

Rare Birds in Guernsey



2020

La Société Guernesiaise - Ornithological Section

Report on rare birds in Guernsey in 2020

The islands of Guernsey, Herm, Jethou, Lihou and associated islets

Mark Lawlor and the Bailiwick of Guernsey Rarities Committee

The following records have been submitted to, assessed by and accepted by the Bailiwick of Guernsey Rarities Committee (BGRC) which is organised through the Ornithological Section of La Société Guernesiaise. The members of the committee for 2020 (M.P.Lawlor, A.P.Loaring, C.J.Mourant, B.G.Wells, M.A.Guppy, J.Horton, L.Higgins) would like to thank all the observers and photographers who sent in details of their rarity observations.



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The systematic list is based on the BOU British List. Although the BGRC's area covers the whole of the Bailiwick, this report focuses on the rare bird sightings from Guernsey. However, the accepted records from Alderney and Sark are also included for completeness and interest. For each record, the following information is given where available; number of birds, age and sex if known, dates, locations, whether it was trapped or photographed, the names of the finder(s), and whether it was seen by anyone else (*et al.*). For each species, it states how many previous Guernsey records there have been (if known) and there is a comment on the birds natural range and migrations. There are also the editor's comments and analysis of sightings for some species. Many thanks to all the photographers who have allowed their photos to appear in this report : A. Stoaling, W. Turner, A. Loaring, D. Carre, R. Ferbrache, M. Guppy, D. Scott, A. Bott, M. Cunningham, A. Marquis, J. Hooper, A. Oliveira, C. Bale, C. Massey.

Cover picture : Pallid Harrier (*Circus macrourus*) by Dave Carre

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Three, 25th October into 2021, Claire Mare, then Barras Lane fields, photo (A. Loaring, et. al.)
- 7th Guernsey record.

The records of this species continue to increase, this being the third year in a row that Canada Goose has occurred. Also, this is the first time a small 'flock' has arrived, and the first time that they have overwintered. As can be seen from the lower photo, the birds were very territorial, chasing off the feral Barnacle Geese when they got a chance. A decision may have to be made in the near future whether we allow this species to colonise or not - the latter option being the most environmentally sensible.

(Introduced American species, now breeding throughout northern Europe)



MCunningham - Claire Mare



MLawlor - Barras Lane

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

One, adult, 8th October into 2021, Mont Herault, Rocquaine, Vale Pond, Barras Lane Fields, photo (J. Hooper, et. al.) - 7th Guernsey record.

Still rare in Guernsey with only seven records, all but one since 2006. However, they are now quite a familiar sight since, most of the time, they have chosen to spend the winter here. This bird did cause a little confusion since it had very orange-coloured legs which is more typical of the closely related Bean Goose. A small percentage of Pink-footed Geese do show orange legs however and this small bird showed the typical structural characteristics of a Pink-foot.

(Breeds in Iceland, Greenland & Svalbard, wintering in north-western Europe)



ALoaring - Rocquaine Bay

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

One, 22nd July, off L'Eree, Catiorec and Albecq, photo.

Short-staying birds seen in bays along the coast seems to be typical for this species. This is different to other large wildfowl species which tend to stay for longer periods.

(A common resident species throughout the UK and Northern and Central Europe)



DCarre - Catiorec

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

One, adult, 2019 to 23rd April, Claire Mare & Colin Best NR, photo - 13th Guernsey record.

One, adult, 16th October, Vale Pond, photo - 14th Guernsey record.

This species has shown a remarkable increase in records in recent years, quite unlike most other 'northern' species which have mostly been declining. The first bird was discovered in December 2019 and stayed in the same area for an exceptionally long time, about four and a half months, leaving quite late in the spring. The second bird was a very short stayer, pitching down in front of a few lucky observers watching from Vale Pond hide, before disappearing to the north. Half of the 14 documented records of Whooper Swan in Guernsey have been in the last six years.

(A common breeding species throughout the far north of Europe, wintering in large flocks in north-western Europe)



Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

One, adult, 12th to 27th July, Claire Mare, then Reservoir, photo - 1st Guernsey record.

This bird was first seen flying over the reserve at Claire Mare and was sighted a few more times during the next week although it was only ever a brief visitor. On 24th July it settled at the Reservoir for a four-day stay before disappearing. This individual represents the first accepted record of an Egyptian Goose in Guernsey, an addition to the island's bird list.

It is not really the most exciting new species to occur and some may debate whether it should be added at all. Of course, this will not be a vagrant from its native Africa but is presumed to be a visitor from the ever-increasing feral population in the UK and NW Europe. In England, Egyptian Goose has extended its breeding range into the south-west (Hampshire, Dorset and Devon) and populations in Europe have built up to large numbers and have reached eastern France. There are also long-distance, over-sea movements proved for these birds - eg a Dutch bird migrating to England, and another reaching the Shetland Islands. This bird showed no rings or wing-clipping evidence to suggest a recent escape and there has not been a history of escaped Egyptian Geese appearing in Guernsey (unlike the situation for Mandarin Duck).

