, while ringed ones are not. One record of a presumed wild bird. This species dropped off WBRC list in 2023 due to the number of re-introduced individuals present in the UK, therefore it is almost impossible to determine whether individuals are genuinely wild or not.

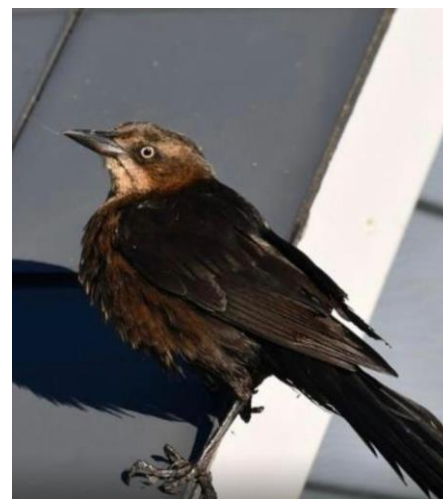
Additional record 2021 **Gwent**: Llangybi, 4 Apr (V. Picken).

Category E – records where identification accepted, but origin is uncertain or known not to be wild**Lesser White-fronted Goose** *Anser erythropus*

2019 Anglesey: Two 3CY+, Llyn Traffwll, 27 Feb – 20 Mar (JM Jones *et al*).

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*

2023 Pembroke: 1CY+ female, Nolton Haven 25 – 29 Oct (T. Finbow *et al*, per County Recorder), DNA confirmed identification.
Photo opposite posted on X by D. Martin.

**APPENDIX I - List of records that were deemed NOT PROVEN**

Many of these records were not accepted because WBRC/BBRC were not convinced, on the evidence before them, that the identification was fully established. Only in a very few cases were the Panel satisfied that a mistake had been made.

Species	County	Site	Date
Azorean Yellow-legged Gull 4CY+	Gwent	Peterstone Gout	31 Aug – 1 Sept 2022
Purple Heron	Montgomery	Cors Dyfi	16 Apr 2024
Cory's Shearwater	Caernarfon	Bardsey	9 Aug 2024
Glossy Ibis	Gwent	Wentloog	18 Dec 2021
Black Kite	Carmarthen	Pembrey Burrows	1 May 2024
Golden Oriole	Gower	Neath Valley	21 May 2024
Wallcreeper 2CY+	Caernarfon	Caernarfon Castle	14 Feb 2024
Nightingale	Gower	Pennard	15 & 16 May 2024
Common Rosefinch	Caernarfon	Great Orme	31 Oct 2024

References

- del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., Saragatal, J. Christie, DA, 1992 – 2011, Handbook of Birds of the World.
 Collinson *et al* 2022, Molecular Birding, *British Birds* 115, 703-714.
 French, P. *et al*, 2025, Report on rare birds in Great Britain in 2024, *British Birds* 118: 493-560.
 Kehoe, C. 2006 Racial identification and assessment in Britain, *British Birds* 99: 619-645.
 Pritchard, R., Hughes, J., Spence, IM, Haycock, B., Brenchley, A., 2021, The Birds of Wales.
 White, S. & Kehoe, C. 2025 Report on Scarce migrant birds in Britain in 2023, *British Birds* 118: 327 – 359 & 379 – 407.

First records for Wales in 2024

Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*

Rhostog Hudson

One at Deeside Naturalists Connah's Quay Reserve, Flint 12 Aug – 27 Sept. The bird was also seen at RSPB Oakenholt Marsh and RSPB Burton Mere (where Border Pool is also in Wales). The following is an account of the finding of the bird.

I was at the Deeside Naturalists' Society reserve at Connah's Quay on the 12 August 2024, with my partner who was carrying out a count at low water. While she was busy scanning for Lapwings hidden in the long grass, I observed a small flock of 18 Godwits drop into the pool in front of us.

