

September 2017

## Bird News: August

**Welcome to the Eden News.** The first official day of Autumn is here and summer will slowly loosen what grip she had. Kids are back at school, nights are darkening before 9pm now and there is a sense of change in the air. The change of seasons always brings a little sadness and always hope. It has been a fantastic birding month, in fact not just birds, a great wildlife month all round. Here are August's highlights:

**Geese:** Around 200-350 Canada geese drifting around the reserve on 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Coble Pools:** A nice spot of a juvenile Whinchat on 8<sup>th</sup>. 9 Grey Partridge on 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Outhead:** The seabird spectacle continued through August with great numbers of mixed Tern, Gannet and Arctic Skua.

**WeBS (Estuary Count) 17<sup>th</sup>:** Very few Shelduck with only 36 in Balgove. 74 Eider, a single Shoveller and good numbers of Mallard formed most of the wildfowl. Only 389 Oystercatcher, 23 Grey Plover, many in full summer plumage. 125 Lapwing. 19 Knot, 193 Curlew and 302 Redshank. Very small number of Godwits, but they are arriving now. 4 Greenshank and a single Ruff, this made up the best of the waders. Add to that 4 Little Egret, a single Sea Eagle, 117 Sandwich Tern being chased by an Arctic Skua and that was it.

**Sea Eagle:** Good news on 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the re-introductions. The male eagle has helped rear 2 juveniles from 2 different nests. One being our Fife pairing. Sightings have been good with Eagles recorded on 14 out of 31 days.

**Eden Centre:** Looking at the centre log book there is little doubt what month and season it is. Little Egret have been present all month with up to 6 birds. Single Shoveller on 16<sup>th</sup>. 18 Goosander on 21<sup>st</sup>. A cracking spot of a lone Marsh Harrier on 19<sup>th</sup>. A brilliant month for Osprey, virtually everyday sightings with peak of 5 birds on 9<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup>. A lone Peregrine on 15<sup>th</sup>. Very good numbers of Lapwing hovering around 250. 3 Snipe on 15<sup>th</sup>. A great 6 Ruff on 24<sup>th</sup>. A single Whimbrel on 26<sup>th</sup>. 64 Black tailed Godwit on 30<sup>th</sup>. A nice 2 Arctic Skua on 17<sup>th</sup> and a unusual 6 Kittiwakes on 9<sup>th</sup>. Good Kingfisher sightings from 15<sup>th</sup> onwards. Some great birds spotted, Stonechat, Willow warbler and a brilliant Yellow Wagtail and to crown it a single Avocet from 19<sup>th</sup> onwards. Grand!

## Bird of the Month



### Avocet

It was very hard to choose this month however this very handsome bird pipped it, just. For such an incredibly unique looking bird the Avocet is actually hard to spot. A member of the 'stilt' family with quite enigmatic behaviour and a 'relaxed' demeanour this adds to the well camouflaged plumage. This species has been recorded on the reserve before however it is still a rare occurrence. Turning up on 19<sup>th</sup> Aug it was still on site on 31<sup>st</sup>. A real talisman bird for conservation and great to see here.

## Eden Centre

- **Opening Hours 9am-5pm:** Please note the centre will require to be closed at 5pm each day, this is to allow for cleaning, log books, restocking etc. We would be most appreciative of visitors vacating at 5pm. Thanks.

## Reserve News.

- **Wildfowling season:** Started 1<sup>st</sup> September. Please note many travel from outside Scotland and may not be used to our land access laws.
- **Operation Chameleon:** A large scale offshore military exercise is taking place up to 15<sup>th</sup> Sept. An increase in helicopter traffic is expected.
- **National Coastal Change Assessment:** This body of work looking at changing coast lines and sea levels featured in the news this month. The Eden reserve is very involved with coastal management and we are proud to say we are already implementing projects to mitigate and enhance coastal habitats. Worth looking into this assessment. (Google or SNH)
- **FCCT Facebook:** This newsletter along with all sorts of Fife wide info. Great stuff.
- **Volunteering:** We are putting together an exciting winter programme of volunteer opportunity. If you are interested contact Meg on 01592 656080.
- **Outhead Sheep:** Our sheep will be back out on the grassland in September.