Weighing up all this evidence, it was decided that the species should be accepted onto the Guernsey List.

(Feral breeding species in the UK and NW and Central Europe)



Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

One, female, 2019 to 7th April, Vazon, Cobo, Grandes Rocques, Rocquaine, photo - 15th Guernsey record.

One, female, 16th to 19th November, Pezeries & Rocquaine, photo (*J.Hooper, et. al.*) - 16th Guernsey record.

The first bird was a very elusive female which disappeared for sometimes weeks at a time before popping up again in a different bay. Perhaps it spent most of its time further out from land, only coming into the bays for rest and shelter. The second bird was a short-stayer and there is the possibility that it was the same returning individual.

(Breeds in the Arctic, wintering in the seas of northern Europe. Usually very uncommon in the English Channel)



ALoaring - GRocques - Feb



AStoaling - Rocquaine - Nov

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

One, 27th to 29th September, Vazon, then St. Sampsons, Vale and Lihou, (J. P. Down, et. al.)

- 4th Guernsey record.

The first Guernsey record was in 1962, but with additional sightings in 2010, 2016 and now 2020, it certainly looks like something that is going to be seen more frequently in future years. This is no doubt due to increasing numbers breeding in the westernmost parts of its range. These recent birds have all stuck to a similar pattern, suddenly appearing flying over someone's head, then going to roost at a mystery location, before reappearing in the sky the next day, flying about a bit, then drifting off-island. This bird extended its stay to two nights but this did not make it any easier to see. It was first seen flying low over Vazon on 27th, then was spotted over Grandes Maison Road, St. Sampsons and Rue des Marais, Vale the next day, with a final sighting on 29th over Lihou Island - all very brief sightings.

(A summer migrant to central and southern Europe, breeding mainly in the East but increasing in the West.)

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

One, 2019 to 10th January, Vale Pond & La Ramee, photo - 3rd Guernsey record.

One, 20th October, Vale Pond, photo - 4th Guernsey record.

Despite the number of records of Glossy Ibis being a paltry four, it is now almost an expected visitor, being seen in five of the last six years. The first bird this year originally arrived in October 2019 and spent the early winter on the island but was elusive. At the turn of the year it settled into a routine of coming into Vale Pond in the evenings to roost, being seen in a field at La Ramee a couple of times during the day. The autumn sighting was very brief but the Vale Pond seems to be a favoured location for the species.

(Breeds in colonies throughout southern Europe. Wanders widely in the non-breeding season.)



D Carre - October

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

**One, adult, 5th April, Vale Pond,
(A. Loaring, et. al.) - 28th Guernsey record.**

A very typical date for this spring overshooting migrant but it did not stay for more than one day. Recently, this species has averaged just over one record per year but, surprisingly, this was the first sighting for four years.

(A summer migrant to central and southern Europe, wintering in Africa.)



Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

One, over Little Russel, 1st August.

Two, over Pleinmont, 7th September.

Three, over Little Russel, 16th September.

One, Vale Pond, 17th September, then L'Eree, 19th September.

One, Vale Pond, Pleinmont & L'Eree area, 7th October to 2nd November.

10th to 14th Guernsey records.

Great White Egret certainly looks like it is going the way of Little Egret and, more recently, Cattle Egret, with a sudden glut of records just a few years after being a sought-after rarity. It was difficult to tell exactly how many birds were involved this year but eight is a fair estimate looking at the gaps between sightings. As has been typical however, many sightings were very brief and only the last bird stuck around, often seen roosting with herons behind the Claire Mare reedbed.

(Breeds in colonies in wetlands throughout Europe, increasing in NW Europe. Partial migrant, with many birds moving further south.)



A.Loaring - L'Eree - Oct

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*

One, juvenile, 13th & 14th September, Pleinmont, photo (D. & L. Carre, et. al.) - 2nd Guernsey record.

Last autumn, the excitement of the first Guernsey Pallid Harrier was short-lived for most local birders, since it did not do the honourable thing and skipped the island before most people were able to see it. No one would have believed that just a year and four days later they would get a second chance with a much more obliging juvenile bird quartering the fields at Pleinmont on a fine Sunday evening. Initially it was elusive but it soon settled to a routine and was also present the next day. In the UK, the species had not been seen for forty years before a few birds started turning up in the 1990s, and quite a few are now seen every year. The breeding range has expanded a little but, apart from the odd pair, they generally nest in the steppes of far eastern Europe. Just a couple of months ago, this bird may have been sat in a nest in the Ukraine.

(Breeds in eastern Europe & Asia, with a few pairs in central & western Europe. Winters in Africa.)





A Loaring

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

One, male, 8th May, Pleinmont, photo (J. Hooper) - 10th Guernsey record.

Unlike many raptor species, Montagu's Harrier has not shown an increase in records in recent years. This is no doubt due to a decline in numbers in western Europe and, even though the breeding population has always been very low in the UK, there were no pairs in 2020 at all. So this brief fly-by sighting may become an even rarer sight in years to come. This bird flew very low past the headland whilst most birders were occupied by the soaring Black Kites and was fortunately photographed. This is the first Guernsey record for fifteen years.

