

DURLSTON

COUNTRY PARK & NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE



Durlston Bird Report
2012

Compiled and Written by Jol Mitchell

Cover photo: Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* by Simon Breeze

Acknowledgements

Durlston are indebted to Jol Mitchell for his time and effort spent going through the weekly summary sheets, Hamish's and the Rangers records and obscure notes, various websites and Dorset bird records to produce this systematic list of birds recorded at Durlston.

Our gratitude also goes to all those who have provided us with records of the birds seen and heard during 2011.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED IN 2012

The records presented in this Systematic List are based largely on the Durlston Rangers' daily Diary entries with additional information from various websites and other sources including Warren Clayton. In comparison with some other Dorset sites (such as Portland Bill and Hengistbury Head), there is little systematic seawatching undertaken at Durlston with the result that sea passage is greatly under-recorded.

In describing the status of species at Durlston, the semantic terms presented below are used.

- Common** occurs regularly at Durlston in large or fairly large numbers during the appropriate period or is widely distributed in suitable habitat; there is a good chance that the species would be seen on most visits during that period.
- Fairly common** occurs in moderate numbers at Durlston during the appropriate period in suitable habitat; there is a reasonable chance that the species would be seen on visits during that period.
- Uncommon** occurs annually in small numbers at Durlston during the appropriate period; the species would not be expected to be seen on most visits.
- Scarce** a species that can be seen in most years at Durlston, but records are few in number (one to ten).
- Rare** a species that occurs at Durlston on a less than annual basis.

These terms are based on those used in *The Birds of Dorset* (Green G., 2004).

The List follows the sequence and scientific names given in the British List: A Checklist of Birds of Britain (7th edition) published in Ibis Volume 148 (3), 526-563 by the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU), updated by the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee: 36th Report (November 2007) published in Ibis (2008) 150, 218-220.

Graphs are presented for some species. These show the number of 'bird-days' per week or month (a bird-day is one bird present for one day; hence, two bird-days could be one bird present for two days, or two birds present for one day).

Unidentified GREY GOOSE *anser spp.*

Rare, passing offshore or overhead.

Twenty unidentified grey geese passed on 15th January.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

Scarce, passing offshore in winter.

Thirty-five birds passed heading west on 9th October.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Scarce, passing offshore.

There was one record of three birds passing on 27th March. Birds are likely to be from the resident feral populations in the Avon Valley and Poole Harbour.

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*

Fairly common, passing offshore mainly in autumn and winter.

The main wintering areas for Brent Geese in Dorset are Poole Harbour and The Fleet. Birds seen at Durlston are probably moving between these and other sites, or taking part in coastal passage during spring and autumn. The first bird of the autumn was seen on 4th September. Peak counts were of 160 past on 15th January, 114 on 10th October and 150 past on

1st November. Pale-bellied birds were recorded passing on 17th April (25), 25th April (35), 9th October (three), 1st November (eight) and 28th December (one).

COMMON SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.

Shelduck can normally be seen at Durlston (usually single birds or pairs flying down the coast) at any time of the year, other than in July and August. Records in 2012 conformed to that pattern.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4	1	2	6	4	0	0	0	2	2	1	0

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

Rare visitor.

A bird drifted east on the sea on 27th October. This is an extremely unusual record of a species invariably found on inland waters, and never recorded before at Durlston.

EURASIAN WIGEON *Anas penelope*

Scarce, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.

There were significantly more records of passing Wigeon in 2010 and 2011 than in previous years; this trend continued in 2012. Birds passed offshore in the first winter period on 1st (eleven) and 11th February (three). In the second winter period, the first birds were recorded on 26th September (three) with five birds four days later. Bird-days for the remainder of the year were 56 in October, ten in November and 24 in December. Peak counts were of 17 west on 6th October and 21 west on 24th October.

EURASIAN TEAL *Anas crecca*

Scarce, passing offshore mainly in winter.

There were eleven records of birds passing offshore: eight on 1st February, and two birds two days later; four on 11th and one on 14th September; single birds on 1st and 20th October; two on 12th, three on 13th, one on 28th and three on 30th November; and four on 11th December.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Uncommon, passing offshore.

Two birds were in a pond in Johnson Meadow on 1st April with a bird in the Wildlife Area on 16th and 18th April, and two on 23rd April. There were eight records of passing birds: two on 7th January; two on 1st February; two on 31st March; three on 5th, two on 10th and two on 12th April; two on 27th October and three on 11th December.

NORTHERN PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Rare, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.

There were two records: a bird passing offshore on 1st February, and three birds passing offshore on 26th November.

NORTHERN SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Scarce, passing offshore mainly in winter.

There were five records of birds passing offshore: five on 16th March, one on 28th March, two on 5th April, one on 28th November, and one on 12th December.

COMMON POCHARD *Aythya ferina*
Rare, passing offshore mainly in winter.
 Six birds passed on 11th December.

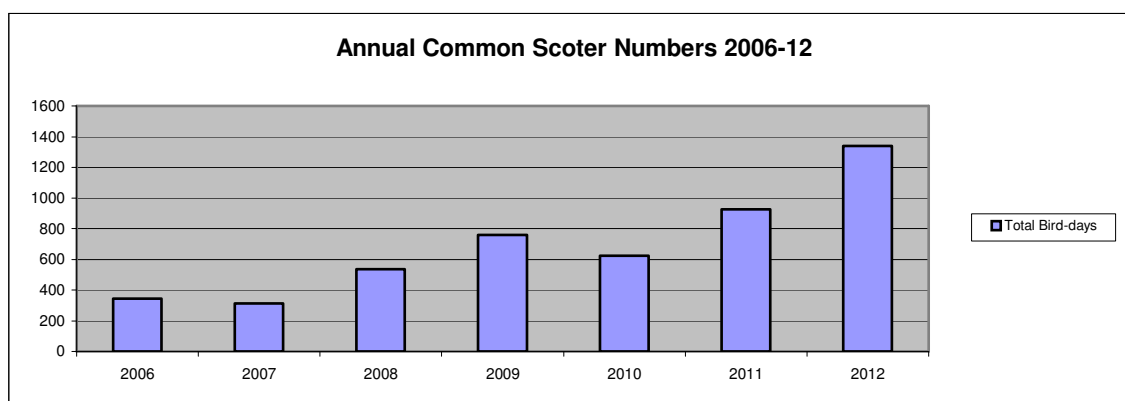
COMMON EIDER *Somateria mollissima*
Uncommon, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.
 There were seven records of single (unless otherwise indicated) birds passing offshore: on 7th February, 5th and 9th April (three), 11th and 22nd October, and 2nd and 30th November. This represents an increase over recent years.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*
Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.
 This species is generally under-recorded at Durlston; the Table below shows the trends in numbers. The maximum counts were of 66 birds on 9th January and 76 on 16th July. Peak monthly total bird-days were (unusually) in July and November.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
164	49	40	149	46	58	234	86	64	114	205	130	1339

The Graph shows the annual number of Common Scoter bird-days recorded at Durlston from 2006 to 2012 and illustrates a trend of increasing numbers.



VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca*
Scarce, passing offshore mainly in winter.
 There were nine records of passing birds, all singles other than where indicated: on 8th and 15th (two) January; 28th October; 13th, 21st (three) and 22nd November (three); and 12th, 23rd and 28th December. This is a significant increase on previous years in which up to four records (in 2009) has been the norm.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*
Uncommon, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.
 The Fleet/Portland Harbour combined site and Poole Harbour hold nationally important populations (over 84) of Red-breasted Mergansers, the largest and sixth largest in Britain respectively. Birds seen at Durlston are possibly moving between these and other sites, or taking part in coastal passage during spring and autumn. Birds were seen up to 24th April and, other than an unusual record of ten birds on 25th August, from 19th October. The total bird-days of 61 in 2012 represents an increase over the average of 35 for the period 209-11.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	11	2	5	0	0	0	10	0	2	16	10

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser***Rare, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.**There was one record: a bird passed on 20th November.**COMMON PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*****Common feral resident.**

A significant population of this game bird has become established at Durlston, although there was no evidence of breeding in 2012.

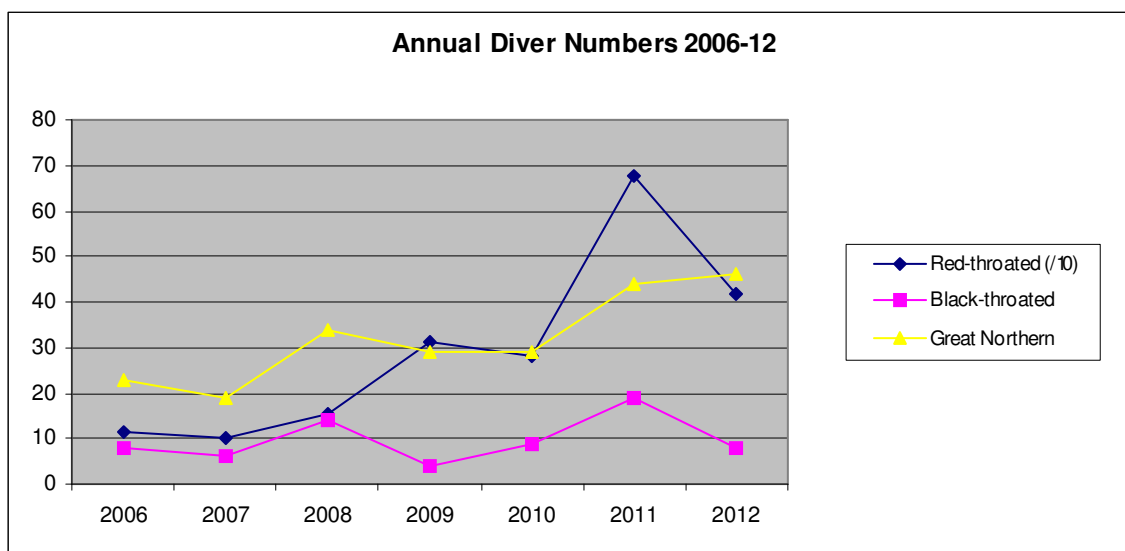
RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata***Uncommon, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.**Red-throated is by far the most common diver seen at Durlston (and at the other coastal watch-points in Dorset) (see Graph below in Great Northern Diver account, note that Red-throated Diver numbers have been divided by a factor of ten). The last record of the first half of the year was on 25th April; the first record of the second winter period was on 26th September. A total of 417 bird-days was recorded, in excess of the numbers in 2009 (313) and 2010 (281), but representing a decrease from the 677 recorded in 2011. Peak daily counts were of 31 birds on 7th and 9th January and 25 on 12th December.**Monthly counts (bird-days):**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
161	59	9	11	0	0	0	0	1	11	41	124	417

BLACK-THROATED DIVER *Gavia artica***Scarce, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.**Black-throated is the scarcest diver seen off Durlston, and in Dorset. Single birds were recorded on: 12th, 15th and 31st January; 10th, 13th and 23rd April; and 7th and 15th December.**GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*****Uncommon winter visitor and offshore passage migrant.**During the first half of the year, birds were recorded intermittently up to 29th May. A bird flew east on the unusual date of 26th July with a further unseasonal bird on 23rd August. The first record of the second winter period was on 2nd September; six birds passed on 30th November. A total of 46 bird-days were recorded, an increase over the numbers seen in previous years.**Monthly counts (bird-days):**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
8	3	1	2	3	0	1	1	3	3	10	11	46

The Graph shows the increase in the numbers of Red-throated and Great Northern Divers recorded at Durlston between 2006 and 2012. Note that the Red-throated Diver numbers have been divided by a factor of 10 to give a comparable scale.



GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Scarce, passing offshore in winter.

There were three records of four passing birds: on 15th January, 16th January (two) and 11th February. This represents a return to normal levels after ten birds in 2011.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*

Common breeding resident and passage migrant.

Fulmars are seen for most of the year at Durlston along the cliff-face, although they are generally scarce or absent between mid-July and mid-November. As usual, breeding numbers were difficult to assess, but the 2012 Purbeck Seabird Survey identified six apparently occupied sites. Sixty-seven passed on 24th December, 70 on 31st.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus*

Scarce, passing offshore mainly in autumn.

There were three records; two birds passed on 10th September, four on 2nd October, and one the next day. These were the first records since 2009.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*

Uncommon, passing offshore in spring, summer and autumn.

