

Castle and Hightae Lochs



Wildlife Report 2023

Castle and Hightae Lochs L N R Wildlife 2023

Castle Loch is owned by the local community and managed by a trust on their behalf. Hightae Loch is privately owned and managed for fishing. Whilst the bird life on Castle Loch is regularly counted as part of the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) access to Hightae Loch has been difficult for some time and so regular bird counts are not currently possible. Occasional surveys of other species are conducted.

The Pink-footed Goose roost (international importance) and Greylag Goose roost (national importance) are now defunct although feeding grounds around the area remain in use.

The continuing decline in Willow Tit numbers gives cause for serious concern.

This report is based on the WeBS bird counts conducted each month throughout the year by Drew Davidson (DD) and Kath Davidson (KD). In past years Freda Seddon has walked round Castle Loch at the end of each month recording the non-waterbirds she sees. The report is compiled by Andy Riches (AR). Additional records for birds and non-avians come from other visits and observers. In 2019 I included moth records for the first time which were kindly provided by Jean Robson of the local Butterfly Conservation Moth Group. Sadly no records were received for the last three years due to the pandemic restrictions. Continuing access problems to Hightae Loch have resulted in fewer records from this site.

The once internationally important Pink-footed Goose roost, the nationally important Greylag Goose roost and the sub-nationally important Goosander gathering are now defunct. The breeding population of Willow Tit, at its northern-most boundary in D&G has also declined.

Happily the population of Variable Damselfly, an important and little understood species in the UK, remains fairly strong at Castle Loch.

Many thanks to the following: Iain Anderson (IA), Pete Antrobus (PA), Chris and Pat Baines (C&PB), Derek Bearhop (DB), Colin Bushell (CB), Alyn Chambers (AC), Edmund & Elizabeth Fellowes (E&EF), Kevin Findlater (KF), Darren Flint (DF), Ross Gemmell (RG), Stuart Graham (SG), Michael Granger (MG), Brian Henderson (BH), Joyce Henderson (JH), Pete Jeavons (PJ), Helen Kelly (HK), Jim Logan (JL), Paul Massey (PM), Richard and Barbara Mearns (R&BM), John Miles (JM), Heather Murray (HMu) Ciril Ostroznic (CO), Tristram Reid (TR), Jean Robson (JR), David Rose (DR), Paul Seddon (PSed), Paul Shimmings (PSh), Violet Sinclair (VS), Angus Sloan (AS), Anna White (AW), Dawn Wright (DW). Thanks also to those folk who kindly provide records but prefer to remain anonymous. Records marked (BT) are kindly provided by the BTO from their Bird Track recording system. Records marked (DGBN) are from the Dumfries & Galloway Bird News group.

Climate data is copyright of the UK Met Office and is used under licence.

The Dumfries & Galloway Bird News Group, set up and managed by Pete Jeavons is an invaluable source of bird information for the whole of the region. It can be located at <https://dumfriesgallowaybirdnews.blogspot.com/> and is a crucial source of information for resident and visiting birders. Don't just use it CONTRIBUTE to it and share your sightings with others!

In addition to providing his records, Richard Mearns has provided historical information, support and advice without which this report would not exist.

A copyright claim has been received concerning a photograph which appeared in the 2013 report of a bittern, apparently at taken Castle Loch. It has not been possible to establish ownership of the photograph or where it was taken but it was used in good faith and appropriate acknowledgements will be made should it be established that it was wrongly attributed.

The weather maps at the end of the report are provided under the copyright of the Met Office.

The descriptions of status refer to status on the reserve only.

Species recorded in 2022 are listed in bold type.

In spite of the many regular contributors listed above new records are always welcome and should be sent to Andy Riches slioch69@aol.com as soon as possible after the end of the year. Thank you.

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MAMMALS.

SOPRANO PIPISTRELLE BAT: *Present throughout the year and probably breeds.*

COMMON PIPISTRELLE BAT: *Present throughout the year and probably breeds.*

DAUBENTON'S BAT: *Present throughout the year and probably breeds.*

NOCTULE BAT: *Reported occasionally from Hightae Loch. Numbers reported are declining since 2002 when at least 22 were noted on 28th May. This may simply be due to lack of observers or possibly results from the clearfell in 2009. Last record 18th July 2006 (R&BM).*

PIGMY SHREW: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

COMMON SHREW: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

WATER SHREW: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

WOOD MOUSE: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

FIELD VOLE: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

BANK VOLE: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

WATER VOLE: *Present in the Castle Woodland and Valison Burn area and breeds.*

BROWN RAT: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

RED SQUIRREL: *Present in Castle and Dalton Road Woodlands throughout the year and has bred.*

WEASEL: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

STOAT: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

AMERICAN MINK: *Present throughout the year and breeds.*

OTTER: *Present throughout the year at both lochs and breeds.*

BADGER: *Regular visitor to Castle Loch woodland.*

RED FOX: *Regular visitor to Castle Loch woodland.*

ROE DEER: *Regular visitor to Castle Loch woodland.*

DRAGONFLIES.

LARGE RED DAMSELFLY: *Present and breeds. Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded: 11 on wing; 2 in cop; 3 ovipositing.*

BLUE-TAILED DAMSELFLY: *Present and breeds Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded: 38 on wing; 3 in cop; 4 ovipositing.*

COMMON BLUE DAMSELFLY: *Present and breeds. Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded: 70 on wing; 5 in cop; 4 ovipositing.*

AZURE DAMSELFLY: *Present and breeds. Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded: 42 on wing; 4 in cop; 3 ovipositing.*

VARIABLE DAMSELFLY: *Present and breeds. Stronghold on the Valison Burn. Maximum number recorded: 29 on wing; 2 in cop; 3 ovipositing.*

EMERALD DAMSELFLY: *Present and probably breeds. No records again this year.*

COMMON DARTER: *Present and breeds. All previous records have been at Hightae Loch which was not accessible this year.*

FOUR-SPOTTED CHASER: *Generally present and breeds. No records this year*

COMMON HAWKER: *Present and probably breeds. Maximum number recorded: 3 on wing at Castle Loch adjacent to Valison Burn.*

BLACK DARTER: *Visited and was seen apparently ovipositing in Valison Burn area in 2010. But the habitat preferences of this insect would suggest that this behaviour was an aberration. A single record of a male in 2011 (AR). No records prior or since.*

GOLDEN-RINGED DRAGONFLY: *Occasional visitor. Single male recorded at Castle Loch on two occasions in 2012 and a single occasion in 2013 (AR). Single record from Vendace Burn in 2014. No records this year.*

MIGRANT HAWKER: *First recorded in 2004. No records since 2013.*

SOUTHERN HAWKER: *Single insect recorded at Castle Loch on 10th October 2014 (BH). A first for the reserve. No records this year.*

HOVERFLIES.

ARCTOPHILA SUPERBIENS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

BACCHA ELONGATA: *Present at both loch and breeds.*

CHRYSOTOXUM BICINCTUM: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

DASYSYRPHUS VENUSTUS: *Last recorded 16th May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

EPISTROPHE GROSSULARIAE: *Last recorded on 14th July 1979 at Castle Loch.*

EPISYRPHUS BALTEATUS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

ERISTALIS ARBUSTORUM: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

ERISTALIS HORTICOLA: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

ERISTALIS INTERRUPTUS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

ERISTALIS PERTINAX: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

ERISTALIS TENAX: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

EUPEODES LUNIGER: *Present at both lochs and breeds at Hightae Loch.*

HELOPHILUS PENDULUS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

HELOPHILUS TRIVITTATUS: *Last record on 14th June 1980 at Castle Loch.*

LEUCOZONA LATERNARIA: *Last record on 4th August 1976 at Castle Loch.*

LUCOZONA LUCORUM: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

MELANOSTOMA MELLINUM: *Last record on 16th May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

MELANOSTOMA SCALARE: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

MERODON EQUESTRIS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

MYATHROPA FLOREA: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

NEOASCIA PODAGRICA: *Last record on 16th May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

NEOASCIA TENUR: *Last record on 16th May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

PLATYCHEIRUS CLYPEATUS: *Last record on 16th May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

PLATYCHEIRUS FULVIVENTRIS: *Last record 14th July 1979 at Castle Loch.*

PLATYCHEIRUS PERPALIDUS: *Last record on 16th May 1980 at Castle Loch.*

PORTEVINIA MACULATA: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

RHINGIA CAMPESTRIS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

SCAEVA PYRASTRI: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

SERICOMYIA LAPPONA: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

SERICOMYIA SILENTIS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

SYRITTA PIPIENS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

SYRPHUS RIBESII: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

SYRPHUS TORVUS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

SYRPHUS VITRIPENNIS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

VOLUCELLA BOMBYLANS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

VOLUCELLA PELLUCENS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

XYLOTA SEGNIS: *Present at both lochs and breeds.*

BUTTERFLIES.