(Breeds sparsely throughout central and southern Europe. Winters in Africa.)



J. Hooper

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

One, 11th April, Pleinmont, photo (M. A. Guppy) - 11th Guernsey record.

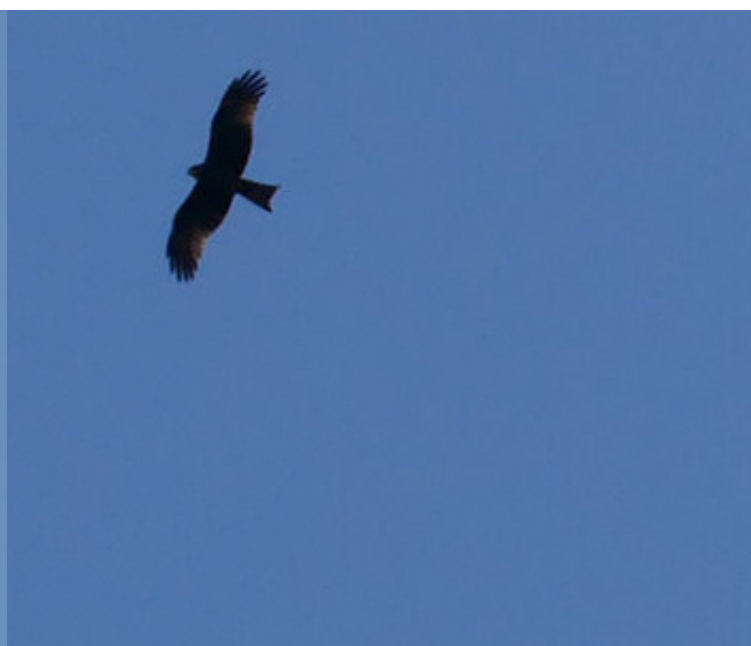
Three, 8th May, Pleinmont & sites inland, photo (M. A. Guppy, M. P. Lawlor, J. Hooper, et. al.)
- 12th Guernsey record.

Although Black Kite feels like a regular and expected visitor nowadays, it is still quite rare with just 12 records altogether and these being the first for three years. The birds in May were the largest group seen on the island, the only previous multiple sighting being of two in 2016. They arrived in classic conditions - a clear, sunny day in spring with a pleasant south-easterly breeze. Watching these birds circling over the headland drifting inland then out again on the wind was quite magnificent. There is a distinct possibility that more than three birds were involved in the second sighting since birds were seen over a large area. However, studying photos and moult patterns of the birds, it seemed that it was probably the same group of birds moving to and fro.

(Breeds in continental Europe, wintering in Africa)



April - MAGuppy



May - MPLawlor



May - MPLawlor

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

One, 29th & 30th March, L'Eree, then Fauxquets, photo (A. Loaring, et. al.) - 10th Guernsey record.

This was probably the most unexpected sighting of the year but unfortunately it eluded most of the island's birders during its brief stay. This adult bird was seen briefly low over L'Eree in the late afternoon of 29th March but it drifted off somewhere to roost for the night. As this was during the first lockdown, it was difficult to get lots of people out searching, but it was seen again the next day mid-morning drifting over the centre of the island. It did not linger though and sneaked away back to the mainland. Although this is the 10th record and thus may not seem that rare, all the previous records were before 1939, when the species was more common in Europe. Since raptor persecution has declined, and the species is now being reintroduced into many areas, hopefully it won't be as long until the next sighting.

(Breeds in northern and eastern Europe, moving further south and west during the winter)



A Loaring



MAGuppy

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

One, juvenile, 5th to 11th September, Vazon, photo (M. A. Guppy, et. al.) - 22nd Guernsey record.

This bird showed very well feeding on the beach at Richmond, Vazon for a week in early September. This is the most common transatlantic vagrant to reach Guernsey but it is unpredictable and irregular. More than half the records are from the 70s and 80s and has been less common since, the previous record being in 2012.

(Breeds in North America and Siberia, wintering in southern South America)



DScott



ALoaring

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

One, juvenile, 28th September to 1st October, Vale Pond, photo (J. Hooper, et. al.) - 3rd Guernsey record.

A species surprisingly rare in Guernsey, this bird represents only the third ever in the island after singles at Vale Pond in 1957 and at L'Eree in 1993. Although a common breeding species in northern Scandinavia and Iceland, the birds do not winter in the Atlantic at all, so its usual migration takes it much further east and west of Guernsey. Nevertheless, the species does regularly wander off-course and there are plenty of records throughout Europe, so we seem to have fewer-than-expected sightings. This tiny wader is unusual as it spends most of its time swimming rather than wading and this bird showed well dwarfed by the ducks and Coots on the pond.

(Breeds in the far north of Europe, wintering pelagically near the equator in the Indian and Pacific Oceans)



ALoaring



AStoaling

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

One, juvenile, 4th October, west past Jaonneuse, photo (K. Childs) - 18th Guernsey record.