Manx Shearwaters are generally under-recorded at Durlston. The species was first reported on 5th April. The total of 2,770 bird-days represents another exceptional year for the species after the 2011 total of 1,069 bird-days. Almost 60% of the 2012 total passed on two days: 575 on 9th April and 1,012 on 2nd July. Low thousands were reported off Portland Bill on 9th April. Most of the birds on the 2nd July were close in; interestingly, only a 'constant low trickle' were noted off Portland Bill, although the visibility was bad in all-day rain. The last record was of two birds on 3rd October.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
0	0	0	910	44	192	1447	110	64	3	0	0	2770

BALEARIC SHEARWATER *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Uncommon, passing offshore mainly in late summer and autumn.

First recorded on 3rd January, numbers of Balearic Shearwater seen from Durlston in 2012 (a total of 130 bird-days) were significantly higher than in previous years (28 in 2006, 12 in 2007,

97 in 2008, 29 in 2009, 17 in 2010 and 45 in 2011). Peak counts were of ten birds loafing in Durlston Bay on 1st Oct and 24 passing the next day.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
1	0	0	0	0	1	30	15	25	54	2	2	130

EUROPEAN STORM-PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Scarce, passing offshore mainly in summer and autumn.

The species is generally under-recorded at Durlston. There were five records: single birds on 8th May and 8th June, two on 9th June, one on 15th June and three close to Durlston Head on 21st November.

NORTHERN GANNET *Morus bassanus*

Fairly common, passing offshore.

Gannets can be seen off Durlston at any time of the year but are normally most abundant in spring/early summer (April to June) and autumn (August to October) with slightly fewer birds in mid-summer (July) and a much smaller population offshore in winter (November to March). Birds involved in feeding movements during the summer months almost certainly come from the closest colonies on Alderney and Sept Iles in Brittany. Peak counts of passing birds were as follows: 310 on 5th April; 450 on 28th June; 399 on 2nd July; 200 on 24th September; 332 on 2nd October. A spectacular movement of 2,550 birds on 24th December as rain cleared was followed by 650 on 29th, 200 on 30th and 688 on 31st.

GREAT CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Common coastal resident.

There were no breeding Cormorants at Durlston in 2012, but there were regular sightings of birds on the rocks below the Observation Point and flying past on the way to and from their breeding sites on the cliffs at Ballard Down.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Common coastal resident.

Shags are seen throughout the year at Durlston, mostly close into the cliffs. The 2012 Purbeck Seabird Survey identified two nests between Durlston Head and west of Anvil Point. Peak counts were in November: 14 on 11th and 22 on 23rd.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*

Scarce, passing offshore.

The Little Egret was a national rarity until 1990; it is now more numerous than the Grey Heron in Poole Harbour with breeding now taking place, or attempted, there and at a number of other sites in Dorset. Birds seen flying past Durlston or on the rocks in Durlston Bay are almost certainly from the Poole Harbour population and can be seen at any time of the year. There were 23 records in 2012, including four birds on 6th June and two on 16th October.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Uncommon visitor.

Grey Herons can be seen at Durlston at any time of the year, although they are not common. There were 25 records in 2012, similar to 2009-2011 and approximately double the number recorded in 2006-08. Records were mainly of single birds.

EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*

Rare passage migrant.

A bird was reported over on 13th October.

RED KITE *Milvus milvus***Scarce passage migrant.**

There were two spring records: a bird flew in off the sea on 30th March (followed ten minutes later by an Osprey), and a bird flew along the cliffs on 19th May.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus***Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

There were three records: on 12th August, 6th September and 3rd October.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER *Circus pygargus***Rare passage migrant.**

A female was seen passing over the shore of Durlston Bay on 29th May, being mobbed by several Great Black-backed and Herring Gulls.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus***Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

There were three records: a 'ring-tail' in off the sea on 6th October, a ring-tail on 28th November, and a stunning male heading west past the Lighthouse on 16th December.

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus***Breeding resident and passage migrant.**

Birds were regularly seen hunting throughout the year. At least one pair usually stayed loyal to the downland slopes above Tilly Whim. The total number of bird-days, at 186, represents a return to the numbers seen during the period 2007-2010 (an average of approximately 200 bird-days) and a decrease on the 309 bird-days recorded in 2011. Counts of four or more birds were recorded on only two days (compared with ten in 2011) as follows: on 9th and 20th October (five).

Monthly counts (bird-days):

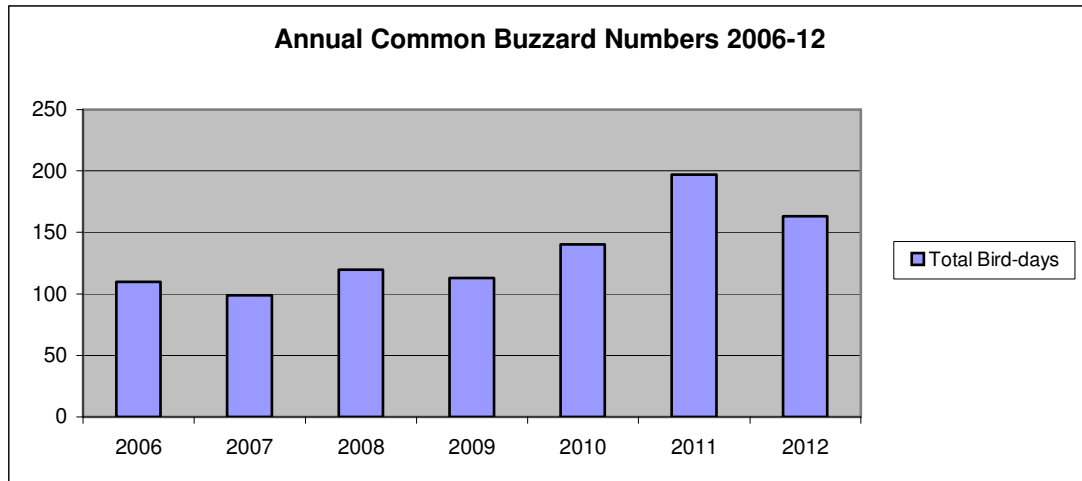
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
13	15	15	13	5	3	5	12	16	49	26	14	186

COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo***Uncommon resident, breeding in the wider area.**

Although frequently seen in other parts of Purbeck, the Common Buzzard was, until relatively recently, somewhat uncommon in the Durlston area. However, Buzzards were regularly observed feeding around Durlston Bay and returning to a central point within the woodland. Further evidence is required to confirm nesting and identify the territory from 2011. The annual number of bird-days between 2006-09 averaged approximately 110, increasing in 2010 to 140 and almost 200 in 2011; bird-days decreased to approximately 160 in 2012 (see Graph). Bird-days in August were influenced by the peak count of twelve birds on 30th August.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
6	9	18	12	11	7	6	35	23	16	12	8	163



OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*
Scarce passage migrant.

There were four records: on 30th March, 30th August, 10th September and 1st October.

COMMON KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*
Fairly common breeding resident and passage migrant.

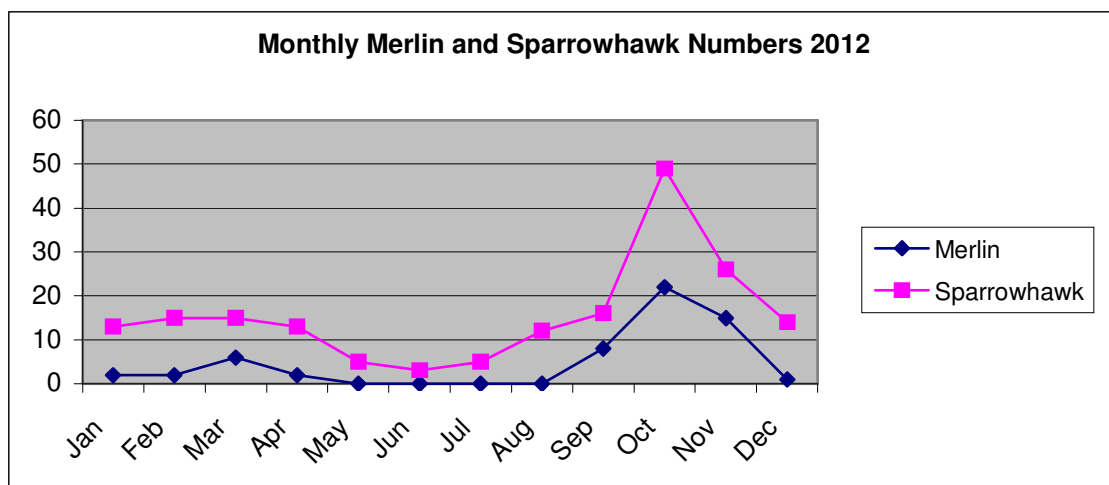
Kestrels were seen throughout the year in all areas of Durlston. At least two young fledged and were regularly seen feeding along the cliff faces. The actual nest location was not confirmed, although it is suspected to be somewhere between Tilly Whim and the Observation Point.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*
Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Merlins are most likely to be seen at Durlston during the passage periods, particularly in the autumn (see Table). The last bird of the first winter period was seen on 19th April; the first autumn passage bird was on 4th September. As in Dorset generally, there is a distinct peak in October when birds hunt the migrating passerine flocks (see Graph which also shows Sparrowhawk). Three birds were recorded on 14th October. Birds were seen up to 2nd December. Total number of bird-days, at 58, was similar to 2008-2011.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2	2	6	2	0	0	0	0	8	22	15	1	58



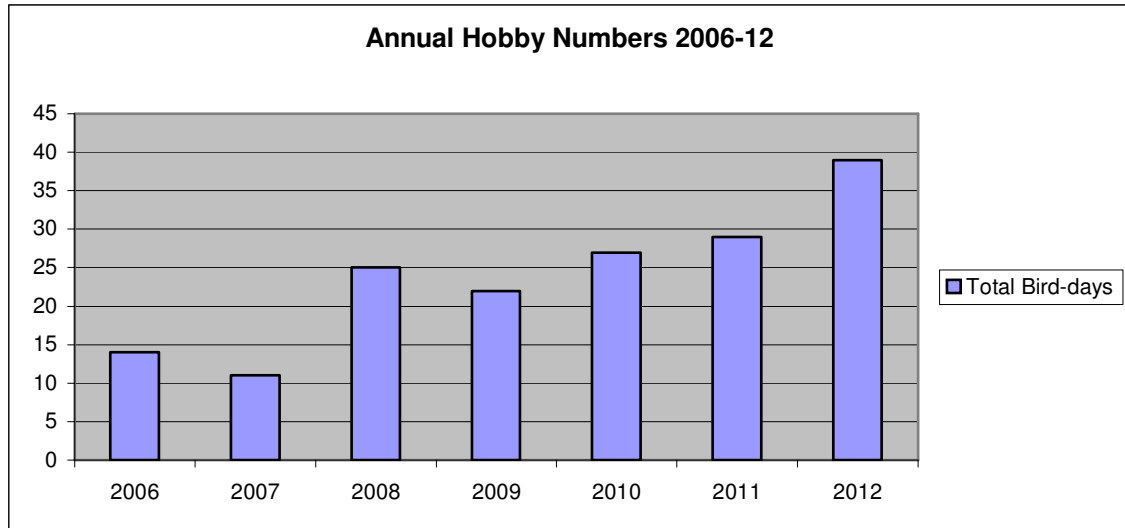
HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant.

Single birds were seen between 31st March and 16th October; two birds were recorded on 4th and 5th May, 6th June, 1st July and 11th September. The birds at the beginning of June were observed hunting Swifts. The total number of bird-days, at 39, represents a continuing increase over previous years (see Graph). This was partly because of more records in July, possibly related to local breeding birds.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
0	0	1	3	7	4	8	7	5	4	0	0	39



PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus*

Fairly common breeding resident.

Peregrines can be seen throughout the year at Durlston and are the most regularly seen bird of prey. The regular nest site close to the Observation Point is no longer used with a new site located further to the west.

GREAT BUSTARD *Otis tarda*

Rare visitor.

A bizarre sight on a seawatch on 18th November was of a Great Bustard flying east low over the sea. Its large size indicated that it was a male and no wing tags were apparent.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Uncommon visitor and passage migrant.

Oystercatchers are the commonest wader seen at Durlston. Birds are normally seen passing offshore at any time of the year, either singularly or in twos or threes. However, as the only wader species to occur in any numbers along rocky coasts in Dorset, they are sometimes seen on coastal rocks.

AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Rare passage migrant.

Two birds flew past on 25th October.

COMMON RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

Scarce, passing offshore in spring and autumn.

During the period 2006-10, the annual number of records of Ringed Plover was three or less. In 2011, there were nine records of nineteen birds. This pattern continued in 2012 with nine records of 22 birds on: 12th and 25th April; 6th May (14 birds); 29th June; 2nd, 18th and 20th August; 11th and 18th October. Other than on 6th May when 14 birds passed, all records were of single birds.

EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

All records were of birds (singles, twos or threes) passing overhead. There was one bird-day in January, five in February, one in September, eight in October, thirteen in November and two in December.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in spring.

There were six records of birds passing over or offshore: on 6th January, 11th February (two), 4th and 10th May, 31st August, and two on 5th November.

NORTHERN LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were eighteen records of single (unless otherwise stated) birds passing over: on 30th (two) and 31st (four) January; 1st (five), 2nd (seven), 3rd (three), 9th (three) and 10th (two) February; 12th March; 26th September (two); 6th, 24th and 25th October; 4th, 8th and 26th (two) November; 11th (nine), 12th and 14th December.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Rare passage migrant, passing offshore in spring and autumn.

There were two records of single birds passing offshore: on 10th and 11th July.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

Scarce, passing offshore spring, autumn and winter.

There were six records of passing birds: one east on 10th April, four west on 30th August, two on 2nd November, singles on 20th and 30th November, and two past on 31st December.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

Scarce passage migrant, passing offshore mainly in late spring.

There were twelve records of single birds (unless otherwise indicated) on: 18th (two), 23rd, 28th (two) and 29th (two) May; 12th June; 12th, 16th and 18th July; 10th August; 5th and 8th September; and three on 31st October.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant.

There were two records: a bird on the rocks at Tilly Whim on 15th March, and two on 2nd November. The nearest regular wintering population is at the entrance to Poole Harbour and the birds may have come from there. These records are the first since 2007.

COMMON SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

Over the period 2006-09, annual Snipe records numbered five or less. In 2010, birds were recorded on 24 days with a total of 37 bird-days; the equivalent figures for 2011 and 2012 were 25 records comprising 30 bird-days, and 18 records comprising 31 bird-days respectively. The 2012 records included eleven birds over on 15th November.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	2	5	15	3

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola***Scarce autumn migrant and winter visitor.**

2012 continued the trend seen in 2010 and 2011 of an increase in records of Woodcocks compared with previous years. Birds were recorded on eight days in November.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	9	2

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica***Uncommon, passing offshore mainly in spring.**

There were two spring records of passing birds: ten east on 5th May, and three on 18th May.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus***Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in spring.**

The first record was of a bird on 26th March; there was a weaker spring passage than in 2011 but a stronger autumn passage. No birds were seen after 10th September.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	1	34	2	2	16	16	1	0	0	0

EURASIAN CURLEW *Numenius arquata***Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.**

There were fifteen records of single passing birds (other than on 5th November when three birds were recorded) on: 8th and 25th January; 22nd, 28th and 29th March; 9th and 11th April; 7th May; 19th and 28th June; 12th and 21st November; and 17th and 21st December.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos***Uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor.**

There were fourteen records of single birds (unless otherwise indicated) passing offshore, but sometimes on the rocks in Durlston Bay or in the Tilly Whim area. Common Sandpipers were recorded on the typical dates of 24th and 25th April; 4th and 13th May; 5th (two), 25th (two) and 26th July; 3rd, 20th, 21st (two) and 31st August; and 5th, 6th and 11th September.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus***Rare passage migrant.**

A bird flew over on 24th August.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia***Scarce passage migrant.**

There were six records of birds flying over or past offshore on: 1st, 16th, 17th, 22nd and 24th July and 30th August.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola***Rare passage migrant.**

A bird flew over on 21st August, the first record since 2008.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus***Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

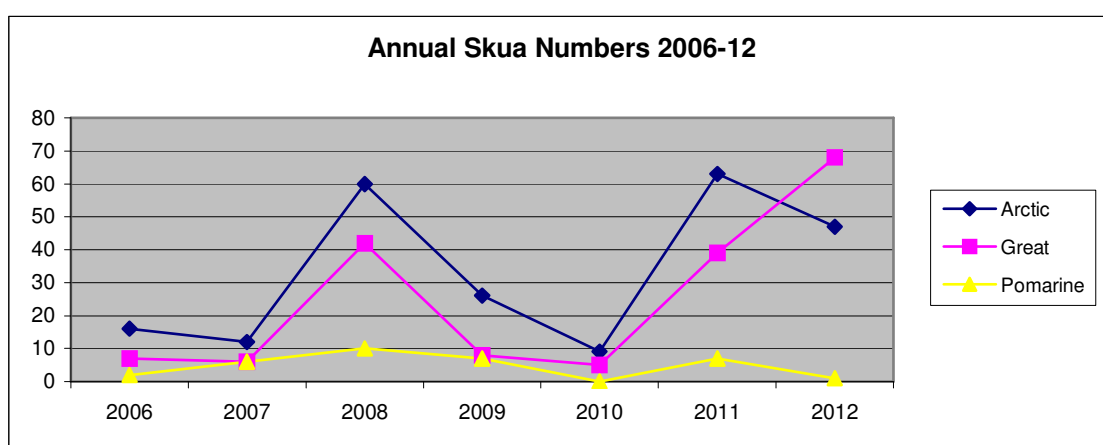
There were seven records of single birds. A bird foraging along the coast on 13th February was followed by records on: 20th April, 2nd July, 30th September, 13th October, and 15th and 18th November.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres***Scarce, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.**

There was one record: a bird on 12th September.

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus***Scarce offshore passage migrant.**

The only record was of a bird heading east on 25th April. The Graph shows the total number of Pomarine (and other) Skuas passing Durlston for the period 2006-12.

**ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*****Uncommon offshore passage migrant.**

Arctic Skua is normally the most frequently seen skua species off Durlston, followed by Great, Pomarine and Long-tailed. In 2012, Great Skua records exceeded those of Arctic Skuas. Arctic Skuas were recorded intermittently between 9th April and 25th October; the highest daily count was of four birds on 2nd October. The Graph above shows the total number of Arctic and other skuas passing Durlston for the period 2006-12; 2012 was comparable to 2008 and 2011.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
0	0	0	11	4	3	3	5	7	14	0	0	47

GREAT SKUA *Catharacta skua***Uncommon, passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.**

At 68, the total number of Great Skua bird-days in 2012 exceeded previous years in the period 2006 onwards (see Graph). Two birds were seen on 18th and 23rd April with twelve on 25th, three on 7th May and two on 13th and 27th November. Multiple birds passed at the end of December with seven on 24th, six on 29th, and three on 30th and 31st. All other records were of single birds.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
4	0	1	19	3	4	5	2	0	4	6	20	68

Unidentified SKUA *Stercorarius/Catharacta spp.*

Passing offshore in spring, autumn and winter.

Unidentified skuas passed on 23rd April; 2nd and 16th July; and 14th, 24th and 30th December.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

Fairly common visitor and offshore passage migrant.

Kittiwakes breed to the east of Durlston at Blackers Hole, a large sea cave near Dancing Ledge. Some of the birds seen passing Durlston, particularly in the summer, are no doubt these local breeding birds, but others are on passage or wintering in the area. There were some significant movements of Kittiwakes in January, although not as marked as in 2011: 68 on 19th, 100 on 21st and 55 on 23rd. In November, 105 birds passed on 19th and 55 the next day. The last week in December witnessed some spectacular westerly movements: 1,860 on 24th; 90 on 28th; 1,200 on 29th and 620 on 31st.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Common visitor and offshore passage migrant.

Spring passage occurs between March and April, although 25 birds passed on 14th February. Fifty-five flew east on 22nd March, with 60 five days later. Some birds seen passing Durlston may be from the breeding population in Poole Harbour. Peak counts were of 150 present offshore on 1st October, with 148 past on 2nd October and 120 past the next day.

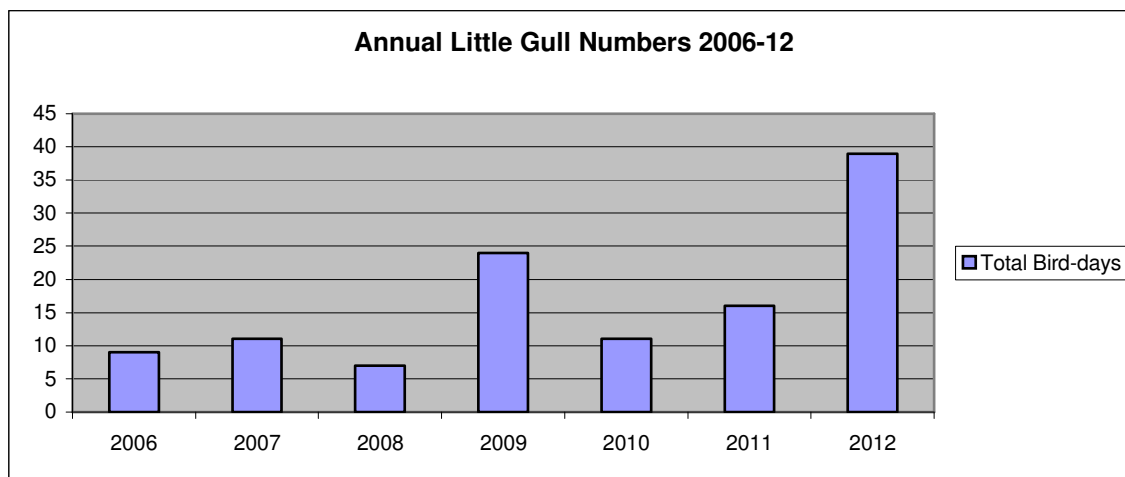
LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Uncommon, passing offshore mainly in autumn and winter.

There were 30 records of 39 birds in 2012; this represents a significant increase over previous years (see Graph). Records were mostly of single birds, but two were recorded on seven occasions and three on 20th November.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	12	11	8	39

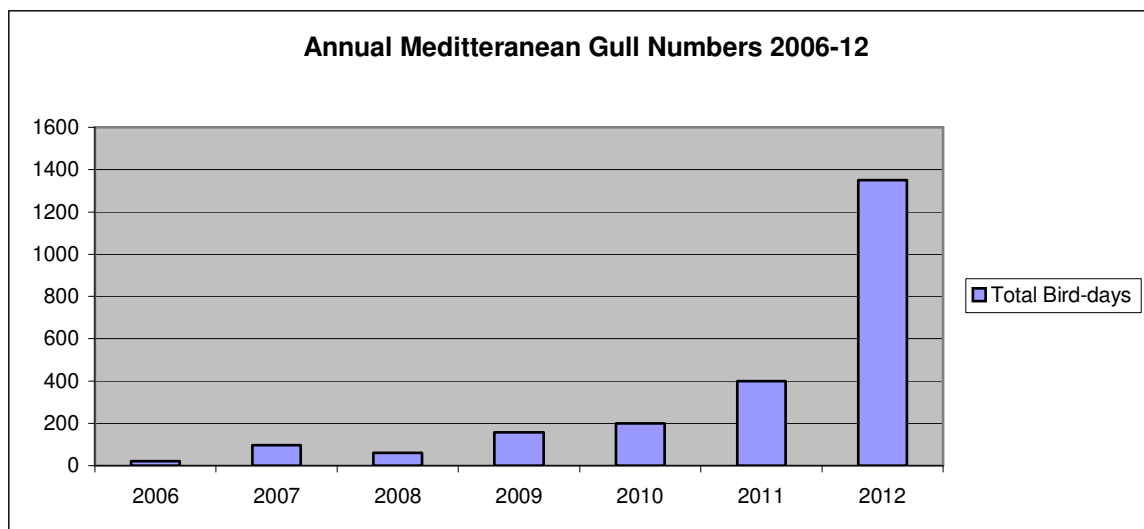


MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

Uncommon offshore visitor and passage migrant.

The total number of Mediterranean Gull bird-days in 2011 was 398, a continuation of the trend of increase seen in previous years (21 in 2006, 96 in 2007, 61 in 2008, 156 in 2009 and 199 in 2010). The total number in 2012 was 1,349, more than three times the previous year (see Graph). Of these, 85% were in the last three months of the year (see Table). The build-up in numbers started at the end of September with 60 birds off Durlston Head on 30th September. Two hundred and ninety-nine were counted two days later with 110 on 3rd October. High counts

continued throughout October with 35 on 10th and 30 on 18th. In November, 28 birds were recorded on 1st and 23 on 8th; 25 birds were recorded on 15th and 16th December.



Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
43	30	15	11	2	4	13	9	70	753	245	154	1349

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Fairly common winter visitor and offshore passage migrant.