SMALL WHITE: *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 7 at Castle Loch.*

LARGE WHITE: *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 2 at Castle Loch.*

GREEN-VEINED WHITE: *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 4 at Castle Loch.*

ORANGE TIP: *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 3 at Castle Loch.*

PEACOCK: *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 5 at Castle Loch.*

SMALL TORTOISESHELL: *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 3 at Castle Loch.*

RED ADMIRAL: *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 3 at Castle Loch.*

RINGLET: *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 12 at Castle Loch.*

LARGE SKIPPER: *Two seen in vicinity of Valison Burn Bridge on 23rd June 2022 (R&BM). No records this year.*

SMALL COPPER: *No records this year. One was seen on 2nd June 2010 (AR) which was a first record for the reserve.*

SMALL HEATH: *No records this year. There have only been four records in the history of the reserve.*

MEADOW BROWN: *Maximum number 1 at Castle Loch in 2012 which was only the second record for the reserve. No records since.*

COMMON BLUE: *One was seen on 1st July 2010 (AR) which was a first record for the reserve. No records since.*

PAINTED LADY: *Present at both lochs and breeds. Maximum number recorded: 4 at Castle Loch.*

COMMA: *One seen at Hightae Loch on 17th March 2009 (AW). A first record for the reserve and a rarity in the region. No records since then.*

MOTHS.

Sadly no moth records were available again this year but I have included the 2019 records. This was the last year for which records are available but I am hopeful that some records may be available for the 2024 report.

Light trap on 13th February 2019 (JR):

Chestnut (*Conistra vaccinia*): 1

Light trap on 27th March 2019 (JR):

Red Chestnut (*Cerastis rubricosa*): 2

Hebrew Character (*Orthosia gothica*): 15

Clouded Drab (*Orthosia incerta*): 26

Common Quaker (*Orthosia cerasi*): 7

Chestnut (*Conistra vaccinia*): 2

Twin-spotted Quaker (*Anorthoa munda*): 3

Water Carpet (*Lampropteryx suffumata*): 1

Egrailed (*Ectropis crepuscularia*): 1

Light trap on 25th April 2019 (JR):

Hebrew Character (*Orthosia gothica*): 10
Common Quaker (*Orthosia cerasi*): 1
Clouded Drab (*Orthosia incerta*): 5
Grey Birch (*Aethalura punctulata*): 3
Flame Carpet (*Xanthorhoe designate*): 2
Small Phoenix (*Ecliptopera silaceata*): 2
Pebble Hook-tip (*Drepana falcataria*): 1
Water Carpet (*Lampropteryx suffumata*): 5
Pale Prominent (*Pterostoma palpina*): 1
Large Twin-spot Carpet (*Xanthorhoe quadrifasiata*): 1
Small Square-spot (*Diarsia rubi*): 1
Flame Shoulder (*Ochropleura plecta*): 1
Small Angle Shades (*Euplexia lucipara*): 1
Silver-ground Carpet (*Xanthorhoe montanata*): 1
White Ermine (*Spilosoma lubricipeda*): 1

Light trap on 5th June 2019 (JR):

Water Carpet (*Lampropteryx suffumata*): 1
Silver-ground Carpet (*Xanthorhoe montanata*): 1

Light trap on 13th June 2019 (JR):

Cream Wave (*Scopula floslactata*): 1
Clouded Border (*Lomaspilis marginata*): 5
Silver-ground Carpet (*Xanthorhoe montanata*): 4
Poplar Hawk-moth (*Laothoe populi*): 1
Pale-shouldered Brocade (*Lacanobia thalassina*): 1
Map-winged Swift (*Korscheltellus fusconebulosa*): 1
Green Carpet (*Colostygia pectinataria*): 5
Buff Ermine (*Spilosoma lutea*): 1
(*Blastobasis laticolella*): 1
(*Scoparia ambigualis*): 5
(*Udea olivalis*): 1

Light trap on 16th July 2019 (JR):

Burnished Brass (*Diachrysis chrysitis*): 5
Common Footman (*Eilema lurideola*): 2
Double Square-spot (*Xestia Triangulum*): 4
Straw Dot (*Rivula sericealis*): 1
Drinker (*Euthrix potatoria*): 5
Barred Straw (*Gandaritis pyraliata*): 4
Silver-ground Carpet (*Xanthorhoe montanata*): 3
Elephant Hawk-moth (*Deilephila elpenor*): 1

Middle-barred Minor (*Oligia fasciuncula*): 1
 Beautiful China-mark (*Nymphula nitidulata*): 1
 (*Carcina quercana*): 1
 Blue-bordered Carpet (*Plemyria rubiginata*): 1
 Mother of Pearl (*Pleuroptya ruralis*): 3
 Common Wave (*Cabera exanthemata*): 3
 Riband Wave (*Idaea aversata*): 2
 July Highflyer (*Hydriomena furcate*): 11
 Small Rivulet (*Perizoma alchemillata*): 2
 V-Pug (*Chloroclystis v-ata*): 1
 Large Emerald (*Geometra papilionaria*): 1
 Smoky Wainscot (*Mythimna impure*): 10
 Coxcomb Prominent (*Ptilodon capucina*): 1
 Large Yellow Underwing (*Noctua pronuba*): 10
 Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing (*Noctua janthe*): 2
 Garden Tiger (*Arctia caja*): 1
 Dotted Clay (*Xestia baja*): 2
 Suspected (*Parastichtis suspecta*): 1

Light trap on 20th August 2019 (JR):

Mother of Pearl (*Pleuroptya ruralis*): 3
 Common Marbled Carpet (*Dysstroma truncate*): 2
 July Highflyer (*Hydriomena furcate*): 5
 Devon Carpet (*Lampropteryx otregiata*): 1
 Silver-ground Carpet (*Xanthorhoe montanata*): 1
 Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing (*Noctua janthe*): 1
 Dun-bar (*Cosmia trapezina*): 1
 Crescent (*Helotropha leucostigma*): 1
 Small Square-spot (*Diarsia rubi*): 1

Light trap on 19th September 2019 (JR):

Green Carpet (*Colostygia pectinataria*): 2
 Pink-barred Sallow (*Xanthia togata*): 1

Light trap on 27th September 2019 (NMN):

Angle Shades (*Phlogophora meticulosa*): *Present.*
 Chestnut (*Conistra vaccinia*): *Present.*
 Green Brindled Crescent (*Allophyes oxyacanthae*): *Present.*
 Garden Carpet (*Xanthorhoe fluctuate*): *Present.*
 Red Line Quaker (*Agrochola lota*): *Present.*
 Common Marbled Carpet (*Dysstroma truncate*): *Present.*
 Pink Barred Sallow (*Xanthia togata*): *Present.*
 Feathered Thorn (*Colotois pennaria*): *Present.*
 Common Wainscot (*Mythimna pallens*): *Present.*

Light trap on 16th October 2019 (JR):
November Moth (*Epirrita dilutata*): 8
Feathered Thorn (*Colotois pennaria*): 1

BUMBLE BEES.

BOMBUS PASCUORUM: *Present at Castle Loch and possibly breeds.*

BOMBUS LAPIDARIUS: *Present at Castle Loch and probably breeds.*

BOMBUS PRATORUM: *Present at Castle Loch and possibly breeds.*

BOMBUS TERESTRIS: *Present at Castle Loch and probably breeds.*

BOMBUS LUCORUM: *Present at Castle Loch and possibly breeds.*

BOMBUS HORTORUM: *Present at Castle Loch and possibly breeds.*

BOMBUS HYPNORUM: *First recorded in the UK in 2001. Present in birdbox at Lochfield Cottage in week beginning 28th June 2021 (DF). No records since.*

AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES

All the Aquatic invertebrate records are from surveys conducted by Jim Logan and kindly supplied by him.

