

Fife SOC

Newsletter No. 206

Compiled by Elizabeth Irwin

September 2022



***What's This Bird? : Elizabeth Irwin
(answer on p11)***

FROM THE EDITOR

In March and at the AGM I promised a newsletter once we had the results of the members' survey and a clearer idea of the future direction for Fife Branch of the SOC. Well, I didn't forget. However, it has taken longer than expected to get the results, hence the delay.

This newsletter focuses on the results of the survey and the implications for us as a branch. I also focus on what we can do with the human resources available and what our options are.

I have also included the minutes from our last AGM, and I think you will be pleased to also see some 'normal' bird items.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts about anything raised in this newsletter.

Elizabeth Irwin

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Results of the Fife Members' Survey

The aim of this survey was to learn more about what Fife members wanted from their SOC Branch.

Membership is very healthy with a total of 149 members. However only a tiny proportion attend outings or meetings (either face-to-face before Covid or on Zoom). The committee have all been in place for (too) many years and we all felt that is not healthy for any organisation to rely on the same people to plan, organise and execute all our activities.

This will all feel familiar to many organisations, so we wondered if the Branch model was still relevant in Fife: - hence the survey.

Thank you to Jane Allison for putting the survey together, sending it out to members and then doing a lot of work to analyse the results. Here is a summary of what we learned.

The survey went to all branch members: 127 online plus 22 by post.

26 people responded online and 4 by post: a total of 30 responses. (Apparently a 20% response rate is not unusual, but to me it suggests that this is not a burning issue for members.)

NB the views expressed below represent the members who responded to the survey. We do not know what other members think.

There was a lot of positive feedback about the SOC, and most respondents were keen to support the charity and its work and were interested in birding. Many were keen to improve their ID skills and bird knowledge and learn about bird sites and sightings. The Fife survey reflected views previously expressed by other SOC branches. Several people expressed interest in online ID workshops and the newsletter was also well received by most people. (Jane Allison is going to explore whether it can be posted to those who don't have internet access). Most members who participated in the survey were also enthusiastic about the online meetings and hoped they would continue in some form.

PS one person commented that there should be photographs in the newsletter from more people: Yes please! That does rely on people sending them to me!

Branch activities

In respect of meetings:

Members who responded to the survey found the talks interesting. However, only 15 people hoped that we would start indoor meetings again and of those only 5 said they would attend all the meetings. Health issues and the distances to be travelled on winter evenings were barriers to many, and members who responded also talked about the many other commitments: online meetings made attendance easier.

In respect of outings:

Of the 30 members who responded 62% said they liked watching birds both alone **and** as part of a group. They enjoyed the social aspect. Only 3 people **preferred** bird watching as part of a group.

Many people said they preferred local outings that lasted a short time. A few remained interested in travelling further afield.

There was also interest in specific events, especially ID walks and photography workshops.

Next steps:

The 'operating committee' is going to try to keep Fife Branch ticking over and we very much hope that people will come forward to contribute to branch activities.

Plans for meetings:

There are barriers to restarting face-to face meetings:

- Our venue (the St Andrews Supper room) is closed until at least the summer of 2023.
- We would need to find another affordable venue with all the facilities we require and given the geographical spread of Fife we are not sure about the best location. We would also have to find speakers.
- We would be doing this with the knowledge that only a tiny number of members expect to attend and that the only people currently able to manage and set up (and clear) these meetings are Elizabeth and John Irwin. What would happen when we are not available?

For all these reasons we do not plan to restart regular in person meetings at the current time. If the Branch can restart in person meetings, we could then look at the best venue thinking about the distances people have to travel.

Outings and events:

We would really like to plan some outings over the next few months and explore holding specific SOC events in Fife but that is going to depend on the availability of committee members.

Watch this space!

Planned meetings via Zoom starting at 7.30:

NB These are organised by Waterston House and will be for all SOC members. There will be breakout rooms from 7pm. Staff at Waterston House have decided to group Fife with Central and Tayside Branches.