Common Gulls are seen offshore at Durlston on most days between mid-September and May. A bird seen on 25th July was very unusual. Peak counts (significantly less than in 2011) were of 30 present on 8th November, 30 on 15th and 16th December, 40 on 17th and 18th December, and 49 on 24th.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Fairly common visitor and offshore passage migrant.

This species is seen in small numbers throughout the year, peaking in late summer and autumn. Two hundred and ninety birds flew west on 14th October, 36 on the following day.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

Common coastal resident and cliff-nesting species.

The 2012 Purbeck Seabird Survey identified at least 15 nests in the Durlston Head to Ragged Rocks area. One hundred and forty-five birds were recorded on 24th December, a day on which a spectacular movement of Gannets and Kittiwakes occurred.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucooides*

Rare visitor.

A bird flew west on 9th January, returning heading east later in the afternoon. A bird flew east on 20th March, following a fishing boat. These two records are the first since 2008.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

Fairly common coastal resident and cliff-nesting species.

Great Black-backed Gulls are seen on and around the cliffs throughout the year. The 2012 Purbeck Seabird Survey identified two nests in the Durlston area.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*
Scarce offshore passage migrant.

There was one record: a bird flew east on 25th April.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*
Fairly common summer visitor and offshore passage migrant.

The first records were on 8th and 9th January, with a February record on 13th. These could be of birds wintering in Poole Harbour. Regular records commenced on the typical date of 15th March and continued until 23rd October; there was a further October record on 29th; two records in November on 19th and 26th; and three in December on 2nd, 29th and 30th. The highest day counts were of 70 on 17th April, 45 on 25th April and 54 on 1st October.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*
Fairly common summer visitor and offshore passage migrant.

Birds were recorded from 9th April onwards. Eighty birds passed on 25th April. The last record was of three birds on 2nd October. Some of the birds may be from the nearest breeding colony, on Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour. Unidentified Common or Arctic Terns ('commic' terns) passed on 4th April (20), 25th April (130) and 16th July (12).

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii*
Rare offshore passage migrant.

A bird flew east on 10th April; there was a further record of two birds on 29th May.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*
Scarce offshore passage migrant.

The annual number of Arctic Terns passing Durlston is variable. In 2006 and 2010, only one bird was recorded; in the period 2007-09, there was an average of five records, with around 10 bird-days each year. In 2011, there were 12 records, totalling 35 bird-days. In 2012, there were eleven records totalling 24 bird-days, of single birds unless otherwise indicated: 25th April (ten); 4th May; 16th July; 30th August (five); 3rd and 24th September; 1st, 2nd, 8th, 11th and 18th October.

COMMON GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*
Common coastal resident, winter visitor and offshore passage migrant.

Three hundred and fifty Guillemots were present on the ledges on 9th January; between four and six hundred were counted on the water and/or ledges on various dates in February, March and April. Unfortunately, Ravens predated the Guillemot colony – at least six eggs were taken in two days at the beginning of May and this continued throughout the Guillemot breeding season with eggs and young being taken. As a result, numbers on the main breeding ledge were at least 80% down on recent years. The first chick was seen on 26th May; two were seen to fledge on 19th June. By 24th June, there were still over 60 adults left on the ledges, with a number of chicks. Two hundred birds had returned by mid-November, with 300 birds present by the end of the year. Four hundred and eighty birds flew past on 31st December.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda*
Common coastal resident, winter visitor and offshore passage migrant.

As in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011, there were some spectacular Razorbill movements and offshore gatherings in January; this also occurred in the last week of December. Counts are tabulated below. It is not clear whether these are local feeding movements, or part of a wider movement. Nineteen birds were present around the Guillemot colony on 16th March and 5th April, with 18 present on 17th April and twelve on 21st June. There were 12 apparently occupied sites.

	Passing RB	Passing Auks	O'shore RB		Passing RB	Passing Auks	O'shore RB
9 Jan	340			6 Dec			200
15 Jan			500	24 Dec	1555	850	
19 Jan	420		1000	28 Dec	450		
20 Jan			400	29 Dec	1500	1000	
23 Jan			600	30 Dec	650		200
25 Jan	230		500	31 Dec	2150	1150	
7 th Feb			1000				
O'shore - Offshore RB – Razorbill Auks- not specifically identified							

ATLANTIC PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica*

Uncommon summer visitor and offshore passage migrant.

The 2012 Purbeck Seabird Survey identified around two to three pairs and ten individual Puffins nesting to the west of Durlston, primarily at Dancing Ledge. The majority of the birds seen at Durlston are likely to be from that population. There were thirteen records in 2012, more than in the period 2006-11. The first record was of a bird flying west on 12th March. There were three records in April: two birds on 9th, and singles on 18th and 23rd. There was a series of records in June: on 7th (two), 8th (two), 10th, 21st (two), 22nd and 29th (three). A bird was recorded on 2nd July. Unusually, there were two November records: one on 19th and two on 30th.

FERAL ROCK DOVE (Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia*

Common coastal resident.

A population of Feral Pigeons live on the cliffs throughout the year, breeding successfully. There are estimated to be approximately 20 pairs nesting within the caves and rocky outcrops around Tilly Whim. Many are taken as prey by Peregrine Falcons.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

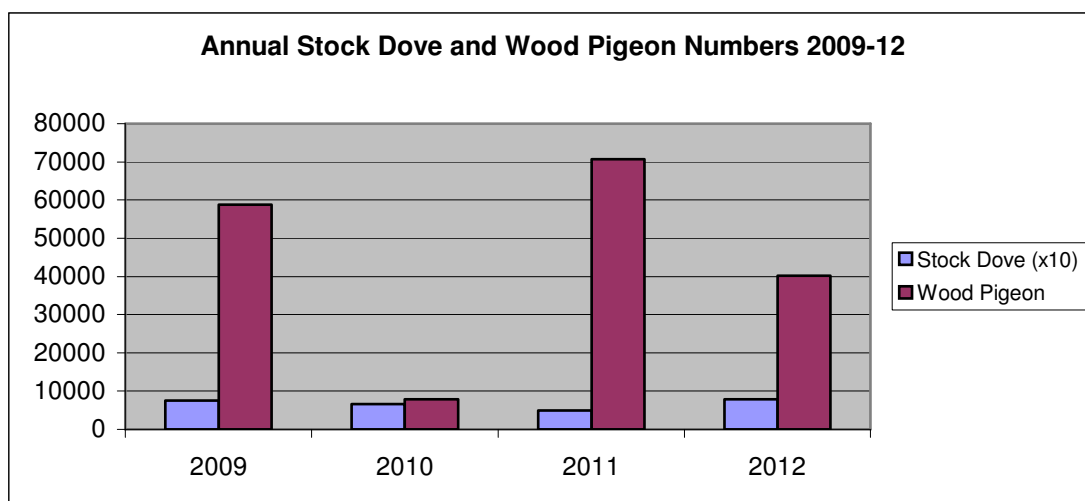
Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

Stock Doves are often seen in flocks of migrating Wood Pigeons. The total number of Stock Doves recorded moving over Durlston between 1st October and 16th December 2012 was 779, an increase over the 482 recorded in 2011, and similar to the 658 and 749 recorded over the same period in 2010 and 2009 (see Graph in Wood Pigeon section). Peak Stock Dove movements were on 27th and 28th November (155 and 90 birds respectively).

WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Wood Pigeon is a widely distributed and commonly found breeding bird throughout Durlston. The total number of Wood Pigeons recorded moving over Durlston between 1st October and 16th December 2012 was 40,260. Approximately 85% of the total passed overhead on four days: 19,600 on 27th October; 7,400 on the next day; 4,270 on 3rd November; and 3,500 on 6th November. Total numbers of Wood Pigeons and Stock Doves (multiplied by a factor of ten to use a comparable scale) are shown in the Graph below.



COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*
Uncommon visitor and uncommon passage migrant
 There is some evidence of autumn migration.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*
Uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant.
 There were only three records, all of single birds: on 4th and 16th May, and on 22nd August. This represents a further decline in records at Durlston, reflecting the long-term national decline.

ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET (Ring-necked Parakeet) *Psittacula krameri*
Scarce visitor from local feral breeding population.
 Rose-ringed Parakeets recorded at Durlston almost certainly originate from the small colony at Studland, although this seems to have decreased in size in recent years. Five birds were seen on 8th September, the first record since 2009.

COMMON CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*
Uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant.
 There were six records: on 12th April, 26th May, 21st and 22nd August and 3rd and 5th September. This is a decrease from the ten records in 2011 and 15 in 2010, and a return to the average between 2006 and 2008.

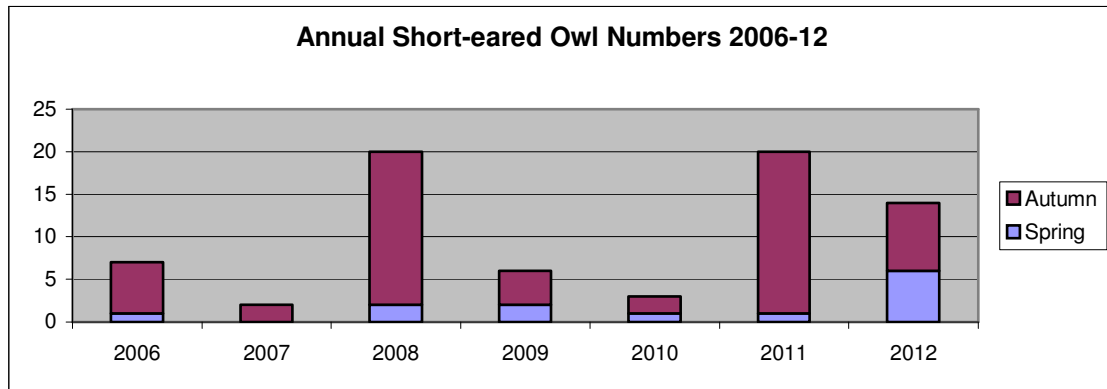
TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*
Uncommon breeding resident.
 There are thought to be two pairs resident at Durlston. Territories appeared to be the same as 2011 with birds heard calling from the same localities. A pair nested in a nest box in the Large Copse; a newly-emerged chick was seen on 11th May; all the chicks had fledged on the 15th with an adult calling in the distance. A bird was seen in daylight on 13th June, flying past the Lighthouse. Birds were heard or seen in most months with no particular pattern apparent within the 29 bird-days recorded.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*
Rare Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, mainly in autumn.
 A bird flew in off the sea on 1st November.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

2012 was another good year for Short-eared Owls at Durlston (see Graph). Spring records were more numerous than in previous years. Birds were recorded in spring on 20th and 25th April; and 3rd, 4th (two over the downs) and 5th May. Autumn records were on 21st, 24th and 26th October; and 9th, 10th, 14th November (the latter flying out to sea); and 4th and 12th December.



COMMON SWIFT *Apus apus*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first record was of five birds on 25th April; 70 birds were recorded on 4th May with 45 on 13th. There were some significant movements or feeding parties in June with 200 birds on 5th, 100 on 7th and 120 on 21st. The last record was on 8th September.

EUROPEAN BEE-EATER *Merops apiaster*

Rare passage migrant, mainly in spring.

A bird was seen over Long Meadow and the Learning Centre at 0800 on 31st May and reported until the late evening. A bird spent three days in Swanage at the end of October and made a brief foray to Durlston on 30th, being seen over the Learning Centre and perched at the Globe.

HOOPOE *Upupa epops*

Rare passage migrant.

One was seen on 13th April at 0900 in The Gully before flying off towards Boys Brigade Meadow.

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla*

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

Birds were seen on eight days, although as always, the number of individuals involved is hard to assess. Birds were recorded on 24th and 31st August; and 7th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th and 29th September.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Fairly common breeding resident.

Green Woodpecker is the commonest woodpecker at Durlston. It is a difficult species to map breeding territories for as most sightings were of birds travelling between feeding and nesting sites. However, because of the frequency of sightings, it is believed that three territories were held: one in the Aviaries, one in the back meadows and one by the Large Copse.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*
Uncommon breeding resident.

One territory was held at the north end of the Aviaries. An interesting feature of the visible migration studies undertaken at Durlston in autumn was the number of Great Spotted Woodpeckers recorded. A total of 96 birds were recorded between mid-September and 23rd December (when the last bird was reported). This represents an increase over previous years (77 in 2011, 49 in 2010 and 74 in 2009). The peak count was of five birds on 15th October.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor*
Rare visitor.