MOLLUSCS.

BYTHYNIA TENTACULATA: *> 50 Castle Loch (JL).*

ANISUS (PLANORBIS) LEUCOSTOMA: *> 9 Castle Loch (JL).*

ANISUS (PLANORBIS) VORTEX: *Last recorded 2019 (JL) no records this year.*

PLANORBIS CARINATUS: *15 Castle Loch (JL).*

PLANORBIS PLANORBIS: *Last recorded 2019 (JL) no records this year.*

RADIX BALTHICA (LYMNAEA PEREGER): *1 Castle Loch (JL).*

LYMNAEA STAGNALIS: *Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL) no records this year.*

LYMNAEA PALUSTRIS: *5 Castle Loch (JL).*

PHYSA FONTINALIS: *23 Castle Loch (JL).*

VIVIPARUS VIVIPARUS: 1 Castle Loch (JL).

POTAMOPYRGUS ANTIPODARUM: 2 Castle Loch (JL).

GYRAULUS ALBUS: *Last recorded 2014 (JL). No records this year.*

SUCCINEIDAE: *Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch. (JL) no records this year.*

SPHAERIUM CORNEUM: 1 Castle Loch (JL).

ANODONTA ANATINA: *Last recorded 2019 (JL). No records this year.*

PISIDIUM sp: 1 Castle Loch (JL).

CRUSTACEANS.

ARGULUS FOLIACEUS: *1 Last recorded 2018 (JL). No records this year.*

ASELLUS AQUATICUS: *Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.*

PROASELLUS MERIDIANUS: 5 Castle Loch (JL).

CYCLOPS sp: *Last recorded on 2021, (JL). No records this year.*

DAPHNIA sp: >100 Castle Loch (JL).

GAMMARUS PULEX: *Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.*

GAMMARUS DUEBENI: 8 Castle Loch (JL).

POLYPHEMUS PEDICULUS: *Last recorded 2019, (JL). No records this year.*

OSTRACODS: >10 Castle Loch (JL).

AQUATIC INSECTS.

ACILLIUS sp: *Last recorded 2018 (JL). No records this year.*

ANABOLIA NERVOSA: *Last recorded 2018 (JL). No records this year.*

GLYPHOTAEIUS PELLUCIDUS: *Last recorded 2018 (JL). No records this year.*

GERRIS sp: *Last recorded in 2019 (JL). No records this year.*

GYRINUS sp: *Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.*

HALIPLUS SP: *Last recorded in 2019 (JL). No records this year.*

HYDROPHILUS sp: *1 larva 2021 (JL). No records this year.*

ISCHNURA ELEGANS: 1 Larva Castle Loch (JL).

LIMNEPHILUS sp: *Last recorded 2021 (JL). No records this year.*

LESSER WATER BOATMEN: 1 Castle Loch (JL) not identified.

NEPA CINEREA: *1 on 28th June 2021, Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.*

NOTONECTA GLAUCA: 9 Castle Loch (JL).

NOTONECTA VIRIDIS: *Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.*

SIALIS LUTARIA: 1 Castle Loch (JL).

TRIANODES DIVERSICOLOR: *Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.*

MICRONECTA POWERI: Castle Loch Bowling Green area (JL).

FLATWORMS.

DUGESIA LUGUBRIS : *Last recorded on 28th June 2021, Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.*

DUGESIA POLYCHROA: *Last records 2018 (JL). No records this year.*

DUGESIA TIGRINA: (alien sp. from America) 1 Castle Loch (JL).

POLYCELIS NIGRA/TENUIS: 4 Castle Loch (JL).

LEECHES.

HAEMOPSIS SANGUISUGA: *Last recorded 2021 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.*

ERPOBDELLA OCTOCULATA: *Last recorded 2022 Castle Loch (JL). No records this year.*

The following sections with the exception of 'Birds' contain a brief account of various species encountered 'in passing'. As yet, I have been unable to conduct a serious survey of any of these groups so in some cases many more species will be present.

NON-ACQUATIC INSECTS.

PANORPA COMMUNIS: *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

PANORPA GERMANICA: *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

CHORTHIPPUS PARALLELUS: *Regularly present on grassland at Castle Loch during the summer (AR).*

OMOCESTUS VIRIDULUS: *Regularly present on grassland at Castle Loch during the summer (AR).*

CHORTHIPPUS BRUNNEUS: *Regularly present on grassland at Castle Loch during the summer (AR).*

CALOSOMA VIOLACEUS: *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

STAPHYLINUS OLENS: *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

NICORPHORUS HUMATOR: *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

NICORPHORUS VESPILLO: *Regularly present adjacent to the Valison Burn and on the track leading to the A709 during the summer (AR).*

NICORPHORUS VESPILLOIDES: *Present adjacent to Valison Burn (AR).*

GEOTRUPES STERCORARIUS: *Present adjacent to Valison Burn and on track leading to A709. No previously recorded but has probably been present (AR).*

STAPHYLINUS OLENS: *Present in Castle Wood adjacent to the Castle ruins (AR).*

FORFICULA AURICULARIA: *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

TERRESTRIAL ISOPODA.

ONISCUS ASELLUS: *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

PORCELLIO SCABER: *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

TERRESTRIAL GASTROPODA.

ARION ATER: *Present throughout the reserve (AR).*

TANDONIA BUDAPESTENSIS: *Present in Castle Wood and adjacent to the Valison Burn (AR).*

CEPEA NEMORALIS: *Present in Castle Wood and adjacent to the Valison Burn (AR).*

CEPEA HORTENSIS: *Present in Castle Wood and adjacent to the Valison Burn (AR).*

DIPLOPODA.

GLOMERIS MARGINATA: *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

TACHYPODOBIUS NIGER: *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

CHILOPODA.

LITHOBIUS FORFICATUS: *Present in Castle Wood (AR).*

BIRDS.

RED-THROATED DIVER: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 12th November 1972.*

BLACK-THROATED DIVER: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 21st March 1984.*

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER: *Very Rare. No previous records. First record seen at Castle Loch on 17th November 2008 (CB). Seen thereafter by a number of observers until the end of the month.*

LITTLE GREBE: *Recorded most years but no evidence of breeding at either loch again this year. Maximum count: 3 at Castle Loch on 19th December (DD&KD).*

GREAT CRESTED GREBE: *Once a regular breeder. First bred at Lochmaben in 1891. Reduction in numbers this year with 4 seen on 10th April (BT). No reports of young between 2019 and 2021. Report of 4 young in 2022 on 20th June from a single observer (BT). No reports of young this year.*

RED-NECKED GREBE: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 6th April 1992.*

SLAVONIAN GREBE: *Rare autumn/winter or early spring visitor. Last previous records one in October 2009 (BH) and two in November 2010. A number of records this year of single birds, all in the second winter period and probably all the same individual. Recorded on 14th October (C&PB), 23rd October (BT), 23rd November (DGBN), 1st December (BG), 2nd December, 11th December (PJ) and 13th December (BT).*

BLACK-NECKED GREBE: *Rare winter and summer visitor. Last recorded 6th October 1996.*

PIED-BILLED GREBE: *Rare American vagrant. One record 24-25th April 1981.*

GREAT CORMORANT: *Common resident. Last breeding records 1898-1903 (Sir Hugh Gladstone). Regularly seen outside the breeding season. Numbers stable this year. Maximum count: 19 on 12th March (D&KD). Maximum count in second winter period 16 on 2nd December (BT).*