Wednesday 21st September

Pete Moore – *RSPB Insh Marshes*

Wednesday 19th October

Ciaran Hatsell & Jude Lane – *The Gannet*

Wednesday 23rd November *Birds and Us, A 12,000 Year History* – Q&A with Tim Birkhead

Wednesday 21st December

Mary Colwell & Dave Parrish – *The Curlew*

You can find information about how to connect to Zoom on the branch pages at www.the-soc.org.uk. Mailchimp reminders and log ins will be sent from Waterston House in the usual way.

Outing reports

Our last outing was to Scone Palace on Saturday 12th March



There was a good turnout for the weather delayed outing to Scone on the 12th. Meeting up at Quarrymill Woodland Park, we started the day with a gentle and undemanding stroll through the woodland alongside an Annaty Burn that was running high. A nice selection of the more common woodland species was seen at the start of the walk, attracted by the feeding stations, with Great Tit, Blue Tit, Coal Tit and Chaffinch in good numbers. The woodland was alive with birdsong with Great Tit, Wren, and Robin especially prominent. After only 100 metres or so along the burn side trail two displaying Dippers, easily handling the flow of water, offered excellent and close up views. The white breasts showing particularly well in the rather dim light. Another good sighting was that of Nuthatch high in the trees, although the bird was quite mobile. Greenfinch, Wren, Common Buzzard and Dunnock added to the day list, before we returned to the car park, and a lucky few also noted a Grey Wagtail flying downstream under the bridges. Moving on the short distance to Scone Palace, the hunt for Hawfinches started near the palace with the group scouring the tops of the huge limes. We had had a tip from Scott Patterson who offers guided walks for the SOC that the birds had been seen in this area recently. It wasn't long

Nuthatch: Dave Heeley

before one Hawfinch had been spotted in the tree tops but it did not stay long. Moving along Lime Avenue, we had good views (if brief) of Nuthatch, another Hawfinch near the archway, three Tit species, Song Thrush and Mistle Thrush. The pair of Mistle Thrushes were gathering moss, presumably for nesting material. There was quite a lot of movement of groups of small

birds high up, but none could be identified easily. A Tawny Owl was noted by some, and we returned along the road parallel to Lime Avenue. Distant views were had of another active pair of Mistle Thrushes, very active groups of Jackdaws, and to our delight a group of three Hawfinches. These offered rather better views than the birds seen earlier, but not for long. The heavens opened and we experienced a cold downpour that brought things to an end, as we opted to call it a day and get back to the cars. On the way, two Greylag Geese were seen in the fields, bringing the species total to 35. An enjoyable morning of birding, and a welcome social event meeting up with fellow SOC members, in many cases for the first time in nearly three years.

Dave Heeley



A ghostly sight in the rain at Scone Palace: Erica Hollis

Fife Branch funding for local bird initiatives

Every year we like to give money raised by Fife Branch to support different initiatives.

I want to know where you think we should give some of our funds this year.

Last year we offered grants for local students with a Fife connection to support their research, travel to conferences, etc. No-one applied, but this offer remains open.

In recent years we have given money for the Kilwinning development and to Fife Coast and Countryside for food for their bird feeders.

Should we give another grant to either of these groups, or do you want to suggest another initiative?

Please let me know (fifechair@the-soc.org.uk) by Friday 14th October so that the committee can decide.

NB Further grants may be made later.