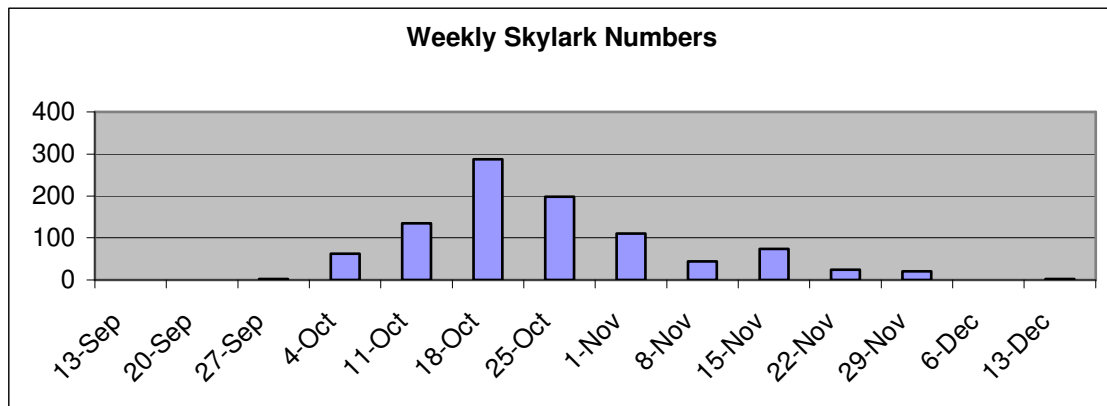
A bird flew over the Castle on 19th October, the first since a series of records in 2010.

WOODLARK *Lullula arborea*
Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

There were no records in the first half of the year. Twelve birds were present on 26th July. The first record of the autumn passage was on 6th October. A total of 29 bird-days were recorded (compared with 70 in 2011, 40 in 2010, 47 in 2009, 22 in 2008, 12 in 2007 and 32 in 2006).

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*
Fairly common breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Five singing males were observed throughout the spring, denoting territories. Twelve were recorded on 12th April. Autumn passage in 2012 was light with 959 birds passing over Durlston between 13th September and 19th December (compared with 2,519 in 2011); passage exhibited a typical 'peaked' nature (see Graph). Peak counts were on 20th and 27th October when 112 and 100 birds respectively flew over.



SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*
Fairly common passage migrant.

The first record was on the typical date of 15th March; twelve birds were recorded on 4th May. Autumn passage started in mid-July with six birds on 11th. Autumn passage was very light in 2012 – a total of 1,171 birds was counted (compared with 10,837 in 2011 and 2,243 in 2010). The last record was on 20th October.

BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*
Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first record was on 26th March; 2,400 were recorded on 4th May. Return passage commenced in earnest on 31st August with 780 birds over. Peak September counts were as follows: 1,500 on 9th; 2,200 on 26th and 3,100 on 28th. Peak October counts were as follows: 2,355 on 2nd; 1,600 on 3rd and 1,450 on 7th. The last record was of two birds on 2nd December.

As with Sand Martins, autumn passage of Swallows in 2012 was similar to 2010 with a total of 31,050 birds counted moving over Durlston (compared with 85,301 in 2011).

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first record was on 31st March; 150 birds were recorded on 4th May. Return passage commenced in earnest on 4th September when 550 birds passed over. Peak counts were: 1,250 on 14th and 3,600 on 30th September; and 1,220 on 2nd and 9th October. A total of 15,491 House Martins were counted moving over Durlston during the autumn passage period, (compared with 24,194 in 2011 and 16,440 in 2010). Over the autumn passage period, the approximate ratio of Sand Martins to House Martins to Swallows was 1:13:26.

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus richardi*

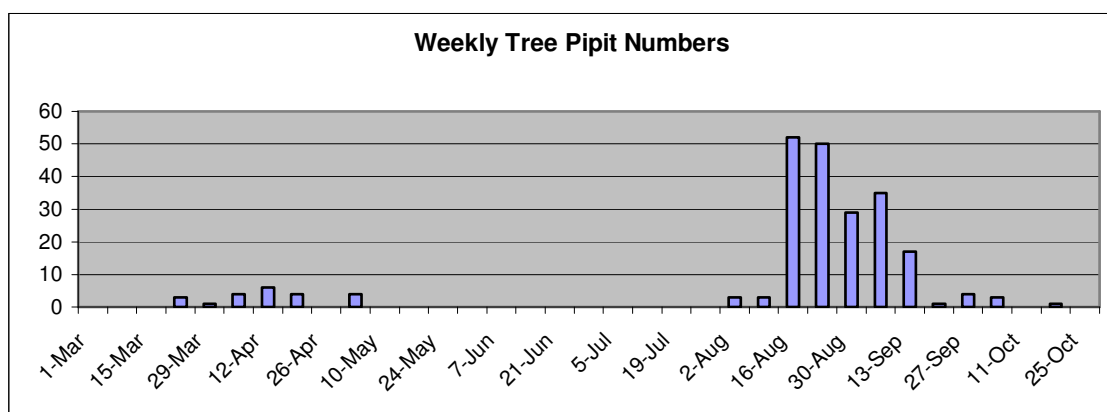
Rare passage migrant.

A bird was reported by the information services near the Lighthouse on 15th May.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

Uncommon passage migrant.

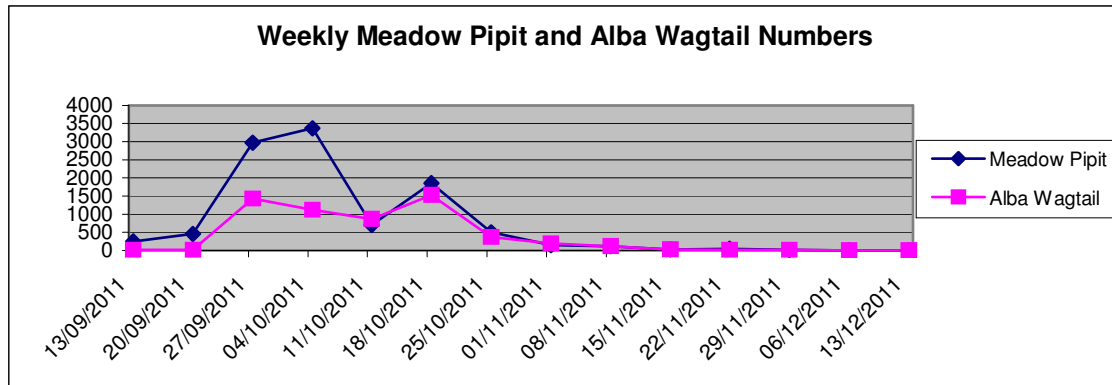
The first bird was reported on 23rd March with spring passage birds reported up to 4th May. Return passage commenced on 2nd August with maximum counts in that month of 25 birds on 21st and 26 on 23rd. The Graph shows the peaked nature of the autumn passage in the last two weeks of August. The last record was on 19th October. There was a total of 220 bird-days in 2012, of which 198 were in the autumn passage period. This represents a decrease from 2011 when 442 bird-days were recorded and a return to previous levels (241 bird-days in 2010, and 123 in 2009).



MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Uncommon breeding resident, common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Spring passage became apparent in March with 60 birds on 9th and 80 on 14th; this was followed by 1,045 on 22nd; 500 on 25th and 350 on 31st. Return passage commenced in earnest in mid-September with 130 birds on 12th and 170 on the next day. Counts in the last week of September between 26th and 30th were of 460, 755, 445, 845 and 390 birds. Peak counts in October were of 950 on 6th; 1,050 on 9th; 570 on 10th; 798 on 19th; 315 on 21st; and 355 on 24th. Passage then declined. The total number of Meadow Pipits counted moving overhead during visible migration studies between mid-September and the end of December was 10,244 (compared with 9,292 in 2011; 6,821 in 2010 and 7,899 in 2009).



ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*
Common coastal breeding resident.

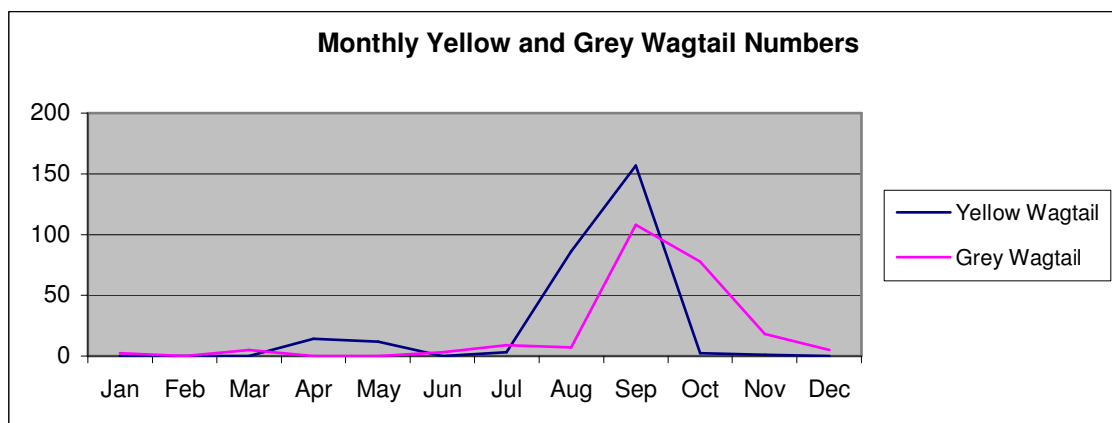
At least five territories were held along the cliffs between Durlston Head and Anvil Point. Peak counts of birds present on the Reserve were of 15 birds on 26th July and 6th August. The monthly number of Rock Pipits counted moving overhead during visible migration studies between mid-September and the end of December were nine birds in September, 61 birds in October, 29 in November and one in December. The overall total of 100 was similar to 2011 and 2010 (111 and 122 respectively) and under half the 223 counted during 2009.

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*
Rare winter visitor and passage migrant.

A bird was present on 15th November.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*
Fairly common passage migrant.

The first record of the year was on 9th April with birds passing through until the end of May (including four on 4th). There were intermittent records to mid-August when autumn passage commenced; peak counts in August were of 12 birds on 23rd and 15 on 28th and 30th. In September, peak counts were of 25 on 3rd, 15 on 4th, 22 on 6th, and 20 on 7th and 8th. The last record was on 5th November. The total number of bird-days in 2012 was 275 (less than the 491 recorded in 2011, but more than the 188 in 2010 and 224 in 2009).



GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*
Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Grey Wagtails show a different occurrence pattern to Yellow Wagtails (see Graph above). Birds may be seen at any time of the year, although they are normally absent, or very scarce, from mid-May to mid-July. There is a marked autumn passage before numbers decline to those of very low numbers or single birds. The peak count was of 14 birds on 12th and 13th September.

The Graph shows the later autumn passage compared with Yellow Wagtail. The total number of bird-days in 2012 was 235, compared with 210 in 2011, 155 in 2010, 209 in 2009, and 200 in 2008.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Occasional breeding resident, common passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor.

Pied Wagtails can be seen at Durlston at any time of the year, commonly around the Learning Centre. Spring passage peaks were of 15 birds on 20th March and 30 on 31st March. Birds of the Continental race *M.a.alba* move through on migration but it is not possible to distinguish them from the British race as they pass overhead; birds are collectively referred to during visible migration studies as 'alba wagtails'. Autumn passage of alba wagtails in 2012 peaked in the third week of October (see Graph in Meadow Pipit account). Peak counts in October were: 406 on 2nd, 355 on 7th, 390 13th, 417 on 19th and 435 on 20th. The total number of alba wagtails counted moving overhead during visible migration studies between mid-September and the end of December was 5,723 (compared with 7,323 in 2011, 6,332 in 2010 and 7,196 in 2009).

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

Rare winter visitor.

There were four records: two on 27th November, and single birds on 1st, 5th and 23rd December.

(Winter) WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Common breeding resident and occasional passage migrant.

There were at least 40 territories, although it is expected that many more undetected breeding sites were present because of the secretive behaviour of the males when not holding territory.

HEDGE ACCENTOR (Dunnock) *Prunella modularis*

Common breeding resident.

The Dunnock is a common and widespread breeding bird at Durlston with at least 41 territories held. Dunnocks were regularly caught whilst ringing in spring and autumn in areas close to breeding sites.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The Robin is a common and widespread breeding bird at Durlston; 29 territories were held across the Reserve. There is some evidence of autumn passage, particularly during October and November; 19 were ringed on 23rd October.

RUFIOUS NIGHTINGALE (Nightingale) *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Scarce passage migrant.