An early morning sighting passing the northern tip of Guernsey on a typical date for the species. Currently there is about one sighting every two years but the species is very weather-dependent and without a suitable northerly blow it will not be sighted. There have been two records of tired birds on beaches, but the rest of the sightings have all been migrating birds over the sea from the headlands.

(Breeds in the high Arctic and winters at sea off southern Africa. Usually a pelagic species during migration.)

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

One, adult, 11th February, L'Eree, photo (W. R. Turner, et. al.) - 23rd Guernsey record.

There seems to be a slight decline in frequency of records of this species in recent years with just three in the last six years, where previously they were more or less annual for a while. Adult birds are unusual with only a couple of previous records.

(Breeds on Arctic coasts, wintering in northern Europe)



ALoaring



AStoaling

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

One, first-year, 28th August, Perelle, colour-ringed, photo (W. R. Turner) - 2nd Guernsey record.

One, first-year, 11th September, Perelle, photo (J. Hooper, et. al.) - 3rd Guernsey record.

One, first-year, 13th September, Perelle, colour-ringed, photo (A. J. Oliveira, et. al.) - 4th Guernsey record.

One, first-year, 27th September, Perelle, photo (A. J. Oliveira) - 5th Guernsey record.

One, first-year, 2nd October, Perelle, photo (A. J. Oliveira, W. R. Turner) - 6th Guernsey record.

It was as recent as 2018 that the first ever Caspian Gull was recorded in Guernsey, so five birds in just over a month was a little unexpected, but just reward for the handful of gull-experts that pore over the birds that can be observed relatively closely over the sea wall at Perelle. It was a very good year for the species in northwestern Europe so we shall have to wait and see if this is a one-off or a sign of an increasing visitor to our shores. The two individuals that were colour-ringed were from colonies in eastern Poland indicating the origin of these birds. One does have to be very careful since there is a degree of hybridisation with other large gulls and a judgement call often has to be made using a suite of often subtle characteristics - definitely a species for the gull experts.

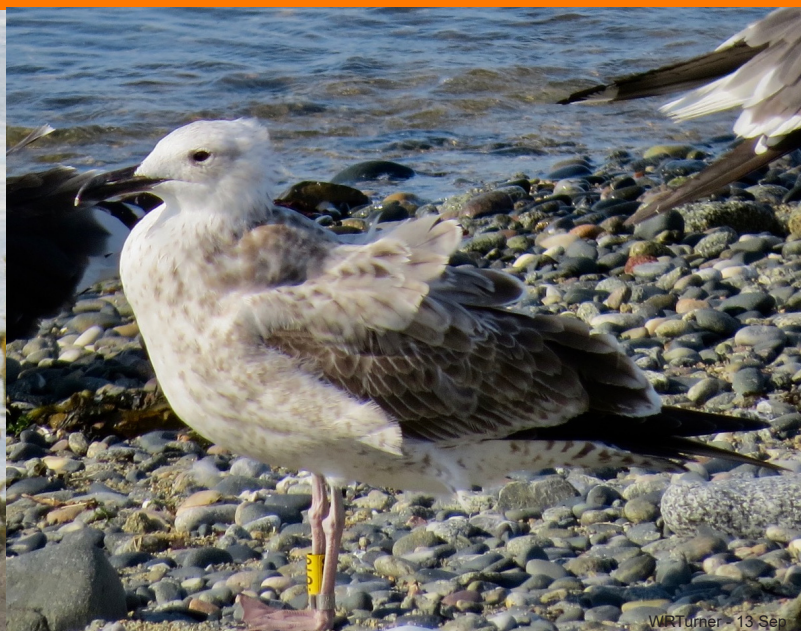
(Breeds in eastern Europe and central Asia, increasingly wintering in western Europe)



JHooper - 11 Sep



WRTurner - 28 Aug



WRTurner - 13 Sep



AJOliveira - 27 Sep



WRTurner - 2 Oct

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus*

One, fourth-winter, same returning individual, 2019 to 19th April, various locations, photo.

After spending four winters here in Guernsey, the famous Royal Tern did not return for its fifth late in the year. It again was irregular and elusive, and kept popping up for a while before disappearing. One reason for this may have been it spending a lot of its time in Herm where it was noted on a few occasions. It was last seen feeding in Perelle Bay in April, one of its favoured haunts. One would like to think that it made its way back across the Atlantic to find a mate.

(Breeds along the East coast of North America, wintering slightly further south)



ALoaring

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Three, juveniles, 29th August, west past Jaonneuse (W. R. Turner, J. Davis, V. E. Froome, J. Hooper) - 15th Guernsey record.

One, juvenile, 31st August, Claire Mare, photo (A. Loaring, et. al.) - 16th Guernsey record.

One, juvenile, 5th September, Baie des Pecqueries, photo - 17th Guernsey record.

One, juvenile, 27th September, west past Jaonneuse (M. P. Lawlor, C. I. Massey, W. R. Turner) - 18th Guernsey record.