Avian Flu

Sadly, this topic has dominated birding news this summer and I know many members continue to be concerned as summer visitors depart and we see wildfowl arriving. I asked SOC Birding and science officer Mark Lewis if he had any thoughts:



“Avian Influenza continues to impact birds, even though the seabird colonies that were the most visible pools of the disease have largely dispersed. As such, it is still important to remain vigilant, and report suspected cases when you encounter them, in line with the current Government advice, which can be found here: <https://www.the-soc.org.uk/news/avian-flu-what-can-we-do>. Do not touch any dead birds without adequate protection (e.g. latex gloves) and keep pets away from suspected cases too, as there are cases of the disease being transferred to mammals. There are no listed cases in small birds that habitually use feeders such as tits, sparrows and finches on the Government’s website, and it can be important to offer birds food in the winter, especially during hard conditions, so on balance it’s still a good idea to feed the birds over the winter. It’s possible that the disease could spread to these birds however, so if you are feeding birds please keep abreast of the news and be prepared to take feeders down if evidence suggests that feeders are facilitating the spread of the disease.”

Tree Sparrow on a bird feeder: Elizabeth Irwin

Mark Lewis

NB Defra have also just released detailed guidance. It refers to England and Wales but contains some useful information. You can find it on their website: *Mitigation Strategy for avian influenza in wild birds in England and Wales*; 31st August 2022.

Elizabeth Irwin

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS): low tide counts in the Firth of Tay

During last winter, a team of 15 experienced volunteers undertook monthly counts of wildfowl and waders at low tide in the Firth of Tay, following on from similar counts in previous winters. Between November 2021 and February 2022, all waterfowl along the whole firth between Mugdrum and the outer firth boundary were counted. This covered an area of 110 square kilometres of which about half is intertidal. Most counts were made within a 3–5 day period around a suitable designated weekend. The rationale of low tide counts allows this spread, since the counts are intended to highlight the importance of each sector to feeding birds rather than total numbers across the firth, although the latter can be useful.

The densest wader flocks were close to the main roost sites in the outer firth and off Invergowrie. The most abundant wader species was the Oystercatcher (maximum 1442 in December) followed by Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew and Dunlin. The largest concentrations of feeding waders along the northern foreshore were between Barry Sands and Broughty Ferry in the outer firth and from Dundee Airport to Templehall in the inner firth. Along the south shore, only the outer firth hosted large numbers of waders, with the majority being east of Tayport.

Wildfowl were mainly concentrated in the Mugdrum area and in the outer firth, where some commute from St Andrews Bay. Cormorants, Grey Herons and Little Egrets were also counted, but gull counts were optional. The maximum count of egrets was six, the first time they have figured in low tide counts.

The table below shows the approximate number of waders counted each month, plus equivalent counts during the two previous low tide counts this century.

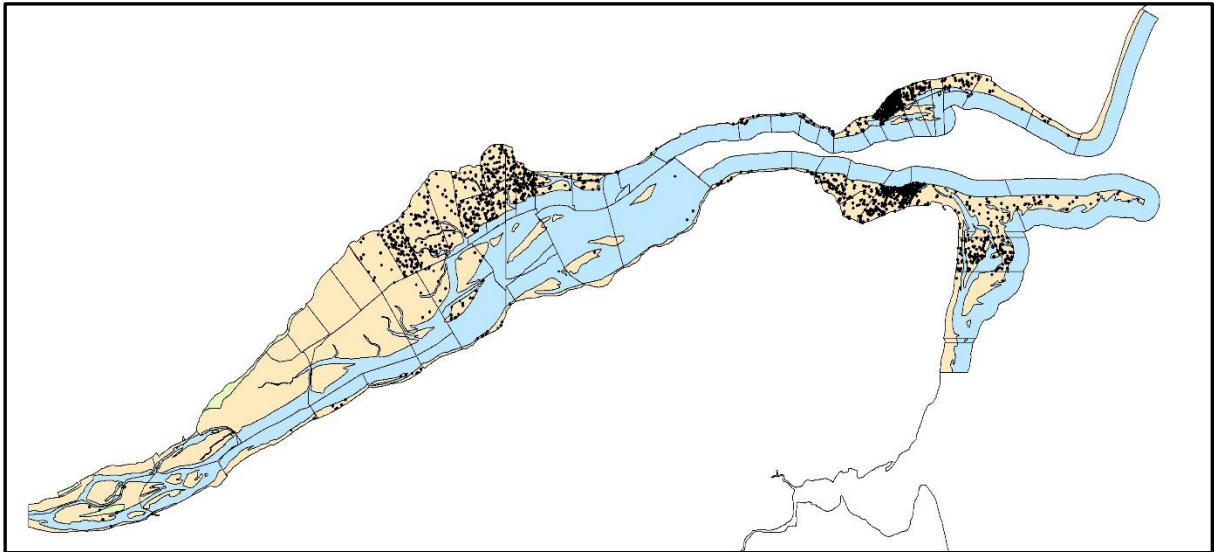
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
2021/22	3280	4208	3439	3559
2012/13	2765	3398	3209	3719
2006/07	4662	4165	4665	2719