There was only one record: a bird on 4th May.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochuros*

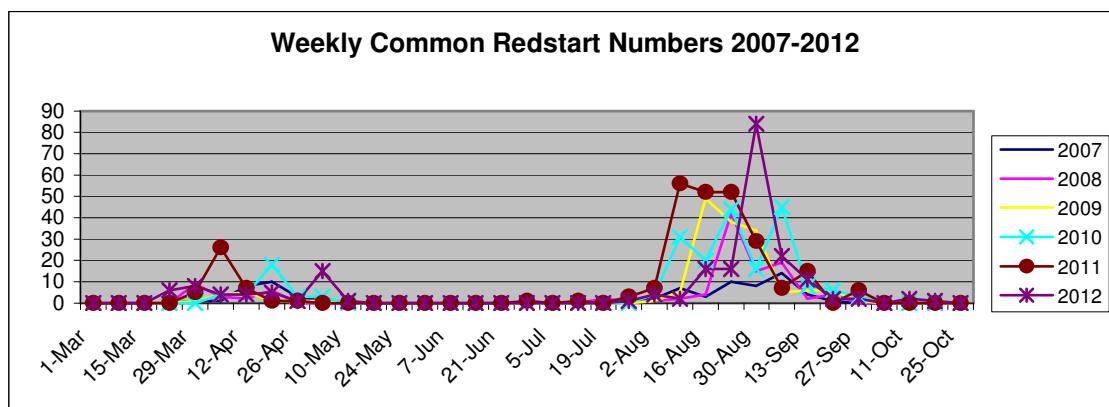
Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

The favoured locations for Black Redstarts at Durlston are Tilly Whim and the grassy slopes of The Gully. Black Redstarts were seen throughout the year. Two chicks were seen exploring the cave at Tilly Whim on 12th June; this represents only the second breeding at Durlston in 40 years. The adults were singing again at the end of June, but no second brood was recorded. A bird was seen in the Castle on 25th October; the bird took some cajoling to leave. Total bird-days in 2012 were 291, a significant increase on 2011 (84), 2010 (41) and 2009 (93). However, this was almost certainly because of the presence of the breeding pair rather than because of an increase in migrant birds.

COMMON REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Fairly common passage migrant.

The first record of the spring passage was on 30th March with six birds the next day; birds passed through until 12th May with a peak count of 14 on 4th May. The autumn passage of Redstarts at Durlston is normally noticeably heavier than in spring and commenced in earnest at the end of July. Peak counts were 30 on 31st August, 21 on 3rd September and 23 the next day; this led to a significant peak in numbers compared with previous years (see Graph). The last record was on the late date of 24th October. Total bird-days in 2012 were 207, compared with 269 in 2011, 209 in 2010 and 158 in 2009.



WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Uncommon passage migrant.

The first spring passage record was on 25th April; the number of bird-days in April and May was two and nine respectively. Autumn passage birds were recorded intermittently from 30th July onwards with movement being more noticeable from the third week of August. Fifteen birds were recorded on 4th September. The last record was on 12th October. The number of bird-days in July, August, September and October was one, thirteen, thirty-four and five respectively, making a total of 53 for the autumn passage period (compared with 75 in 2011, 49 in 2010 and 19 in 2009).

COMMON STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*

Common breeding resident and passage migrant.

Eight birds were present on 12th March and 5th, 19th and 20th April. A total of three territories were identified. Twelve birds were present on 26th July and 8th August, and 14 on 20th and 30th August; these numbers gradually built to a peak of presumably dispersing and passage birds in mid-October with 20 on 10th, 18 two days later, 20 on 22nd and 17 the next day. The last significant count was of 15 birds on 5th November.

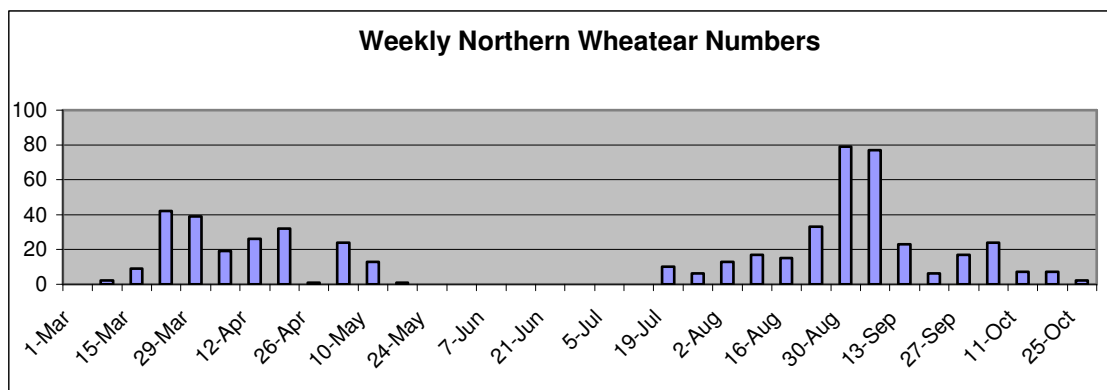
NORTHERN WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Fairly common passage migrant.

Northern Wheatear is one of the commonest passerine passage migrants at Durlston and normally the first to arrive from Africa. The first spring record was of a bird on 9th March; 24 birds passed through on 31st March with 21 on 4th May. Return passage commenced in the third week of July. Peak passage was in the first two weeks of September (see Graph); 28 birds were recorded on 31st August and 30 on 11th September. The last record was on 28th October. The total number of birds-days in 2012 (520) compares with 667 in 2011, 525 in 2010, 443 in 2009 and an average of 235 for 2006-08.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
0	0	60	87	38	0	16	111	162	46	0	0	520



RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

There were nine spring records, all single birds (other than three on 28th March) on: 26th, 29th, 30th and 31st March; 5th and 15th April; and 2nd and 4th May. Autumn passage of Ring Ouzels at Durlston is invariably stronger than the spring passage and commenced on 30th September, continuing until 15th November. Seven birds were recorded on 22nd October, ten the next day. The number of bird-days in September, October and November was one, fifty-eight and six respectively, totalling 65 for the autumn passage. This compares with 28 in 2011, 39 in 2010 and 22 in 2009.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The number of territories increased from 16 in 2011 to 24 in 2012. Large numbers of Blackbirds were recorded in the third week of October: 200 on 22nd, 290 on 23rd plus 35 over, 150 on 24th plus 23 over and 90 on 25th.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were few records of Fieldfares in the first winter period, the last was of two birds on the late date of 20th April. Fieldfares were seen in the second winter period from 11th October onwards. The species is not generally as common at Durlston as Redwings; in the 2012 autumn passage period, the ratio was almost 1:5. The only significant count during visible migration surveys was of 210 birds on 15th November.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Common breeding resident and passage migrant.

A bird was heard singing on 5th January; 20 were present on 3rd February. There were four territories across Durlston in approximately the same locations as in previous years. Almost 50 birds over on 13th October presaged high numbers in the third week of October: 90 on 22nd with 24 over, 180 on 23rd with 112 over, 199 on 24th with 120 over, and 100 on 25th.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Fairly common passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor.

Twenty birds were present on 3rd February; birds were recorded during the first winter period up to 11th April. Redwings are normally more common at Durlston than Fieldfares; in the first winter period, six times more Redwings than Fieldfares were recorded. The first record in the second winter period was on 29th September; birds were then seen regularly until the end of the year. Peak counts were of 180 present and 55 over on 23rd October, 50 present and 210 over on the next day, and 445 over on 15th November.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus***Occasional breeder, common visitor and uncommon passage migrant.**

As with the other thrushes, birds are seen more frequently in the second winter period with passage birds seen regularly from mid-October onwards. Twelve birds were present on 8th November.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia***Uncommon passage migrant.**

The first spring passage record was on 31st March. The main passage period was from then until the third week of April with intermittent records up to 12th May. Return passage commenced on 20th July; the last record was on 12th October. The total number of bird-days was 63, a decrease from the 127 recorded in 2011 and a return to the levels of 2010 and 2009 (54 and 58 respectively) which in turn were approximately double that of the numbers recorded in 2007 and 2008.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus***Uncommon passage migrant.**

The first record of the spring was on 10th April. Passage continued during April and May until 22nd May, with two further records on 29th May and 3rd June. A record on 16th July presaged autumn passage which became apparent in the third week of July and continued until 30th September. Twelve birds were recorded on 20th and 22nd August. The total of fifty-one bird-days in August exceeded that of 2011 and contributed to an annual total of 101, which also exceeded that of 2011.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus***Uncommon passage migrant.**

Reed Warblers normally arrive later than Sedge Warblers, and the first record was on 17th April. As is normal with this species, spring passage was protracted and lasted until 27th June when three birds were recorded. Return passage, limited though it is, commenced on 10th August. Reed Warblers are normally significantly less common at Durlston than Grasshopper and Sedge Warblers, primarily because of the lack of the favoured reedbed habitat. Records continued very intermittently until 26th September.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Totals
Grasshopper Warbler	14	4	0	4	21	15	4	63
Sedge Warbler	4	21	1	11	51	13	0	101
Reed Warbler	1	10	11	0	6	10	0	38

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla***Fairly common breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant.**

Birds were recorded from 11th January onwards. Spring passage appeared to commence on 20th March when nine birds were recorded; 35 birds were present on 31st March, 40 on 4th May. Eight territories were identified. Autumn passage began in earnest in the first week of September with 50 birds on 7th and 11th, 55 on 12th and 13th and 118 on 15th. In the last week of September, 55 birds were recorded on 27th and 30th and 110 on 29th; 110 birds were also recorded on 4th October. A total of 1,891 bird-days were recorded, a decrease from the 3,023 in 2011, but an increase from 1,509 in 2010 and 1,048 in 2009.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
7	3	81	108	69	9	38	72	835	582	79	8	1891

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin***Occasional breeding summer visitor and uncommon passage migrant.**

The first record was on 24th April; fifteen birds were present on 4th May. Return passage commenced at the end of July, but as usual, birds were never common. The peak counts were

of 15 birds on 20th August. In total, there were 178 bird-days, compared with 242 in 2011, 140 in 2010, 130 in 2009, 72 in 2008 and 66 in 2007. The last record was on the late date of 11th October.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Total
0	1	27	0	4	90	51	5	0	178

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria*

Rare migrant.

A bird was caught and ringed near the Learning Centre on 13th October. This is only the fifth Durlston record of this species.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Fairly common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first spring record was on 20th April; eight birds were present on 4th May and seven on 13th. As with many spring records of warbler species, it is difficult to separate passage birds from resident breeders. The frequency of records declined in June and the first half of July as birds had either moved through, or had become less evident during breeding. However, birds were recorded throughout the summer and breeding occurred in hedgerows and scrub in the farmland areas of Durlston (four territories). The peak count during autumn passage was of seven birds on 20th August. The last record of the autumn passage was on 26th September. Less common at Durlston than Common Whitethroat (see Tables), there was a total of 145 bird-days compared with 269 in 2011, 149 in 2010 and 198 in 2009.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Total
0	4	32	12	32	42	23	0	0	145

COMMON WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first spring record was on 13th April; 145 birds were counted on 4th May. Birds were seen from then onwards on an almost daily basis throughout May and June, more commonly than Lesser Whitethroats. Common Whitethroat is the most common breeding bird at Durlston with 50 territories identified. Young birds were seen in the hedges and scrub around the meadows and downs. Peak counts (of resident and migrants) were of 60 birds on 26th and 31st August, and 55 on 7th September. The last record was on 29th October. In total, there were 1,120 bird-days, compared with 2,278 in 2011; 1,007 in 2010; 692 in 2009; 244 in 2008; and 192 in 2007.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Total
0	28	287	26	80	356	332	11	0	1120

DARTFORD WARBLER *Sylvia undata*

Uncommon breeding resident and autumn visitor.

Birds were seen intermittently from January to March including four on 27th March. Young birds were seen on 19th June; four were recorded on 6th August. One territory was identified.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Scarce autumn passage vagrant.

There were six records. A bird was reported in the sycamores at the bottom of Long Meadow on 8th October with a further bird in the woodland near the Castle on 16th. Further records were on 29th October (two birds), 31st October, and 4th and 30th November.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Scarce passage migrant.

There were three records: on 4th May, 12th August and 8th September.