EURASIAN BITTERN: *Rare vagrant. Unconfirmed report of four on 29th January 2006 (Birdline Scotland). Possible sighting on 6th December 2006 when a bird took off from shallow water amongst willows but was immediately lost to view (RM). Report (via TR) of a Northumbrian birder having "good views" of 2 birds in the reeds by the yacht club on 18th January 2008. Further possible sighting on 23rd June 2008 with a bird taking off from the reeds on the west side of Castle Loch but again being immediately lost to view (AR & DW). One seen on ice near the inflow of the Innerfield Burn on 24th December 2010 (AR) and again on 28th (DB). Single bird reported on 24th December 2011 (BH) and again on 27th and 28th December 2011 (BH, JH). Two birds reported on 23rd December 2012 (BH). Single bird reported at Castle Loch on numerous occasions between 8th January and 5th March 2013 (BH). A single bird reported on 6th and 26th December 2013 (BH). Single bird reported on a number of occasions in the Castle Wood area between 11th January and 27th February 2014 (BH). Single bird present in reeds on Lockerbie road side on 14th December 2014 (AR). Bird present on 20th January 2015 (AR). No further records until 2019 when a single bird was seen on 4th February (DF). Single bird reported on 19th February 2022 (DGBN). No birds reported during the second winter period of 2022 but it seems likely that at least one was present. Single birds reported regularly between the 6th January and the 15th March this year with two birds present on 30th January and 1st February (All BT).*

LITTLE EGRET: *Rare vagrant. Single bird seen on 6th March 2011 near mouth of Valison Burn (BH). Two birds reported on 30th March 2022 (BT) and two on 14th August 2022 (DD&KD). Two birds seen in Vendace Bay on 18th February and 3 on 21st December (both BT). A single bird seen at various times between the 1st and 23rd February (BT). No other records this year.*

GREAT WHITE EGRET: *Rare vagrant. First record was of a single bird during WeBS count at Hightae Loch on 13th November 2016 (DD). A bird was present at Castle Loch on 9th March 2020*

(DD&KD), 23rd March 2020 (DF) and 13th December 2020 (DD&KD). In 2021 there were records of a single bird on 30th August (DF), 20th December (DD&KD), 26th December (DF) and 28th December (R&BM,E&EF). There were a number of sightings in 2022 with a single bird being seen on 1st January and two birds on 17th January (both BT). Further sightings of single birds were made on 19th February, 13th and 30th March (all BT), 16th April (DD&KD) 7th September (BT) · 9th September (AW), 11th and 13th September (both BT), the 9th October (DD&KD), and 22nd December (DGBN). Two birds present during WeBS counts on 19th February and 12th March (DD&KD). Regular sightings of a single bird in January and February (BT). Single bird recorded again during WeBS count on 20th November (DD&KD).

GREY HERON: *Regular Visitor. Maximum count 11 birds on 29th January (BT).*

PURPLE HERON: *Rare vagrant. One record only 27th May 1975 at Hightae Loch.*

MUTE SWAN: *Regular breeder with two pairs fledging young again this year. The usual rise in numbers during the moulting period saw 133 on 18th July (PSh). Other monthly maxima 48 on 22nd January (DD&KD), 68 on 13th February (BT), 77 on 12th March (DD&KD), 42 on 24th April (DD&KD), 60 on 24th May (DD&KD), 107 on 19th June (DD&KD), 65 birds on 7th September (BT), 61 on 15th October (DD&KD), 99 on 20th November (DD&KD) and 103 on 19th December (DD&KD). There were no records from August.*

BEWICK'S SWAN: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 20th January 1995. Three birds at Castle Loch on 15th December 2011 (BH) rising to five birds on 22nd December 2011 (BH). Five birds still present on 5th January 2012 (AR). No records since.*

WHOOPE SWAN: *Irregular winter visitor. Present during both winter periods with a maximum of 4 birds on 1st January (BT) and 8 birds on 11th December (PJ).*

BLACK SWAN: *Rare vagrant. Last previous record of a single bird that arrived in early July 2010 and was in the area until mid-September of that year. Two birds present in sanctuary zone early on the morning of 5th March 2013 (BH). No records since.*

BEAN GOOSE: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 23-25th February 1983.*

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE: *Formerly regular winter visitor in internationally important numbers. Sadly, although the surrounding fields are still used by flocks of over a hundred geese for feeding, the roost on Castle Loch has collapsed. Numbers up substantially this year with a record of 110c birds on 3rd February and an annual maximum of 240c on 23rd October (both BT).*

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 16th February 1992.*

GREYLAG GOOSE: *Once a regular visitor in nationally important numbers. No resident birds recorded. Although considerable numbers of Icelandic birds continue to use their traditional feeding*

areas around Lochmaben. Seven records this year with a maximum of 12 recorded on 9th February and 8 on 21st December (both BT). The remaining five records were of 5 or fewer birds.

SNOW GOOSE: *Rare winter vagrant and uncommon escapee from wildfowl collections. Last recorded 14th October 1990.*

BAR-HEADED GOOSE: *Asiatic introduction. Now feral. One record of 11 birds on two dates in August 2001 (PSh).*

CANADA GOOSE: *North American introduction, now a common UK resident. Occurs throughout the year and is an irregular breeder on the reserve. Maximum counts of 51 birds on 2nd January and 8 on 21st December (both BT). No reports of breeding again this year.*

HYBRID GEESE (GREYLAG x CANADA GOOSE): *Single hybrid seen frequently throughout 2008. Last seen on 13th February 2009 (BH).*

BRENT GOOSE: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded 12th January 2004.*

BARNACLE GOOSE: *Occasional winter visitor. Last record was a single bird overflying on 23rd January 2013 (BH).*

COMMON SHELDUCK: *Irregular breeder, usually one or two pairs only. Last recorded breeding 2007. The only records in the first part of the year were 4 birds on 19th and 20th January, 3 on the 21st January (all BT). A single bird was recorded during the second winter period on the 2nd December. No records during the rest of the year.*

RUDDY SHELDUCK: *Accidental from Asia or north-west Africa, or uncommon escapee from a wildfowl collection. One record 27th April 2004 (AR).*

MANDARIN DUCK: *Escape from wildfowl collections. Only two previous records on the reserve when a single bird was present on 10th October 2013 near Lochside plantation (BH) and a single male was present on 12th December 2016 (PSh).*

EGYPTIAN GOOSE: *Introduced now feral. Single bird at Castle Loch on 1st November 2011 (BH) and seen thereafter by a number of observers.*

EURASIAN WIGEON: *Regular winter visitor, scarce in summer. Numbers substantially up this year with a noticeable reduction in numbers regularly using the Kirk Loch. Maximum count in first winter period: 178 on 20th January (BT). Numbers remained well into double figures during the first winter period. Maximum count during the second winter period was 120 on 30th December (BT). The last record*

of the first winter period was 19 birds on 10th April (BT). The first record of returning birds was of 3 on 1st October (BT) which is much earlier than last year.

AMERICAN WIGEON: *Accidental from North America or escapee from wildfowl collection. There was an unconfirmed sighting in 2003 and a single male was present between early October and Mid December 2009 (BH). A single bird was present from the 22nd January until 2nd February 2010 (BH). Single male at Castle Loch 22nd November 2011 (BH). This bird remained in the area alternating between Castle and Kirk Lochs until the end of the year being seen by numerous observers. A single male was seen in a flock of Eurasian Wigeon in the Castle Wood area on 5th April 2012 (BH). A further single male was seen in Vendace Bay on the 2nd and 5th of November 2012 (both BH). No records since.*

GADWALL: *Occasional winter visitor or during spring passage. Single summer record of two birds in 2013. Birds were regularly present during the first three months of 2015 with a maximum count of 6 on 17th February (AR). Numbers held up during the second winter period, with 6 birds present on 10th November 2015 (AR). No birds were noted during the summer of 2015. One record of a single male on 12th December 2016 (PSh) and a single bird on 23rd October 2022 (BT). Two records this year of single birds on 1st January and the 10th April (both BT).*

COMMON TEAL: *Regular winter visitor. Seen on a number of occasions at Castle Loch during the first winter period. Maximum count of 230+ on 14th January (BT). No records received for second winter period.*

GARGANEY: *Rare summer visitor. Last previous records 15th September 1991, 3rd June 2003 5th May 2006 and a single drake seen by numerous observers between 28th February and 30th March 2008. This bird was noted to have a yellow ring on the right leg (R&BM). This and the time of its arrival (rather early for a migrant) suggest that it might not have been a wild bird. A further sighting of probably the same bird on 16th April (JB & G Garner).*

MALLARD: *Regular throughout the year and breeds. Numbers considerably down this year with a maximum count 48 on 14th January (BT). Only February, May, September and December had counts of more than 20 birds (BT).*