When monthly counts at high tide are compared with those at low tide, the differences are much greater than would be expected in counts at most only one or two weeks apart in each month, supporting the view that there is considerable interchange with other east coast sites. Most waders feeding in the inner firth are located along the north (Perthshire) shore. However, some species seem to have abandoned these feeding sites for those in the outer firth, notably Dunlin. The maximum count of this species in the inner firth was 50 in the latest winter, compared to over 3000 during similar counts in the 1990s. Other significant losses concern Lapwing and Golden Plover, which also feed on agricultural land but used to frequent the firth in their hundreds. These two plovers have declined in the firth to almost nil this century.

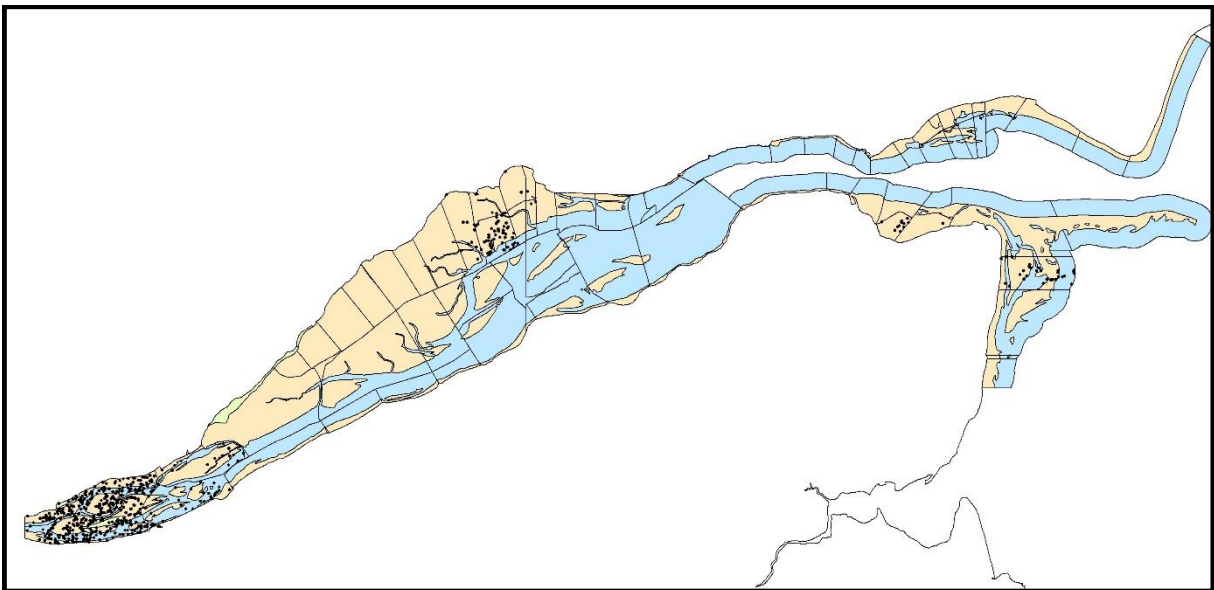
Counts of wildfowl are influenced by the difficulty in viewing distant ducks in mid channel and have shown marked variations between winters. Eiders, Red-breasted Mergansers, Long-tailed Ducks and Common Scoters also commute between the outer firth and St Andrews Bay and therefore vary in number. Although the Eider is normally the most abundant wildfowl species, many move out of sight beyond the outer firth and previous counts exceeding 12,000 were not repeated this winter. Goose numbers fluctuate according to their movements from inland feeding sites. The most abundant other duck using the firth was the Teal (maximum 445 in January), followed by Wigeon, Mallard and Goldeneye. Cormorants also feature in considerable numbers, with a maximum of 265 counted in November.