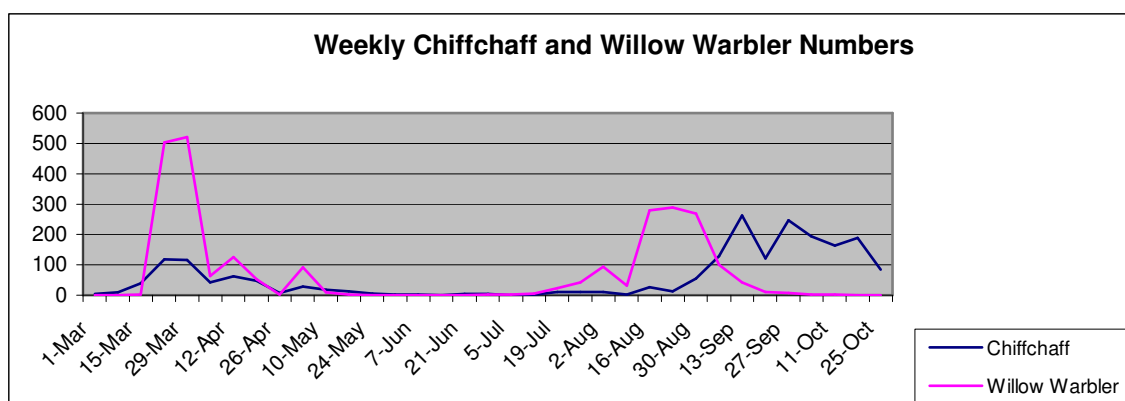
COMMON CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant; scarce in winter.

Chiffchaffs overwintered at Durlston with birds seen in January and February. Spring passage was late, not starting in earnest until the third week in March; 26 birds were recorded on 20th March with 80 on 31st. A total of 23 territories were identified. Chiffchaff autumn passage is later and normally significantly stronger than the closely-related Willow Warbler (see Graph). Passage in 2012 peaked in the last half of September (rather than October as is normally the case); peak counts were of 118 birds on 15th September. In total, 2,197 bird-days were recorded compared with 3,384 in 2011; 1,765 in 2010; 1,847 in 2009; 958 in 2008; and 644 in 2007. A very grey bird was seen on 6th November; a bird of the *tristis* race was seen on 14th and 15th November.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
16	18	210	173	63	6	26	72	703	727	163	20	2197



WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Occasional breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant.

The first spring record was on 19th March; 500 birds were recorded on 31st March. The next highest spring count was of 85 birds on 4th May. Willow Warblers migrate earlier in the autumn than Chiffchaff (see Graph above) with autumn passage starting in earnest in the last week of July with eleven birds on 27th July. Peak counts were in August: 120 birds on 20th and 145 on 26th. The last record was on 15th October. The total number of bird-days of 2,071 was only slightly reduced from the 2,373 recorded in 2011 and significantly more than the numbers recorded in previous years: 606 in 2010, 414 in 2009, 453 in 2008 and 601 in 2007.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
0	0	521	245	104	0	61	811	323	6	0	0	2071

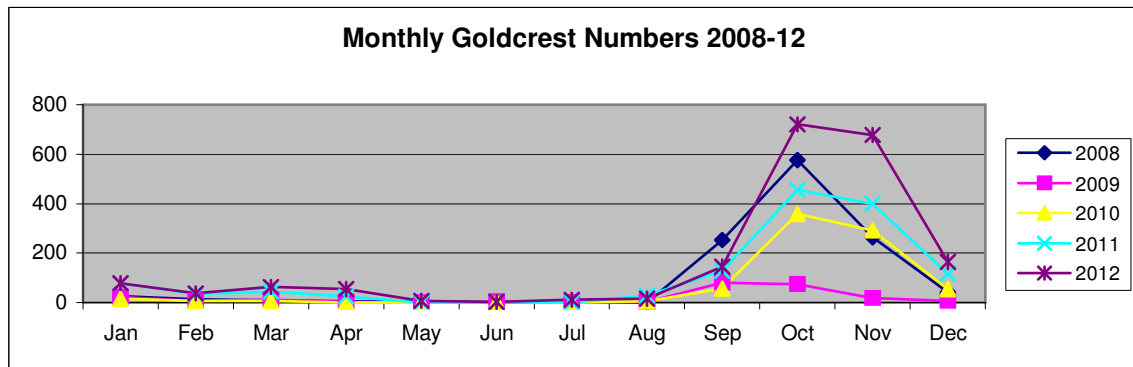
GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Uncommon breeding resident, common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Goldcrests can be seen in any month but the numbers of resident birds are significantly increased by autumn migrants (see Table and Graph). The 2012 autumn passage was the strongest for the last five years. The maximum count was of 55 birds on 20th and 22nd October. The total of bird-days for 2012 was 1,971 (compared with 1,307 in 2011, 798 in 2010, 226 in 2009 and 1,194 in 2008).

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
77	36	62	54	7	2	10	16	145	721	678	163	1971



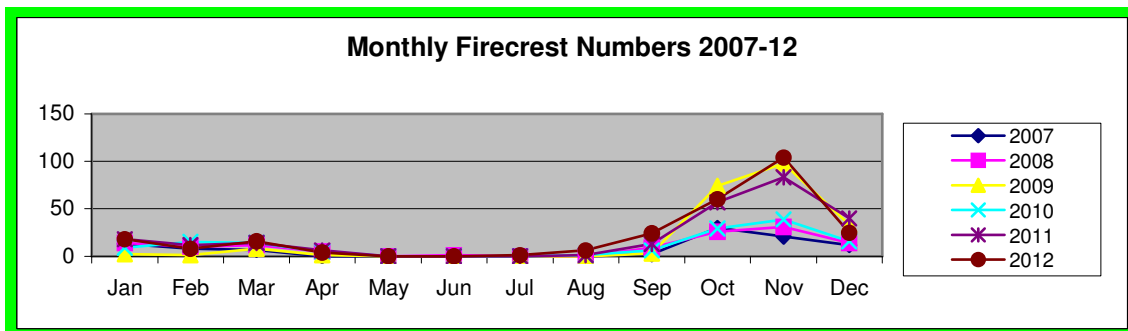
FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapillus*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor.

Firecrests were seen intermittently throughout the first winter period up to 19th April. There was a record on 9th July. The first autumn record was of two birds on 24th August. Birds were seen regularly until the end of the year with a peak in sightings in October and November; peak counts were of eleven birds on 31st October, nine on 15th November and eight on 30th. The total number of bird-days was 266, the highest in six years (see Graph).

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
18	8	16	4	0	0	1	6	24	60	104	25	266



SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

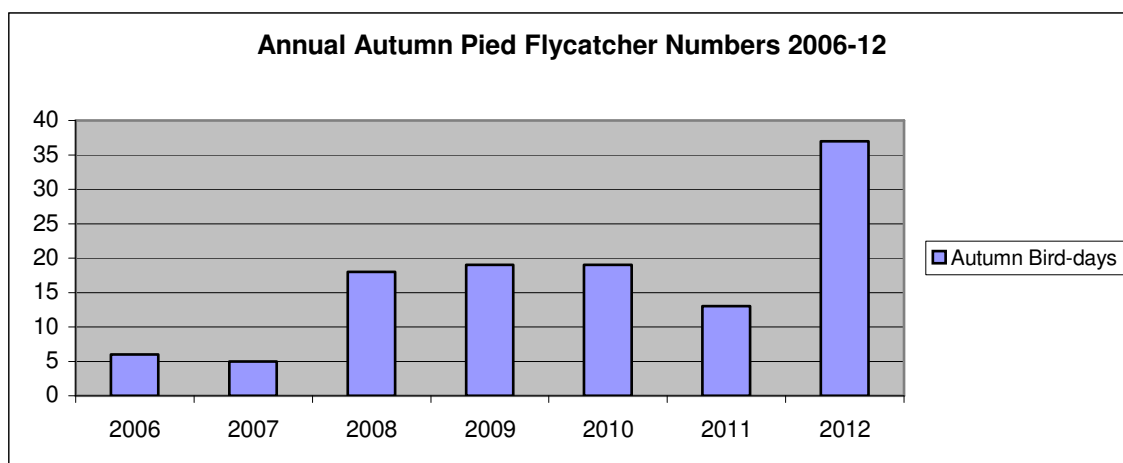
Fairly common passage migrant.

Spotted Flycatcher is a late migrant and the first spring passage record was of six birds on 4th May with birds seen intermittently up to 28th May. Return passage commenced on 6th August and continued to 26th September. Peak counts were of 20 birds on 31st August and eleven on 4th September. There was a total of 19 bird-days in spring and 76 in autumn (less than in 2011 and 2010).

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Uncommon passage migrant.

There were four records in spring: on 11th, 13th and 25th April and 8th May. Return passage commenced on 11th August. There were 29 bird-days in August (including 14 on 20th), and eight in September, continuing the upward trend seen over recent years (see Graph). The last record was on 8th September.



LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

Common breeding resident.

The peak count was of 23 birds on 3rd November.

BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Common breeding resident.

Birds were present throughout the woodland areas and mature scrub; pairs also used nest boxes including the Visitor Centre camera nest box; unfortunately, these chicks did not fledge. A total of 27 territories were identified.

GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Common breeding resident.

Great Tits are found all across Durlston – particularly in hedgerows and the woodland areas. Bollards across the reserve were successfully used for nesting once again. A total of 17 territories were identified.

COAL TIT *Periparus ater*

Uncommon breeding resident and passage migrant.

Three birds were recorded on 18th November. A very vocal bird of the Continental race was recorded on 30th October. It dropped in very briefly and then left, initially flying up almost vertically before heading off west.

MARSH TIT *Poecile palustris*

Rare visitor.

Marsh Tits are in decline throughout Dorset and have rarely been seen at Durlston in the past until 2010. The 22 records in that year were eclipsed by the 40 in 2011. The number of records in 2012 returned to the pre-2010 period. There were two in January, one in February, one in November (of two birds) and one in December.

EUROPEAN NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

Scarce visitor.

Records of Nuthatch at Durlston continue to increase. The ten records in 2010 contrasted with previous years when it has been recorded on one or no days. In 2011, there were 24 records including two birds on four days. In 2012, there were 53 records including two birds on three days. A male was singing in Ash trees in the Aviary Glade on 17th April. Birds were recorded in all months apart from March and May. The increase in records may be associated with a breeding pair; the species has not bred at Durlston for many years.

EURASIAN TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris***Uncommon breeding resident and visitor.**

Treecreepers were seen intermittently in the woodland areas, although records decline significantly during the breeding season (see Table). Abundance in 2012 was similar to 2011.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
17	7	2	5	1	3	3	3	5	20	14	12	92

EURASIAN JAY *Garrulus glandarius***Fairly common breeding species and passage / irruptive migrant.**

Jays are normally particularly evident in the autumn as they collect acorns from the many Holm Oaks around Durlston; birds are also seen flying over. Approximately 20 birds were present on many days in October with the peak counts being 30 present and 12 over on 12th October and 25 present on 24th.

MAGPIE *Pica pica***Common breeding resident.**

Magpies were recorded daily with regular counts of eight to ten birds together; fifteen were counted on 26th November. Eight territories were recorded across the reserve, with juvenile birds noted.

EURASIAN JACKDAW *Corvus monedula***Common breeding resident and passage migrant.**

No Jackdaw nest sites were identified during the breeding bird surveys but it is believed that a large proportion of the breeding birds present nest on the cliffs between Tilly Whim and the Observation Point. Fifty birds were recorded on 4th February and 2nd March (many paired). Jackdaws move through Durlston in autumn. Peak counts of birds present were of 120 birds on 28th and 200 on 30th September. Peak counts of birds flying over in October were: 140 on 9th, 130 on 10th, 120 on 19th, 110 on 20th, 120 on 22nd, 130 on 24th, 130 on 28th and 120 on 30th. One hundred and twenty birds flew over on 8th and 29th November.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus***Common non-breeding visitor.**

Rooks are seen at Durlston normally primarily in the autumn, and usually in the meadows.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone***Common breeding resident.**

Carrion Crows nest in The Gully and various wooded areas.

COMMON RAVEN *Corvus corax***Fairly common visitor.**

Ravens are normally seen at Durlston as single birds or pairs, flying over. In 2012, a pair first seen possibly mating on the cliffs on 8th February (being harassed by three Peregrine Falcons) bred successfully. A newly-fledged chick was seen on 19th April; this is the first confirmed breeding at Durlston for at least 40 years with at least two young fledged. Unfortunately, the birds predated the Guillemot colony – at least six eggs were taken in two days at the beginning of May and this continued throughout the Guillemot breeding season with eggs and young being taken.

COMMON STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Uncommon breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

An increase in Starling numbers generally was noticeable by mid-October. Peak counts of passing birds were of 540 on 27th October, 600 on 30th, and 655 on 5th November.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

Scarce passage migrant.