NORTHERN PINTAIL: *Irregular winter visitor. Two records this year. A single bird on 1st January and 2 on the 12th January (both BT). No records from the second winter period.*

NORTHERN SHOVELER: *Irregular visitor, winter and spring. Reported in both winter periods with 2 birds present on 2nd January, 1 on 3rd March and 8 on 10th April. A single bird was seen on 2nd and 31st December and 2 birds on 21st December. All records (BT).*

RED-CRESTED POCHARD: *Rare vagrant and uncommon escapee from wildfowl collections. Last recorded 9th September 1995.*

COMMON POCHARD: *Irregular winter visitor. No records this year.*

TUFTED DUCK: *Present throughout the year. Maximum counts: 85 on 12th March (DD&KD) and 108 on 19th December (DD&KD). Numbers in both winter periods regularly exceeded 50 birds. Four young seen during WeBS count on 29th August 2013 (AR) but no breeding records since.*

GREATER SCAUP: *Very occasional winter visitor. Single record from Castle Loch in 2010 and six in 2013. No records in 2014 and 2015. Single bird present on 29th February 2016 (DF). Two reports this year. A single bird reported on 2nd December and 2 on 15th December (both BT).*

LESSER SCAUP: *Rare transatlantic vagrant. Last recorded 26th January 2004 (IA). Bird with superficial appearance of Lesser Scaup seen by a number of observers in 2008. This appears to have been a hybrid although its exact nature has not been determined. In 2022 a number of records were received of a single bird between the 21st and 29th March. Believed to be a hybrid. Report of a single bird on 14th May (AC).*

LONG-TAILED DUCK: *Rare winter visitor. Last previous records 24th December 1994, 6th November-15th December 2002, 23rd January 2003, 8th and 12th December 2005 and 11th January-12th April 2006. Two birds present during the latter half of February 2008 and then again from 17th November until the end of the year. In 2009 a single male was present from 14th to 28th January 2009 and a female from 15th November until 16th December. One male bird was first seen on 1st November 2010 (BH) and remained until 5th being seen by a number of observers. Single at Castle Loch on 12th and 16th December 2016 (PSh). No records again this year.*

COMMON SCOTER: *Scarce visitor. Last previous record at Castle Loch on 13th March 2006 (RM). Single male present in Vendace Bay on 9th and 12th August 2013 (BH). A total of three records submitted this year. Four birds all male on 12th March, 3 on 10th April and 1 on 20th August (all BT).*

VELVET SCOTER: *Rare visitor. One record 18th October 2000.*

COMMON GOLDENEYE: *Regular winter visitor, sometimes remaining well into summer. The first winter period had a maximum count of 61 on 22nd January (DD&KD) and a final record of 6 on 10th April (BT). In the second winter period the first record was of a single bird on 23rd October with a maximum count of 45 on 2nd December (both BT).*

SMEW: *Used to be seen most winters in small numbers. Last previous records: 3 on 14th January 2009 (BH) rising to 4 on 5th February. Last sighting: 1 on 28th February. Single redhead at Castle Loch on 14th November 2010 (AR). Single female present at Castle Loch on 20th February 2011 (BH). Single female present at Dalton Road piers on 6th February 2012 (BH). Last previous record was of a single female present in Innerfield Burn area 25th November 2013 (BH). Single bird seen at Castle Loch by a number of observers from 29th to 31st December 2022 (DGBN). Single bird seen by a number of observers between 6th and 22nd January (BT, PM and D&KD).*

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: *Was once a fairly regular visitor in winter. Has declined substantially in recent years but probably slightly under-recorded. Record of a single male at Henderland Island, Castle Loch on 21st April 2012 (BH). Single female on 12th December 2016 (PSh).*

GOOSANDER: *Regular winter visitor. Breeds locally. Once present in sub-nationally important numbers. The decrease in numbers noted in 2015 and 2016 continued until 2020. Maximum count in first winter period was 10 on 30th January (BT). Maximum count in second winter period 19 on 29th December (BT).*

RUDDY DUCK: *North American introduction. Occasional visitor. Last record is a pair at Castle Loch on 16th January 2006 (RM).*

RED KITE: *Rare vagrant. Four records: single at Hightae Loch early 1990s (FSe). Single at Castle Loch in May 2020 (FSe). Single seen on 28th August 2021 (FSe). Single on 3rd November 2022 (BT). Single bird seen over Castle Loch on 24th May (BT).*

MARSH HARRIER: *Scarce summer visitor. Last previous records a single on 20th May 1984 at Hightae Loch and a single at Castle Loch on 7th September 2010 (BH). Single bird quartering over the Vendace Bay reed beds on 13th August 2013 (BH).*

HEN HARRIER: *Scarce visitor. Last recorded 2nd March 1990.*

NORTHERN GOSHAWK: *Scarce local breeder. Last previous record one flew over Castle Loch from the west, circled and then returned west on 17th March 2008 (AW). Single bird present on 13th November 2018 (CO). No records this year.*

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK: *Resident, probably breeds in woodland on reserve. Seen regularly at Castle Loch by a variety of observers.*

COMMON BUZZARD: *Resident, has bred in woodland on reserve. Seen regularly at both lochs by a variety of observers. The area is traditionally used by two pairs, one based in woodland to the East and the other in Castle Wood. As is usual two pairs were seen soaring on a number of occasions by a number of observers.*

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD: *Rare winter visitor. Last recorded at Hightae Loch February 2004 (FSe).*

OSPREY: *Occasional on passage, spring and autumn. A single bird was seen in the Lochside Plantation area on the 8th and 9th of April 2013 and there was a further sighting of a single bird in the same area on the 9th and 10th of May 2013 (all BH). One at Castle Loch on 13th May 2015 (DF). One at Castle Loch on 23rd June 2016 (DF). Single in June 2020 (FSe). One seen week commencing 24th May 2021 (DF) and a further singleton, possibly the same bird on 3rd July 2021 (FSe). No records this year.*

KESTREL: *Resident breeder. Seen regularly hunting over sanctuary zone by a variety of observers.*

MERLIN: *Scarce visitor. Last recorded 8th April 2005 (but probably under-recorded).*

HOBBY: *Rare summer visitor. One record 17-18th July 1982.*

PEREGRINE: *Occasional winter visitor. Single flying over at Castle Loch on 24th February (BH). Last previous records were a single at Castle Loch on 6th September 2010 and a juvenile seen at Hightae Loch on 28th September 2011 (both BH).*

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE: *Sometimes reared and released in area. Single bird seen on entrance road to castle on 28th September 2012 (BH). No records since.*

GREY PARTRIDGE: *Declining farmland resident. Last recorded 1991.*

COMMON PHEASANT: *Resident breeder with small number seen regularly throughout the year.*

WATER RAIL: *Regular winter visitor but breeding has only rarely been confirmed. There were ten records in 2013, a considerable advance on 2012 in which there were only three. Numbers dropped in 2014 with only records of single birds, although they were recorded in all seasons. Single records in all seasons of 2015 but no signs of breeding. Single records in first three seasons of 2016 with 5 birds at various locations around Castle Loch on 12th December 2016 (PSh). Two records in 2022 on 14th February and 9th September. Two birds heard near Valison Burn on 18th July and a single at the same location on 25th July (Both PSh). No signs of breeding.*

SPOTTED CRAKE: *Very rare breeder in UK. Only record 26th August 2001 at Hightae Loch (PSh).*

CORN CRAKE: *Former resident breeder? Last recorded 1st and 2nd August 1980 (PSh and Dugald Black).*

MOORHEN: *Resident breeder, in small numbers. Maximum count: 13 on 2nd December (BT). No confirmed breeding this year.*

EURASIAN COOT: *Winter visitor. Small numbers have bred but no records this year. Numbers slightly improved again this year with nine birds being seen on a number of occasions during both the first winter and second winter periods (DD&KD and BT).*

AMERICAN COOT: *Rare American vagrant. One record 10-17th February 2004 (AW).*

OYSTERCATCHER: *Irregular visitor in spring and autumn, sometimes breeds in or near reserve. No records again this year of a pair of birds present in the reserve during the breeding season. Two birds seen during WeBS count on 19th February (DD&KD) and 6 overhead on 18th July (PSh).*