Two examples of the dot-density maps produced by the WeBS office are shown below. Intertidal areas are shown in orange. Within each sector (outlined), black dots are randomly placed but show the concentrations of each species.

Oystercatcher: low tide distribution, winter 2021-22



Teal: low tide distribution, winter 2021-22

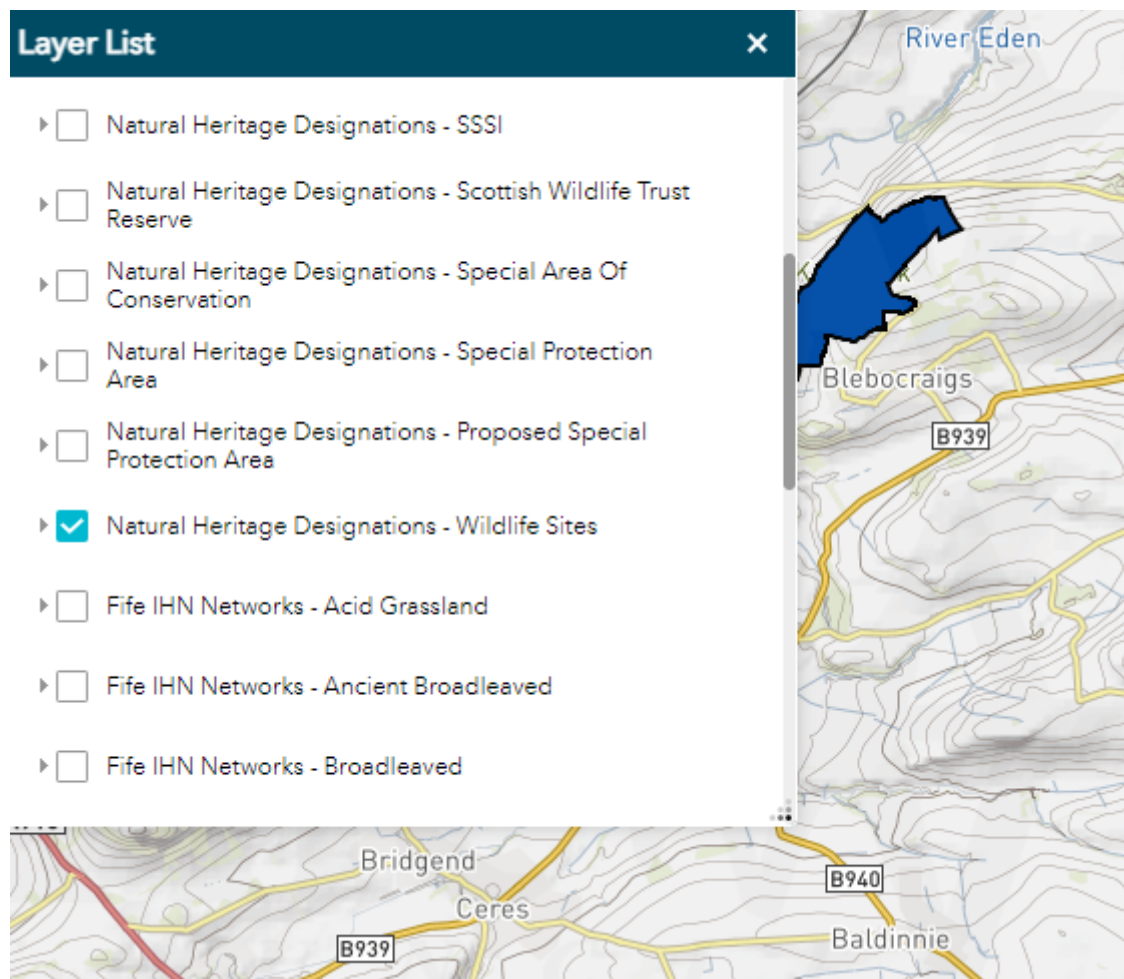


Norman Elkins

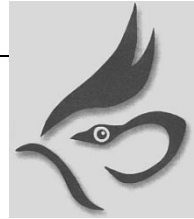
Paul Blackburn, BTO Regional Rep, has asked for more bird records from listed wildlife sites in Fife. Please see below a link to see them

“Here's the link to the Natural Heritage map in Fife . To view Listed Wildlife Sites, you need to ensure that the Wildlife Sites Tick box is checked

[Natural Heritage Designations & Integrated Habitat Networks \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)



**Minutes of the AGM held on
Wednesday 13th April 2022
Via Zoom**



1. **Apologies:** Apologies were received from Jean Stewart and Erica Hollis..
2. **Minutes of 2021 AGM:** The Minutes of the 2021 AGM were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, proposed by Elizabeth Irwin and seconded by Norman Elkins.
3. **Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising.
4. **Chairman's report:**
Elizabeth Irwin looked back over a year in which branch activities had continued to be affected by the pandemic.

Despite this, membership rose to 166 from 155 in 2021, an encouraging development which shows the interest there is in what the club can offer, across all levels of birdwatching expertise.

Our meeting programme continued on Zoom and the benefit of 'clustering' with Tayside branch continued to be positive with up to 40 – 50 members logging in to each meeting. The standard of the presentations was again very high. Although many will have missed the social aspect of face-to-face meetings, others will have enjoyed being able to join in without concerns about having to travel. Any plans for a return to meetings in St Andrews Town Hall possibly later this year are on hold as work continues on the building and it is not known when it will re-open. If we are to start up meetings again, a new venue would need to be found.