Four records of six birds is a record total for a single autumn. Two of these were the more typical seawatching sightings, the three birds in August being all separate individuals (rather than a small group) which were part of a superb skua passage past the island on that date. More unusually two birds were seen “on land” this year. The first was present for a short period on the pond at Claire Mare and the second, just a few days later, was rescued by the GSPCA after being found “wrecked” on the coastal path.

(Breeds in the Arctic tundra, winters in the southern oceans.)



A. Loaring - Claire Mare



A. Loaring - Claire Mare



A. Loaring - Claire Mare



Pecqueries - GSPCA

Little Auk *Alle alle*

One, 2nd January, L'Eree Shingle Bank, photo (P. & J. Vaudin, et. al.) - 22nd Guernsey record.

This forlorn looking individual was found bobbing around below the Shingle Bank at high tide. It slowly drifted away as the tide retreated but many birdwatchers managed to see it before it became too distant. Whether it survived or not is unknown but the area was being patrolled by hungry looking gulls. Most records of this species are of dead birds wrecked by winter weather but this is the first individual since 2006. Winter storms are increasing so one might expect more records, but perhaps the species is not entering the English Channel as often as it did.

(Breeds in the high Arctic, wintering in the cold northern seas)



AStoaling

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

One, singing male, 13th June to 9th July, Pleinmont, photo/sound recorded.

The highlight of the year for many birders was standing in the camping field at Pleinmont at dusk and watching the dark shape of a Nightjar chasing insects around the pine trees. Last year's bird was just a single evening visitor but this one stayed for a few weeks, "churring" on most evenings on the headland. This was the first available Nightjar in Guernsey for 23 years, so was very welcome. There seems to be an increase in records in the Channel Islands in recent years and perhaps the species is looking to extend its range, and perhaps we may have a chance of a breeding record in the future.

(Breeds uncommonly throughout Europe, winters in Africa.)



AStoaling



ALoaring

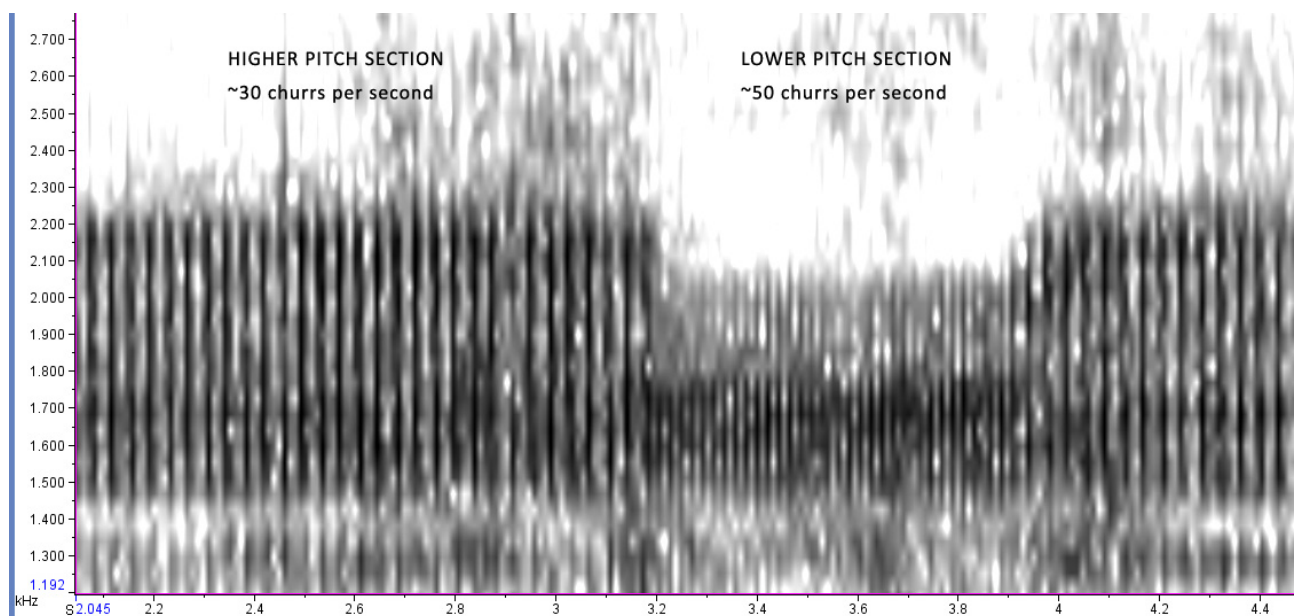


figure 1 - spectrogram of Nightjar song, Pleinmont, June '21, MPLawlor

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Two, 5th May, Pleinmont (J. Hooper) - 23rd Guernsey record.

These birds were five years after the previous record, the longest gap between sightings for quite a while. This species has been increasing slowly but it is very irregular. This may be because, like these birds, they are often very brief visitors and so are easily missed.

(Breeds in central and southern Europe, winters in Africa)

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

One, female, 3rd June, Pleinmont, photo (M. A. Guppy, et. al.) - 30th Guernsey record.

This species has now reached thirty records for the island and is thus one of our most-recorded rarity. However, more than half of these birds were before 1990 and, with only four in the last decade, it is currently rarer than the stats suggest. Only about a fifth of the records are from spring and most of these are from early to mid-June.