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER: *Scarce summer visitor to Scotland. One record 18th May 1996 (RM).*

RINGED PLOVER: *Occasional passage migrant. Last recorded March and July 2005.*

GOLDEN PLOVER: *Occasional passage migrant. None on reserve since 8th September 1995. Large flocks still regular at Greenhill, near River Annan, where 650 on 5th April 2006 (PSh).*

NORTHERN LAPWING: *Irregular visitor in spring and autumn, sometimes breeding on or near the reserve. Serious decline in numbers in recent years. Maximum count: 20 on 21st July (BT). Only 5 other records received for the whole year. No breeding noted since 2013.*

CURLEW SANDPIPER: *Rare passage migrant. One record 8th September 1999 at Hightae Loch (RM).*

DUNLIN: *Scarce passage migrant. Seen very occasionally, last previous records 10th May 1999, 29th April and 20th July 2003 with eleven birds seen on the latter date. Single bird at Henderland Island on 28th July 2013 (BH). No records since 2013.*

RUFF: *Scarce passage migrant. Very occasional, last previous record several autumn dates in 1995. Three present at Castle Loch on the 7th September 2010 and one on the 9th September 2010 (both BH).*

JACK SNIBE: *Scarce winter visitor. Last recorded 9th March 1986.*

COMMON SNIBE: *Common passage migrant and local breeder. Single bird seen on 11th December 2022. No records this year.*

WOODCOCK: *Occasional breeder and winter visitor. Last recorded roding 27th March 1990. Single records at both lochs in March 2004. Single at Castle Loch on 23rd and 24th December 2010 (BH). Two in Castle Woods on 23rd January 2013 (BH). Single in Castle Woods on 10th November 2015 (AR). Single near Vendace Burn on 19th December 2016 (PSh). Single bird at Hightae Loch on 20th January 2019 (DD&KD). Two present at Castle Loch on 16th December 2022 (BT). No records again this year.*

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT: *Scarce passage migrant. Last previous record 29th August to 1st September 2005. Single in the Sanctuary Zone at Castle Loch on 7th September 2010 (BH).*

BAR-TAILED GODWIT: *Scarce passage migrant. Last recorded 21st October 1983.*

WHIMBREL: *Scarce passage migrant. Last recorded 9th May 2006 (RM).*

CURLEW: *Regular passage migrant. In the past there have sometimes been large numbers in spring but these are now much reduced. Breeds locally. No records this year.*

SPOTTED REDSHANK: *Uncommon passage migrant. Last recorded 26th August 2001 (PSh).*

COMMON REDSHANK: *Irregular visitor to the reserve, usually in spring. Last records singles on 13th March 2006 and 13th July 2006 (RM).*

COMMON GREENSHANK: *Uncommon passage migrant. Last recorded 2nd-3rd September 2005.*

GREEN SANDPIPER: *Uncommon passage migrant. Two records of single birds on 21st October 1994 and 14th September 2013 (BH). No records since.*

WOOD SANDPIPER: *Rare passage migrant. Last record 3rd September 2005.*

COMMON SANDPIPER: *Uncommon passage migrant, local breeder. An adult with 3 juveniles was present in Sanctuary Zone on 3rd July 2013 (BH) and this suggested breeding within the reserve. No records thereafter until a single bird seen on 9th September 2022 (BT). Single bird seen again this year flying past hide on 25th July (PSh).*

ARCTIC SKUA: *Rare passage migrant. Last recorded 8th October 1995.*

GREAT SKUA: *Rare passage migrant. Last recorded 27th April 1999.*

LITTLE GULL: *Scarce passage migrant. Last previous record 20th March 2004. Single in gull roost on 27th February 2014 (BH). No records since.*

BLACK-HEADED GULL: *Common winter visitor; breeds locally. Maximum daytime count: 20 on 19th February (DD&KD). No winter roost count conducted this year.*

MEDITERRANEAN GULL: *Rare vagrant. Only previous records: One bird on 15th March 2003 (Birdguides). At least one bird present in Castle Loch roost between 24th January and 12th March 2013 with two birds confirmed on the 3rd and 11th February 2013 and three on 14th February 2013. Two birds in the roost during the second winter period on 28th and 29th December 2013 (all BH). A single bird seen in the roost on each occasion it was checked in 2014 with two birds present on 19th February (BH). No records since.*

COMMON GULL: *Mainly a winter visitor. Recorded in small numbers at Castle Loch in both winter seasons. No roost count this year.*

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: *Most birds migrate south in winter. Usually at least one or two birds present throughout the year. Maximum count of 19 resting on the loch on 18th July (PSh). No roost count this year.*

HERRING GULL: *Seen regularly in small numbers in day time. Breeds locally. No roost count this year.*

GLAUCOUS GULL: *Rare winter visitor. Last previous records 25th February 1974 and 11th January 1984 and first winter bird at Castle Loch 17 November 2008 (CB).*

ICELAND GULL: *Rare winter visitor. One record 25th February 1974.*

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL: *Scarce local resident, seen occasionally. Last previous records three seen in roost on 15th November 2015 (AR). Two seen in roost count on 5th October 2016 (AR). Single on 11th April 2021 (DD&KD). A single bird was recorded on 5th January 2022 (BT). This year produced three records in the first winter period each of two birds, on 29th January, 23rd February and 4th March (All BT). A sighting of a single bird on 21st December (BT) was the only record from the second winter period.*

KITTIWAKE: *Rare visitor. Last previous record 10th-15th January 1984. Two birds passed through on 19th February 2014 (BH).*

COMMON TERN: *Occasional on passage. Last recorded 19th August 2001, 26th August 2003 and 8-10 October 2006.*

ARCTIC TERN: *Occasional on passage. Last previous records singles on 26th September 2003 and 12th August 2011 (BH). Two at the Lochside Cottage area of Castle Loch on 3rd May 2012 (BH).*

BLACK TERN: *Once fairly frequent on spring and autumn passage, most often seen second week of May to first week of June, and late August to early September. Last records 7th September 1998, a single at north end of Castle Loch from 8th –10th October 2006 (SG, RM) one at Castle Loch 16th May 2009 (BH) and other observers. A single bird was seen near the Lockerbie road on 8th September 2010 (BH).*

SANDWICH TERN: *Rare visitor. One record only 6th September 1973.*

COMMON GUILLEMOT: *Rare vagrant. Last recorded 26th December 1987 (2 birds).*

LITTLE AUK: *Rare vagrant. Last recorded mid to late 1980s.*

ROCK DOVE/FERAL PIGEON: *Common local resident in and around farms and towns. Occasional visitor to reserve.*

STOCK DOVE: *Resident breeder. Seen throughout the year by a number of observers.*

WOOD PIGEON: *Present throughout the year in the woods at both lochs with a maximum count of 48 recorded 14th January at Castle Loch (BT).*

COLLARED DOVE: *Common local resident in and around farms and towns. Noted throughout the year by a number of observers. No breeding recorded.*

COMMON CUCKOO: *Scarce summer visitor. Last records 10th May 2002 11th March 2020.*

BARN OWL: *Scarce visitor, former breeder until 2019 when breeding was confirmed with two young in nestbox. Nesting reported in 2022 but no success confirmed (DF). Single record from the breeding season this year (AR).*

TAWNY OWL: *Resident regular breeder.*

LONG-EARED OWL: *Irregular visitor. Last recorded at Hightae Loch 28th October 1978 (PSh).*

SHORT-EARED OWL: *Rare visitor. Last recorded 28th November 1985.*

COMMON SWIFT: *Common summer visitor, breeds in Lochmaben. Regularly recorded hawking above the lochs in June, July and August.*

COMMON KINGFISHER: *Regular visitor, breeds locally. Often seen on the Valison Burn. .*

EUROPEAN GREEN WOODPECKER: *Scarce resident locally. Last recorded 31st May 1984.*

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER: *Resident regular breeder. Records from every month of the year although no breeding could be confirmed again this year.*

EURASIAN SKYLARK: *Irregular visitor. Last record 3 on 13th June 2011 (AR).*

SAND MARTIN: *Regular visitor in spring and summer: breeds in banks of River Annan and at Applegarthtown Wildlife Sanctuary. Early record of 33 birds on 3rd April (BT). Recorded regularly between then and early September.*