House Sparrows are much less numerous at Durlston than 15 years ago when they bred at the Learning Centre and Bungalow. There was, however, a significant increase in records in 2010 and this continued in 2011 and 2012 when there were more records than ever. Birds were present in all months other than June, July and December. Six birds were present on 20th March and 26th September. In 2009, autumn visible migration surveys recorded a total of four single birds flying over. The equivalent figures for 2012, 2011 and 2010 were 16, 24 and 26 respectively.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

Scarce passage migrant.

Autumn passage was weaker than in previous years. Twelve birds flew over on 20th October.

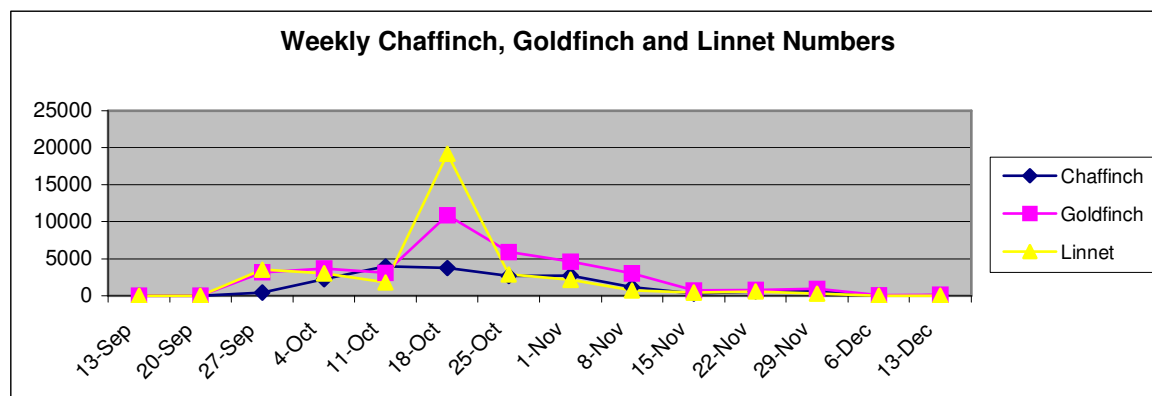
Monthly counts (bird-days):

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2012	0	18	0	0	18
2011	0	24	3	1	28
2010	1	24	6	0	31
2009	7	30	4	0	41

COMMON CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

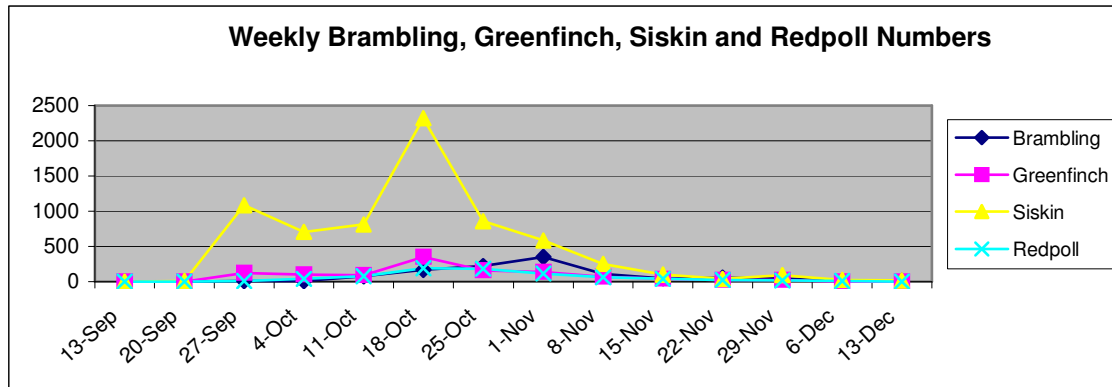
Breeding bird surveys identified 37 Chaffinch territories amongst the hedgerows, scrub and woodland areas, and in The Gully. This represents an increase of nine territories from 2011. Visible migration (the overhead daylight passage of migrating species such as pigeons, larks, hirundines, wagtails, pipits and finches) is an annual occurrence at Durlston and other Dorset headlands. Passage lasts from September until December, but the main period for finches is from October until mid-November. Counts were undertaken on 69 days between 13th September and 19th December. Approximately 18,384 Chaffinches were counted during this period, amounting to an average of 267 per day. Of the seven common finch species (Chaffinch, Brambling, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Siskin, Linnet and Lesser Redpoll), Chaffinches were the third most abundant, amounting to 18.4% of the common finches. Particularly strong movements were noted on 12th (2,130 birds); 13th (1,290); 19th (1,324); 24th (1,450); and 27th (1,420) October; and 5th November (1,125).



BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon passage migrant mainly autumn and winter visitor.

There were only three records in the first half of the year, all of single birds unless otherwise indicated: on 7th January; and 9th (two birds) and 12th March. As with other finch species, autumn passage is always significantly stronger. The first record of the autumn was on 29th September; records continued until the third week of December. The main passage period was in the first week of November. Approximately 1,070 Bramblings were counted between 13th September and 19th December, amounting to an average of 16 per day (double the rate in 2011 and similar to 2010). Of the seven common finch species, Bramblings were the sixth most abundant, amounting to 1.1% of the common finches. Peak counts were of 77 birds on 28th October and 122 on 5th November.



EUROPEAN SERIN *Serinus serinus*

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in spring.

There was one record: two birds on 9th April.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*

Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding bird surveys identified 15 Greenfinch territories, the same as in 2011. Although still numerous as a passage migrant, Greenfinches do not move through Durlston in the numbers associated with species such as Chaffinch, Linnet and Goldfinch. Approximately 1,110 Greenfinches were counted between 13th September and 19th December, amounting to an average of 16 per day. Of the seven common finch species, Greenfinches were the fifth most abundant, amounting to 1.1% of the common finches. Passage peaked in the third week of October with a count of 120 birds on 20th.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Breeding resident, common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Although small in comparison to the autumn passage, spring migration of Goldfinches is noted as birds move north from their wintering grounds in France and Iberia. Approximately 37,030 Goldfinches were counted between 13th September and 19th December, amounting to an average of 535 per day (down from 685 in 2011, but similar to other previous years). Of the seven common finch species, Goldfinches were the most abundant, amounting to 37.1% of the common finches. Migration peaked in the third week of October with 1,981 on 18th; 3,095 on 19th; 2,260 on 21st; and 1,860 on 27th.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Fairly common passage migrant, particularly in autumn.

As in 2011, there were more records of Siskins in the first half of the year than in previous years, particularly in March and April. The main autumn passage commenced in the last week of September with 140 birds on 29th. Approximately 6,880 Siskins were counted between 13th September and 19th December, amounting to an average of just under 100 per day

(compared with 40 in 2009, 80 in 2010 and 230 in 2011). Of the seven common finch species, Siskins were the fourth most abundant, amounting to 6.9% of the common finches. Siskin autumn passage exhibits a more marked peak than the other finches (see Graph in Brambling section). Peak counts were in October: 1,202 birds on 18th and 578 on 19th.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

Breeding resident and common passage migrant.

The breeding population of Linnets has reduced significantly and breeding bird surveys identified four territories in similar locations to previous years. Approximately 34,700 Linnets were counted between 13th September and 19th December, amounting to an average of 500 per day (significantly more than in 2009, 2010 and 2011). Of the seven common finch species, Linnets were the second most abundant, amounting to 34.7% of the common finches. Peak Linnet passage lasted from the end of September (1,120 birds were recorded on 30th) to the end of October. October peak counts were: 1,192 on 2nd; 1,921 on 18th; 10,960 on 19th; 1,180 on 21st; and 3,900 on 24th.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris*

Scarce passage migrant.

There was one record of a bird passing over on 28th October.

LESSER REDPOLL *Carduelis carbaret*

Fairly common passage migrant mainly in late autumn.

There were ten records in the first half of the year (all of single birds or two birds): on 6th February; 7th, 9th, 12th and 29th March; 10th, 11th, 19th and 20th April; and 22nd May. All other records were from autumn passage; the first was on 28th September. Approximately 750 Redpolls were counted between 13th September and 19th December, amounting to an average of 11 per day. This represents a return to levels seen in previous years after the high numbers recorded in 2011 (an average of 60 per day). Of the seven common finch species, Redpolls were the least most abundant, amounting to 0.7% of the common finches. Main passage was in the last two weeks of October. Peak counts were of 53 birds on 20th and 68 on 28th.

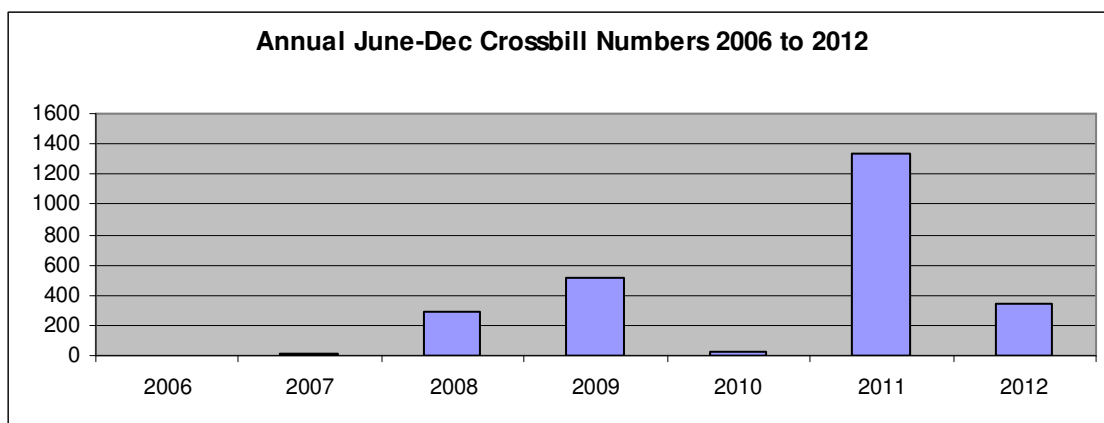
COMMON CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Uncommon passage migrant and irruptive visitor.

Birds were recorded in spring: 35 bird-days in March included 27 on 22nd March; a bird on 2nd April was followed by twelve on 29th May. Monthly bird-days for the rest of 2012 are given in the Table. Crossbill numbers vary significantly from year to year. Numbers in the period June to December for the years from 2006 to 2012 are shown in the Graph.

Monthly counts (bird-days):

Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
17	109	22	17	105	76	1	347



COMMON BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula***Breeding resident and uncommon passage migrant.**

The Bullfinch is a secretive and often under-recorded species. Breeding bird surveys located four territories across Durlston in mature scrubland, as in 2011. Prior to autumn, peak counts were of 14 birds on 13th May and 15 on 26th July. Autumn migration numbers were less than those recorded in 2011; peak counts were of 25 birds on 30th October and 5th November. Monthly visible migration count totals between 13th September and 19th December were as follows: October – 116 bird-days, November – 128 bird-days, and December – 7 bird-days.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes***Scarce passage migrant.**

There has not been a significant autumn passage of Hawfinches at Durlston since 2005; passage is annually very variable. There were seven bird-days in 2011, ten in 2010, none in 2009, 17 in 2008, one in 2007 and three in 2006. Bird-days in 2012 totalled 22 (one in July, 10 in October including four on 30th, and eleven in November including three on 9th and 29th).

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus***Scarce passage migrant.**

The first bird of the autumn was recorded on 29th September flying over the Lighthouse before flying down the coast. There were six further records of single over-flying birds: on 7th, 10th, 23rd and 30th October; and 6th and 19 November.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis***Rare passage migrant**

There were two spring records: a bird over on 7th January, and one by the Warden's Cottage on 7th and 8th April. There were five records of over-flying birds on 3rd, 12th, 23rd and 29th November, and 4th December.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citronella***Fairly common breeding resident and passage migrant.**

Peak counts in the first part of 2012 were of nine birds on 19th April. Once a common breeding bird found throughout Durlston and The Wares, the Durlston population of this Red-listed species has remained relatively constant over the last few years with five territories recorded in 2012. Future nest recording studies are underway to establish the productivity and breeding success, along with a farmland bird project to provide winter food and ideal nesting habitat for Yellowhammers and Linnets. Yellowhammers move over Durlston during autumn passage, but in low numbers. There were 23 bird-days in October and 11 in November.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus***Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in autumn.**

There were few records in the first half of the year, all between 9th March and 4th May. As with other finch species, autumn passage is always stronger than in spring. Records consisted predominantly of small numbers of birds moving overhead, although birds were also occasionally seen around Durlston. Reed Buntings were recorded on almost every day in October and November; records then declined with the last on 3rd December. September, October, November and December bird-days were two, thirty-one, twenty-nine and one respectively.