(Breeds across most of continental Europe, wintering in Africa)



Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*

One, juvenile, 10th September, Pleinmont, trapped, photo (T. J. Bourgaize, et. al.) - 13th Guernsey record.

This bird was caught during a ringing session at Pleinmont in September but was quite elusive upon release. This is the first record since 2014.

(Breeds in southern Europe, as far north as central France, wintering in Africa)



Western/Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli/orientalis*

One, 1st September, Pleinmont, photo (J. Hooper, V. E. Froome, A. Loaring) - 3rd Guernsey record

This bird appeared in the clifftop scrub, clearly newly-arrived, but disappeared quite quickly after being found. Quite recently the relatively straightforward-to-identify Bonelli's Warbler has been split into two separate species - the Western Bonelli's Warbler from western Europe which breeds right up as far as Brittany, and the Eastern Bonelli's Warbler from south-eastern Europe. These two new species however are not easy to distinguish from each other and from appearance alone there are no conclusive differences. A Bonelli's now requires to be trapped and/or sound recorded to be categorised at Western or Eastern and since this bird was not heard to call or was anywhere near a net, it could only be accepted as one of this species-pair. One could assume that, since it breeds not very far away, Western Bonelli's would be far more likely to occur here but accurate bird-recording cannot make assumptions. The closeness of a population doesn't really indicate which species are more regular vagrants to the island and which aren't. In fact an Eastern Bonelli's was seen in western France just a couple of weeks before this sighting. This bird prompted the committee to look back at the two previous island records (1964 and 1997) and no description of their calls could be found. Hence, Bonelli's Warbler has been removed from the island's bird list.

(Breeds in southern Europe, wintering in Africa.)

**Rose-coloured Starling** *Sturnus roseus*

One, adult, 10th June, Jaonneuse beach, photo (M. P. Lawlor, et. al.) - 50th Guernsey record

One, adult, 28th & 29th June, near Saumarez Park, photo - 51st Guernsey record

One, juvenile, 15th September, Pleinmont, photo (J. Hooper) - 52nd Guernsey record

There was a distinct movement of Rosy Starlings in the early summer with many sightings throughout western Europe and the UK. Even though 2019 was the first blank year for quite a while, the number of island records has now reached the half-century, and the species isn't really classed as a true rarity any more. However, at the moment, we are keen to keep it on the official rarity list as it a species which is still relatively rare in many counties and regions of the UK and elsewhere in NW Europe. It seems that Guernsey is a real hot-spot for the species and we want to continue to document the sightings.

(Breeds in southern-eastern Europe and Asia, wintering in SE Asia - prone to westerly influxes.)



ALoaring - Jaonneuse

White-spotted Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica cyaneacula*

One, male, 12th May, Pleinmont, photo (M. A. Guppy) - 12th Guernsey record.

A feature of the spring seemed to be very briefly seen birds which disappeared quite quickly. This bird was the quickest of all, seen feeding on the cliff path where a photo was snapped, then it dove straight into the scrub never to be seen again. Bluethroat was a much-wanted species as it is a declining vagrant, the previous record being one trapped in 2011 and before that, it was 1996. Also, this is the first record for the island in Spring, which is a surprise for a species that breeds quite close by in France and one would expect to overshoot occasionally.

(Breeds in marshes of west and central Europe, wintering in Africa.)



MAGuppy

Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris*

One, adult, 20th to 22nd September, Mont Herault/Les Tielles, photo (J. Hooper, et. al.).

The second year in a row that this species has been recorded. It was much more regular in years gone by but is declining in much of its range. With nearly all coastal fields now growing just grass and of limited feeding, finding a herd of cows is a good technique for finding migrants. This bird was by a field with lots of cows along with many other migrants, especially Yellow Wagtails.

(Breeds in central and southern Europe, winters in Africa)



ALoaring

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

One, 18th January, Pleinmont, photo - 43rd Guernsey record.

One, 10th June, Rue des Pres, St. Pierre du Bois, photo - 44th Guernsey record.

Both of these birds were snapped by casual birdwatchers who spotted a Hawfinch visiting their bird table. With the advent of social media, there are many more records of rare garden visitors coming to light.

(Resident breeder throughout Europe, with northern birds wandering further south in autumn and winter)

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

One, 8th May, Pleinmont, photo
(A. Marquis) - 9th Guernsey record.

Another brief sighting but luckily the bird was photographed before it disappeared. Despite there being few records, four have been in the last seven years. May is a new month for Corn Bunting, with only one other spring record, in April 2004.

(Mostly resident breeder throughout Europe)



Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

One, female, 18th May, Pleinmont, photo **(D. & L. Carre)**.

With the breeding record in 2019, there was hope that the pair may return to the headland in 2020, and with this bird appearing in the breeding season, there was a thought that it could happen again. However, it was only seen on this one occasion and so it is unlikely any breeding occurred, even though there is a chance it was last year's bird returning.