BARN SWALLOW: *Summer visitor, breeds locally. First record of a single bird on 10th April (BT). Maximum count 15 on 7th September (BT).*

HOUSE MARTIN: *Summer visitor, breeds locally.*

TREE PIPIT: *Scarce summer visitor. No records again this year*

MEADOW PIPIT: *Irregular visitor. No recent breeding records for the reserve. Last records 2003 and 2021. No records this year.*

YELLOW WAGTAIL: *Rare summer visitor. Last recorded 25th September 1981.*

GREY WAGTAIL: *Common local resident but irregular visitor to the reserve. Records of a single bird on grassland adjacent to A709 on 5th January and 1st May 2022 (both BT). No records this year.*

PIED WAGTAIL: *Irregular visitor and breeder. Confirmed breeding for the eleventh consecutive year. Two adults with four young seen at Bowling Club Car Park/Victoria Park area on several occasions in June by a number of observers.*

WHITE WAGTAIL: *Last recorded 28th April 1995.*

BOHEMIAN WAXWING: *Irregular, rare winter visitor. Last previous record 15 by Lochmaben Kirk on 17th November 2008.*

WREN: *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

DUNNOCK: *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

ROBIN: *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

COMMON REDSTART: *Scarce summer visitor and occasional breeder on the reserve. A pair present in Castle Woods on 9th May 2013 (BH). No records since.*

WHINCHAT: *Scarce summer visitor. Last recorded 10th May 1982.*

COMMON STONECHAT: *Scarce local resident. First record for the reserve a single on 19th November 2019 (FSe). Recorded in both April and October this 2020 (FSe). No records this year.*

NORTHERN WHEATEAR: *Occasional passage migrant. Last recorded 2nd June 1991.*

BLACKBIRD: *Resident throughout the year and breeds at both sites. Maximum count 18 on 13th February (BT).*

FIELDFARE: *Regular autumn and winter visitor. Maximum number 100+ on 3rd January (BT).*

SONG THRUSH: *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites. Maximum count 4 on 13th February (BT).*

REDWING: *Regular autumn and winter visitor. Maximum number 213 at Halleaths on 31st October (BT).*

MISTLE THRUSH: *Recorded in most years, breeds locally. No 2001 or 2002 records. A few records in 2003, 2004 and 2005. No reports for 2006, 2007 or 2008. Maximum count of 3 in 2010. Single singing in Castle Wood 2011. Single seen in Castle Wood in 2012. Three seen in boardwalk area on 21st September 2013 (BH). Pair present in Castle Wood in May/June 2014 but no proof of breeding found. Seen in Castle*

Wood on a number of occasions during, and outhwith the 2015 breeding season but no proof of breeding found. Present in Castle Wood in 2016 but no proof of breeding found. Single bird seen on 9th June 2019 (FSe). Recorded in January, February and June in 2020 (all FSe). Single record on 30th April 2021 (FSe). Maximum 2 on 24th April 2022. Seven records received this year, all within the winter periods, with a maximum of 4 birds on 1st January (BT).

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER: Occasional summer visitor and irregular breeder. Last records on two spring dates in 1997 and a single on 16th May 2016 (DF). Two singleton records on 29th May and 3rd July 2021 (both FSe). No records this year.

SEDGE WARBLER: Summer visitor and regular breeder at both lochs. No breeding confirmed again this year.

REED WARBLER: Summer visitor and recent breeder. No breeding confirmed again this year.

COMMON WHITETHROAT: Scarce summer visitor. Last recorded 12th August 1996 and 19th May 2013 (BH). Singletons on 30th April and 29th May 2021 (both FSe). No records this year.

GARDEN WARBLER: Summer visitor and breeder. No breeding confirmed this year.

BLACKCAP: Summer visitor and breeder. No breeding confirmed this year.

WOOD WARBLER: Scarce summer visitor. Occasional in spring. Last recorded 25th July and 5th August 2003.

CHIFFCHAFF: Regular spring and autumn migrant, occasional breeder. No confirmed breeding this year.

WILLOW WARBLER: Summer visitor and regular breeder.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER: Scarce autumn visitor to Western Europe. A single bird, probably the same individual, was seen on three occasions in October 2013. These are the only records from the reserve.

GOLDCREST: Present throughout the year and confirmed breeder at Castle Loch.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER: Irregular summer visitor and occasional breeder. Last previous records: single at Castle Loch 25th August 2006 (RM), three at Castle Loch on 4th June 2009 (MG) and single at Hightae Loch on 13th May 2009 (JM). Two records from 9th June 2019 (both FSe). No records this year.

PIED FLYCATCHER: Scarce summer visitor. Last recorded 9th August 1993.

LONG-TAILED TIT: Resident and breeds at Castle Loch. Maximum count was a flock of 30 minimum seen foraging on 30th July (PSh).

WILLOW TIT: Resident and regular breeder. The Willow Tit (*Poecile montana*) is a scarce resident of Dumfries & Galloway, very close to the northern boundary of its range. Between 2011 and 2016 an annual survey was carried out at Castle Loch to monitor success and failure of breeding. Published studies have suggested that Willow Tit nest site preferences are for standing dead wood of between 2-4m in height, within an area of developed understorey and high soil water content. Because of this, locating suitable points within the narrow bands of woodland around Castle Loch is not a particularly difficult task.

The methodology was a simplified form of that used by Lewis et al 2009ⁱ. The woodland strips to the west, south and east of the loch were walked in the early morning on several days of suitable weather during the period from 1st to 30th April. A recorded call was used at regular points 200m apart. The call was sounded for two minutes or until a bird responded, whichever was the sooner. When a bird responded, its location (ten figure grid reference) and the direction from which it came, were carefully recorded. All spontaneous calls and sightings were also recorded. Once territories were established they were monitored regularly during the breeding season to establish the success or failure of the breeding attempt. Five factors were monitored where possible although time constraints and other factors meant that it was unusual to be able to record all five for a particular territory.

- 1) Singing male
- 2) Female present
- 3) Nest building
- 4) Adults with food or faecal sacs.
- 5) Fledged young

The maximum number of territories held at the start of the 2011 season was eight. The table below shows the results for the years 2011 to 2016. Sadly the downward trend of numbers of fledged young continued in 2016. It was not possible to conduct a full nesting survey in 2017 and 2018. In 2019 only previously recorded territories were monitored as they comprised all the suitable habitat.

The 2020 lockdown due to the pandemic made a full nesting survey impossible.

In 2021 a limited survey was conducted by Heather Murray. A single bird was spotted during the survey on the 16th of May at NY 08453 81824. Two birds were located during the survey conducted on 30th of May one at NY 09042 81087 and a second at NY 09039 81105. Two other casual records were received both out with the breeding season.

The Willow Tit is the UK's most rapidly declining resident bird species and is a Conservation Priority Species. The south of Scotland is its most northerly breeding area and Castle Loch has been a crucial site. Because the species is sedentary once lost from a site it is extremely unlikely to be able to return. Although the data is limited for the years 2020 and 2021 there has been a marked decline at Castle Loch since 2011 which is a ground for serious concern that it may soon be lost altogether.