While 17 of the Godwits were Black-tailed, one was distinctly smaller, and my initial thought was a Bar-tailed Godwit. On closer inspection, with a telescope, I realised this bird was very dark – too dark for Bar-tailed, but it was moving about, feeding amongst the Black-tailed Godwits and difficult to see at times. I realised that this bird was a godwit but was neither Black- or Bar-tailed. As my partner was finishing her count, I became increasingly agitated and eventually she trained her scope on the bird. Just at that moment all 18 birds flew up, giving me a good view of the dark underwing and small square of white on the rump, with a black tail – it had to be a Hudsonian Godwit!

I shouted at my partner "Are you on that smaller godwit?"

"Yes!" she replied!

"Can you see how dark it is?"

"Yes!"

"Can you see the small square white rump?"

"Yes!"

I was now utterly convinced, but the bird had gone with the flock across the nearby River Dee towards RSPB Burton Mere Wetlands and we were on a site where we are not permitted to report rare birds. Now what should I do?

We went home and I double-checked in the Collins Bird Guide, which confirmed my suspicions. Knowing that the ex-site manager at RSPB Burton Mere Wetlands often went there in the evening I phoned him to let him know to look out for this bird if he was going there. Fortunately, he had just arrived in the car park! About half an hour later, he phoned me back to say the Hudsonian Godwit had, indeed, flown to Burton Mere Wetlands and it was in the pool in front of Border Hide!

This bird stayed on the Dee Estuary with the Black-tailed Godwits for a week or so and fell into the habit of feeding on the mudflats upriver at RSPB Oakenholt Marsh and flying to Flint Sands to roost over the high tide, sometimes stopping close to the DNS reserve, where we managed to get a few photos including one in flight on 22 August (photos below by Julie Rogers).



Description (taken from the BBRC submission): Smaller than the Black-tailed Godwits, with upturned bill: Prominent pale supercilium and pale grey head but otherwise very dark plumage, much darker than Bar-tailed Godwit, with reddish breast extending to the underparts, the red much darker and more of a wine red colour than other godwits. On flying I could see the dark underwings and small wing bar (much smaller than Black-tailed). Also, it had a squarish white rump, which was more pronounced due to the darkness of the bird, with a black tip to the tail. Its feet were visible trailing from the back as it flew.

Geoff Robinson.



Photo above from RSPB Burton Mere by M. Woodhead.

Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala**Bras Wynebddu*

One trapped and ringed at Oxwich Marsh, **Gower** on 26 Oct. The following is an account of the finding of the bird.

Description

The bird instantly struck me as something different when I saw it in the mist net. The head was reminiscent of a dunnoek, while the remainder of the plumage was similar to a reed bunting. None of the people at the ringing session were familiar with Black-faced Bunting, and it took a little while to come to the conclusion that that was what it appeared to be.

The lower mandible of the bill was largely pink as opposed to grey and the upper mandible predominantly dark. It had a prominent sub-moustachial stripe, and showed some grey feathering on the crown, ear coverts and neck sides. The pointed tail showed a degree of wear. The iris was dull as opposed to reddish. In combination these features indicated a first winter male.

The features can be seen in the photographs.

The bird had a wing length of 70 mm and a weight of 16.8 mm. It was carrying no visible fat but did not appear in poor condition. It did not call.

Photos of the bird were sent out to a couple of external people for verification of the identification, including one former BBRC member.

Context

The bird was captured in a mist net in an area in which we target day roosting common snipe. It is characterized by tall common reed with encroaching willow and is very wet. It was the only passerine captured in that net during the ringing session (we also caught two Snipe). The weather conditions during the morning were mild, with light winds. Six Yellow-browed Warblers and a Firecrest were captured during the same ringing session, indicating a movement of incoming migrants in a west / south-westerly direction (the origin of the Firecrest is less clear than the other species).

Following discussions with Natural Resources Wales (the landowner), news was released. Unfortunately, following initial release the bird was not seen. The ringing session the following day did not recapture it, and it was noted that while Yellow-browed Warblers were still present the number was lower (no YBW were captured). This might be taken to indicate a movement through the area.

Observers

Owain Gabb, Heather Coats, Alex McCubbin, Steve Lysyj, Megan Nicklin.

An account, written at the time, is here: <https://www.gowerbirds.org.uk/oxwich-marsh-late-autumn-migration-and-a-1st-for-wales/>

Owain Gabb.