(Resident breeder in western and southern Europe, uncommon in SW England and a few pairs present in Jersey)





DCarre

Alderney

Below is a list of the rare birds submitted to, and accepted by, the Bailiwick Rarities Committee from the island of Alderney in 2020. For more details of these Alderney birds, please contact the Observatory or visit their website.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Three, Arch Bay, 24th September (A. Robilliard).
One, Corblets Quarry, 3rd November (J. Mitchell).

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

One, Longis Common, 11th August (J. Horton).

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

One, immature, Longis Pond, 20th & 21st September (J. Horton, J. Mitchell, T. Bourgaize).

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

One, Mannez Lighthouse, 16th April (J. Horton).
One, South cliffs, 8th May (E. Montieth).

Lammergeier *Gypaetus barbatus*

One, various locations, 20th & 21st May (N. Harvey) – [N.B. a parent of this bird is part of a reintroduction scheme in Alps]

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

One, adult, over Observatory, 31st March [same as Guernsey].

Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana*

One, Longis NR, 30th October (J. Hart).

Crane *Grus grus*

Two, over Mannez Quarry, 4th November (J. Mitchell).

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

One, Longis Bay, 14th September (J. Mitchell).

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

One, juvenile, past Chateau L'Etoc, 3rd November (J. Horton, J. Mitchell).

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

One, Longis, 10th September (J. Horton).

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Two, Mannez Lighthouse, 7th May (J. Horton).

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

One, trapped, Mannez Quarry, 14th October (J. Horton).

One, trapped, Mannez Quarry, 15th October (J. Horton).

One, trapped, Longis NR, 7th November (J. Mitchell).

One, trapped, Essex Farm, 21st November (J. Mitchell).

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

Two, adults, Fosse Herve & New Town, 30th May to 2nd June.

One, juvenile, Whitegates, 7th & 8th September (K. Webb).

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

One, trapped, Mannez Quarry, 3rd to 5th May (J. Horton).

One, trapped, Mannez Quarry, 7th August (J. Horton).

Cirl Bunting *Emberiza cirlus*

One, male, Longis Common, 20th November (J. Mitchell).

Sark

Below is a list of the rare birds submitted to, and accepted by, the Bailiwick Rarities Committee from the island of Sark in 2019. For more details of these Sark birds, please search for the "Sark Bird Sightings" Facebook group.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

One, adult, Le Vallon d'Or area, 18th April (A. Prevel, L. Higgins).

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

One, over Le Vallon d'Or, 19th October (L. Higgins, T. Bourgaize, J. Davis).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

One, La Forge, 26th April (L. Higgins).

Scarce species in Guernsey

Below is a list of other rare sightings in Guernsey in 2020. The species below occur too regularly to be classified as official rarities, and are generally labelled "scarcities". Some years, a scarce species may occur in higher-than-usual numbers and will be missing from this section (for practical reasons). Since these species are not official rarities, no formal report form has had to be completed, and no assessment has taken place by the Rarities Committee. So, as these records are 'unchecked' they are listed with the assumption of correct identification by the observer, and the proviso that an error may have been made on occasion. A handful of reported scarcities have been omitted from this list as it was judged that there was a high likelihood of a mistake being made. Some may be the same bird moving between locations.

Garganey (*Spatula querquedula*)

1, (m), Claire Mare, 15th Mar.

Pintail (*Anas acuta*)

1 (m), L'Eree/Vazon, 2nd to 19th Sep.

3 (f/i), C Best NR, 3rd to 6th Oct.

[1, escaped m, various locations 24th Nov to 2021]

Black-necked Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*)

1, Rocquaine Bay, 1st Jan.

1, Rocquaine Bay, 15th to 19th Feb.

1, Rocquaine Bay, 15th & 16th Mar.

Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)

1, Claire Mare, 2019 to 23rd Feb.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)

3, various sites, 2019 to 26th Jan.

1, C Best NR, 21st Mar.

3, Claire Mare, 6th to 12th Apr.

1, Claire Mare, 6th Aug.

13, past Pleinmont, 31st Aug

2, Vale Pond/Rue des Hougues, 1st to 3rd Sep.

1, Mont Herault, 20th Sep.

max of 8, various sites, 15th Oct to 2021.

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

1, Grand Pre, 26th Mar.

1, Baubigny, 1st Apr.

1, Camp du Roi, 3rd Apr.

1, Vale Church, 12th Apr.

Honey Buzzard (*Pernis apivorus*)

1, Le Gouffre, 1st Jun.

1, Herm, 18th Jun.

1, (f), Fauxquets, 20th Jul.

1, (m), Silbe, 20th Jul.

1, Courtil de Bas, 20th Aug.

1, Pleinmont, 31st Aug.

1, Reservoir, 7th Sep.

1, Les Grantez, 10th Sep.

Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)

1 (m), Reservoir, 4th Apr.

1 (f/i), L'Islet, 22nd Aug.

1 (m), Pleinmont, 15th & 16th Oct.



Pintail - RA Ferbrache



Cattle Egrets - CM - CBale



Cattle Egrets - Pleinmont - ABott



Hen Harrier - Pleinmont - RA Ferbrache



Garganey - ALoaring



Honey Buzzard - Res. - ALoaring

Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)

1, Claire Mare/C Best NR, 21st to 24th Mar.
1, Vale Pond, 15th to 18th Apr.