Factor	Territories	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	2011	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	2012	X	X	X	X		X	X	
	2013	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	2014	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	2015		X	X	X		X	X	
	2016		X		X		X		X
	2019		X		X		X		
	2022		X					X	
	2023		X		X			X	
	2011	X	X	X	X			X	

2	2012		X						
	2013								
	2014		X		X		X	X	
	2015		X		X			X	
	2016		X		X			X	
	2019		X		X			X	
	2022							X	
	2023				X			X	
3	2011	X			X	X		X	
	2012		X						
	2013								
	2014		X		X	X		X	
	2015		X		X	X		X	
	2016		X		X			X	
	2019		X					X	
	2022								
	2023							X	
4	2011		X			X			
	2012		X						
	2013							X	
	2014		X					X	
	2015							X	
	2016		X						
	2019		X						
	2022							X	
	2023							X	
5	2011	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	2012	X		X		X	X	X	
	2013		X	X				X	
	2014		X	X	X			X	
	2015		X		X			X	
	2016		X					X	
	2019		X					X	
	2022							X	
	2023							X	

Lewis, Alex J. G., Amar, Arjun, Daniells, Laura, Charman, Elisabeth C., Grice, Phil and Smith, Ken (2009) 'Factors influencing patch occupancy and within-patch habitat use in an apparently stable population of Willow Tits *Poecile montanus kleinschmidtii* in Britain', *Bird Study*, 56:3,326 — 337

COAL TIT: *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites. Over 12 seen foraging in a mixed tit flock in woodland on 19th February (BT).*

BLUE TIT: *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites. Maximum count 37+ on 14th January (BT).*

GREAT TIT: *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites. Maximum count 21 on 13th February (BT).*

EURASIAN NUTHATCH: *Increasingly numerous resident in Dumfries and Galloway, having spread westwards from Cumbria and the Scottish Borders during the 1990s. First reserve record near the castle on 21st April 2003 (PSed). Single birds seen at a number of locations within woodland around both lochs since 2015. Several sightings of pairs again this year with a maximum of 7 birds on 13th February (BT). Still no confirmed breeding.*

COMMON TREECREEPER: *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites.*

JAY: *Resident, and confirmed as breeder since 2017.*

MAGPIE: *Rare vagrant. Last previous record 24th March 1978. Five birds recorded on 22nd December 2022 (BT). No records this year.*

JACKDAW: *Resident breeder, usually supplemented by larger numbers coming to winter roost. No roost counts submitted again this year.*

ROOK: *Sporadic resident breeder usually supplemented by larger numbers coming to winter roost. No roost counts submitted again this year.*

CARRION CROW: *Resident breeder usually supplemented by larger numbers coming to winter roost. No roost counts submitted again this year*

HOODED CROW: *Last recorded 1981.*

COMMON RAVEN: *Occasional visitor. Last previous record two birds overflying 2nd October 2008 and one on 25th December 2011. Two birds overflying on 4th January 2013 (BH). Two over Vendace Bay on 19th February 2014 (BH) and a single bird overflying on 13th October 2014 (AR). Single on 17th August 2019 (FSe). Single bird seen on 30th April and 28th August 2021 (both FSe). Two records this year both of single birds. One on 19th February (BT) and one on 4th April (R&BM).*

COMMON STARLING: *Winter visitor and local breeder. No regular roost counts this year but occasional visits suggest that the decline in the roost in the reeds around Vendace Bay continues.*

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING: *Rare Eurasian vagrant. One record late October 2003.*

HOUSE SPARROW: *Common resident in Lochmaben and at surrounding farms. Irregularly recorded on reserve.*

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW: *Scarce and declining resident on local farmland. First record since 1984 was 4 on 16th May 2016. Single record week commencing 24th May 2021 (DF). No records again this year.*

COMMON CHAFFINCH: *Present throughout the year and breeds at both sites. Maximum count of 80+ at Castle Loch on 19th February (BT).*

BRAMBLING: *Irregular winter visitor. No records again this year.*

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH: *Present throughout the year, probably breeds. Numbers continue to decline this year. Only a single record was received this year of 2 birds on 13th February (BT).*

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH: *Occasional visitor. Probably breeds in some years. Around 20 seen foraging in woodland at Castle Loch on 21st December (BT).*

EURASIAN SISKIN: *Winter visitor and passage migrant. A maximum count of 30+ on 30th December (BT).*

EUROPEAN LINNET: *Scarce resident locally. Last recorded 30th August and 29th December 2003.*

LESSER REDPOLL: *Resident in wider vicinity, irregular on the reserve. No records this year.*

COMMON CROSSBILL: *Irregular visitor. Probable breeder in conifer forests in vicinity. Last recorded 27th May 2003.*

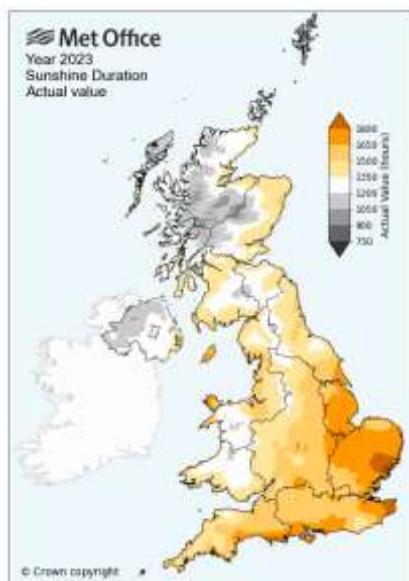
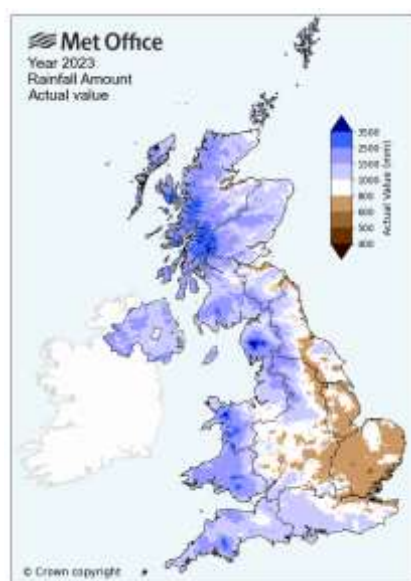
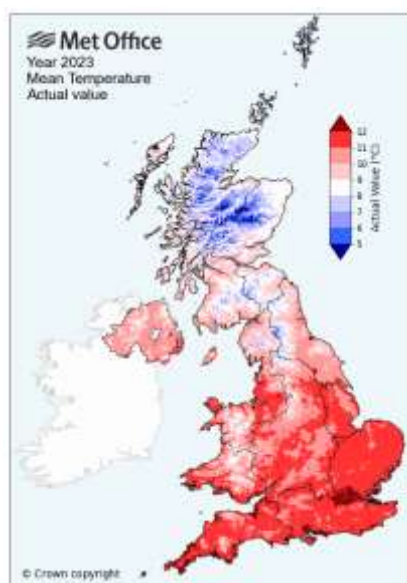
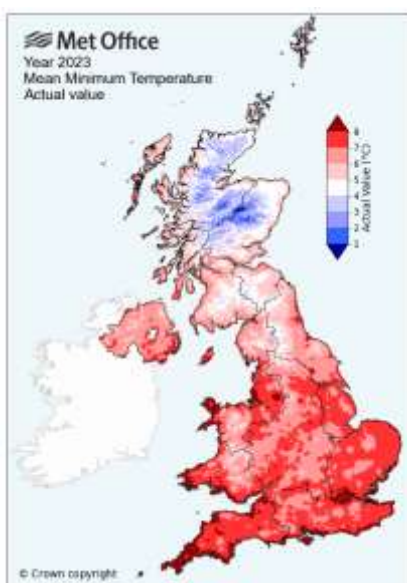
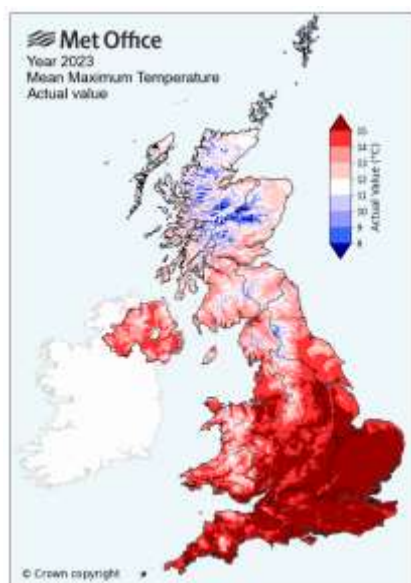
EURASIAN BULLFINCH: *Irregular. May breed occasionally. Five seen foraging in woodland at Castle Loch on 30th December (BT).*

YELLOWHAMMER: *Used to be a regular resident breeder. Last record of a single bird on 9th June 2019 (FSe).*

COMMON REED BUNTING: *Regular resident breeder. No breeding confirmed again this year. Maximum count of 4 birds on 13th February (BT).*

CORN BUNTING: *Rare visitor (and now extremely rare resident in D&G). Recorded 26th February and 6th May 1978 at Castle Loch and at Hightae Loch on 2nd February 1980 (all records PSh).*

Climate Data for 2023



<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/uk-actual-and-anomaly-maps>