We were able to hold a number of outings once again and although a combination of hides not being open for use and poor weather affected some plans, we enjoyed trips to Ferryhills, Fife Ness and Kingsbarns, the Angus coast and Scone Palace.

Elizabeth thanked the members of the committee for their input and support throughout the year.

5. **Accounts:** John Irwin presented the branch accounts and reported that with no money coming in and no outgoings, the current account balance at the end of March remained at a healthy £1459.28.

He noted that the offer of small grants to students had not received any applications to date but remains open.

The accounts were approved, proposed by Jeremy Greenwood, seconded by Andrew Riches.

6. **Committee and Future Plans for the Branch:**
Three members of the current committee, Elizabeth Irwin, Caroline Gordon and Rob Armstrong are standing down from their roles. Elizabeth thanked Caroline and Rob for their contribution to the branch. The vacancies have been publicised to members but no one has expressed interest. The committee has therefore been looking at the way ahead for the branch.

We have been working on a survey of members with Jane Allison at HQ. With only a minority of members actively participating in meetings or outings, it's hoped that the survey will flag up what members want from their membership and possible issues around participation in branch activities and may also identify new opportunities. No results were available for the AGM but once we have them, a Newsletter will be sent out detailing what they tell us.

The current committee is proposing that the branch continues for now with an 'operations committee' rather than the existing formal structure. This will organise and coordinate events and help with disseminating information about the talks programme and consider other activities that may be identified from the members' survey. The post of Treasurer will be maintained and John Irwin has agreed to continue in this role while other current committee members are also willing to remain involved. It is hoped this will build momentum within the branch.