Dotterel (*Charadrius morinellus*)

1, over Longfrie, 17th Aug, sound recorded.
1, Mont Herault/Pleinmont, 14th to 26th Sep.

Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)

1, C Best NR, 21st Mar.
1, Vale Pond, 21st Jul.
1, C Best NR, 19th Aug.
3, L'Ancrese/Vale Pond/L'Eree, 21st & 22nd Aug.
1-2, C Best NR, 3rd to 6th Oct.
1, C Best NR, 4th Dec.

Knot (*Calidris canutus*)

2, L'Eree/Vazon, 21st to 26th Aug.
1-3, Vazon, 5th to 7th Sep.
1, Vazon, 15th Sep.
1, Grandes Rocques, 17th Sep.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)

1-2, L'Eree/Vazon, 3rd to 7th Sep.

Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*)

1-2, Jaonneuse, 14th Jan to 16th Feb.
1, Port Grat, 1st Mar.
3, Rousse, 14th Mar.
1-8, Jaonneuse, 3rd Nov to 14th Dec.

Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*)

2, C Best NR, 2nd Oct.

Jack Snipe (*Lymnocyrtus minimus*)

1, Rue des Hougues (SA), 27th Oct.
1, Claire Mare, 5th to 8th Nov.

Grey Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*)

1, Jaonneuse, 10th Oct.
1, Claire Mare, 27th Oct to 2nd Nov.
1, Jaonneuse, 3rd & 4th Nov.

Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*)

1, Claire Mare, 7th to 12th Oct.

Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*)

4, past Jaonneuse, 29th Aug.

Pomarine Skua (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

All past Jaonneuse: 28th Aug (2), 29th Aug (10), 30th Aug (1), 4th Sep (1), 26th Sep (1), 27th Sep (2), 10th Oct (1), 11th Oct (1), 20th Dec (1).



Avocet - CBNR - RAFebrache



Knot - CBNR - ALOaring



Wood Sandpiper - ALOaring



Pomarine Skua - 4 Sep - CIMassey



Dotterel - MHerault - DCarre



Grey Phalarope - Jaonneuse - AStoaling



Purple Sandpiper
Jao - Nov - AStoaling

Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*)

1, Pleinmont, 19th May.

Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)

1, Rue des Crabbes, 5th Apr.
1, Les Laurens, Torteval, 15th to 22nd Apr.
1, Pleinmont, 16th Apr.
1, Icart, 18th Apr.
1, Les Hubits, 18th May.
1, Pleinmont/Rocquaine, 5th to 8th Nov.

Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*)

1, Fort Hommet, 16th to 20th Aug.
1, Pleinmont, 10th to 15th Sep.
1, Fort Doyle, 28th Sep.



Wryneck - Pleinmont - DCarre



Hoopoe - Les Laurens - ALoaring



Hoopoe - Rocquaine - AStoaling

Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*)

1 (m), Pleinmont, 10th May.
1 (m), Pleinmont, 25th May.
1 heard singing, Reservoir, 2nd Jun.

Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*)

1, C Best NR, 8th Mar.
1, Les Vauxbelets, 11th to 13th Mar.
1, Pleinmont, 16th Oct.
1, Les Tielles, 19th Oct.

Woodlark (*Lullula arborea*)

1, Pleinmont, 16th Oct.

Wood Warbler (*Tringa glareola*)

1, Delancey Park, 3rd May.

Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*)

1, Fort Hommet, 2nd Oct.
2-3, Pleinmont, 3rd to 7th Oct.
1, Pleinmont, 14th to 18th Oct.
1, Le Guet, 18th Oct.

Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta*)

1, Pleinmont, 1st & 2nd Sep.
1, Pleinmont, 15th Sep.

Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*)

1, Le Bigard, 30th Apr to 12th May.
1, Pleinmont, 19th May.
1+, Pleinmont, 19th to 24th Oct.

Dartford Warbler (*Sylvia undata*)

1, Pleinmont, 4th to 7th Nov.

Blue-headed Wagtail (*Motacilla flava flava*)

1, Pleinmont, 19th Apr.
1-3, Pleinmont, 23rd to 25th Apr.

Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*)

1, L'Eree/Fort le Crocq/Vazon, 2nd Jan to 6th Mar.
1, Albecq/Fort Hommet, 22nd Oct.

Lesser Redpoll (*Acanthis cabaret*)

1, over Pleinmont, 18th Oct.
1, over Pleinmont, 5th Nov.

Common Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)

2, over Rue de la Vallee, Torteval, 9th Jun.
A few, Le Guet, 29th Sep.
4, over Pleinmont, 14th Oct.

Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortulana*)

1, Pleinmont, 7th Sep.

Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)

1, Fort le Marchant, 31st Oct to 2nd Nov.



Yellow-browed W - Pleinmont - MPLawlor



Melodious W - 15Sep - DScott



Water Pipit - Jan - WRTurner



Dartford W - ABott



Snow Bunting - ALoaring