There was a useful discussion of how participation by members could be increased, including comment on the approach taken by NE Scotland branch with a new programme of activities, and publicising the branch locally both online and in local press to attract new members. Elizabeth noted however that organising additional activities does depend on the willingness of volunteers to give their time beyond that already given by current committee members.

With regard to indoor meetings, it has been confirmed that from the autumn a programme of monthly online talks for all SOC members across the country is being introduced and organised by HQ. Branches can organise additional face-to-face events with local speakers if they wish. For Fife, for now, it is not intended to do this.

Andrew Riches thanked Elizabeth on behalf of the branch for her contribution as Chair for the last 5 years and before that as Treasurer and Vice Chair, and also as a member of SOC Council.

7. AOCB:

No other matters were raised and the meeting closed at 8.00pm.

What's This Bird? Answer: A Shoebill on the shores of Lake Uganda.

Fife Bird Sightings:

April 2022

A White-fronted Goose was at Pitlessie (9th), Barnacle Geese passed Fife Ness on 27th, Garganeys continued in St Andrews (pair to 2nd) and at Cameron Reservoir (drake to 6th). A Quail was calling at Kilmany. Red-throated Divers were at Dysart, Kinghorn, Lower Largo and Fife Ness (17 on 10th), Black-throated Divers were at Dysart, Lower Largo (six on 9th) and past Fife Ness. Red-necked, Black-necked and Slavonian Grebes were noted at Lower Largo, and Fife Ness logged 23 Manx Shearwaters on 24th. Two Common Cranes passed over Loch Glow (18th). Ospreys were widespread with records from Golden Loch, Letham Pools, Dysart, Lindores Loch, Coble Shore, Eden Estuary, Ferry Hills and Kinghorn (three on 9th). A Red Kite was seen over Outhead. Marsh Harriers visited Luthrie (F on 2nd), Letham Pools (16th) and Coble Shore with three continuing on Mugdrum Island. Kilrenny and Shell Bay held Merlins. A Spotted Craik was a rare sight at Letham Pools for just one day on 20th. Golden Plovers were on the Lomond Hills (35 on 1st) and at Crail airfield (100 on 13th). Fife Ness held Purple Sandpipers. Wood Sandpipers were noted at Luthrie and Holl Reservoir. Green Sandpipers were briefly at Luthrie and Lochore Meadows; Whimbrels passed Fife Ness (10th) and Ruddons Point. Letham Pools held small numbers of Ruff (25th -). Fife Ness logged Great and Arctic Skuas on 24th. An adult Little Gull in summer plumage was at Letham on 15th. Short-eared Owls were on the Lomond Hills, at Cameron Reservoir (two) and on the coast at Caipie. A House Martin was recorded at Lindores Loch on 15th. White Wagtails were at several coastal sites from 10th to 21st. A Yellow Wagtail (sp) flew over St Andrews (27th). Wheatears appeared on the Lomond Hills and eight coastal sites and Seafeld held a singing Lesser Whitethroat. Grasshopper Warblers were heard reeling at Kilmany, Letham Pools, Rossie Bog, Cameron Reservoir, Kinghorn, Blairhall and Loch Fitty. A Spotted Flycatcher passed through Kilminning (30th). Twite were still present at Boghall (70) and Cellardyke continued to hold Corn Buntings with 21 logged on 4th.

May 2022

Letham pools held Wood Sandpipers, Common Sandpipers, Temminck's Stints, a Jack Snipe, Dunlins, Little Ringed Plovers, Ringed Plovers, Black-tailed Godwits (23 on 21st), a Ruff, Little Gulls, drake Pochards, drake Garganeys, a Barnacle Goose, Whimbrels, a White Wagtail, Ospreys (over) and a Marsh Harrier. Fife Ness logs included Great, Arctic and Long-tailed Skuas, Manx Shearwaters, Red-breasted mergansers, Red-

throated, Black-throated and Great Northern Divers, Common and Velvet Scoters, Little Gulls, Red Knot, Purple Sandpipers, Sanderlings, Whimbrels and a Black Tern. A Barnacle Goose was at Angle Park, a drake Mandarin Duck was briefly at Morton Lochs (22nd), drake Garganeys were at The Wilderness and Morton Lochs, and a drake Ring-necked Duck visited the The Wilderness on 21st. A female Scaup was on Kilconquhar Loch; a Quail was calling at Kingsbarns. 69 Manx Shearwaters passed Kinghorn on 14th. Ospreys were seen at Mountcastle and continued in the Eden Estuary. A Red Kite was over Auchtermuchty and a Hen Harrier came in off the sea at Kinghorn (6th). Hobbies were noted at Kilmany, Kilminning and Tentsmuir NNR. A Temminck's Stint showed at The Wilderness possibly relocated from Letham pools. The Eden Estuary and Tentsmuir Point NNR held Curlew Sandpipers, Wood Sandpipers were at Luthrie and Holl Reservoir, and Luthrie floods also hosted Common Sandpipers. Kinghorn logged Pomarine, Arctic and Long-tailed Skuas Kinghorn, and a Long-tailed Skua was also sighted at West Weymss. An Iceland Gull was in the roost at Leven river mouth, a Roseate Tern was at Kinghorn and Black Guillemots were seen at Pathhead and Ruddons Point. Short-eared Owls showed on the Lomond Hills (18th), and one came in off the sea at Crail. Kingsbarns had a Ring Ouzel. Garden Warblers were at Kilminning and Balcomie, with Lesser Whitethroats and Spotted Flycatchers also there. A Hawfinch was at Rossie House (22nd), and a male Common Rosefinch was seen for a sort period at Kilminning on 15th.

June 2022

Letham Pools held Black-tailed Godwits (20 on 14th), Green Sandpipers, Common Sandpipers, Ringed Plovers and Dunlins. Ruddons Point logs included Manx Shearwaters (140 on 15th), Red-throated Divers, Grey Plovers, Ravens, Arctic Skuas and Mediterranean Gulls. Fife Ness recorded Arctic Skuas, Manx Shearwaters, Common Scoters, Arctic and Sandwich Terns. Kinghorn Loch held 11 Pochard on 8th, a Quail was calling on Norman's Law 9 - 10th, 180 Manx Shearwaters passed Anstruther in 20 minutes on 21st. A female Marsh Harrier was noted at Crail (20th) with a Merlin at Anstruther on the same date. Balcomie Bay held two Whimbrels. Mediterranean Gulls were at Leven, Anstruther, Balcomie and Kinghorn. Roseate Terns were at Kinghorn on 11th and 12th. A Short-eared Owl was at Crail, a Black Redstart was at Fife Ness (9th) and a Spotted Flycatcher was at Kilminning.

July 2022

Letham Pools held White-rumped and Pectoral Sandpipers 19th - 20th. Other species there included Common Sandpipers, Snipe, Greenshanks, Black-tailed Godwits, and Dunlins. A Bonaparte's Gull was at East Weymss 22nd - 23rd. A Cory's Shearwater was off Kinghorn from 25th to 29th. East Weymss roost held 41 Mediterranean Gulls on 29th. Kinghorn logged Manx Shearwaters (60 on 27th) Common Sandpipers, Mediterranean Gulls, Little Gulls, Arctic Terns, Roseate Terns, Great Skuas, Pomarine Skuas, Whimbrels and Common Scoters. Fife Ness logs included Sooty Shearwaters, Manx Shearwaters (268 on 27th), Storm Petrels (27th) Arctic and Great Skuas, Arctic, Common and Sandwich Terns, Mediterranean Gulls, Common Scoters, Goosanders and Whimbrels. Four Pale-bellied Brent Geese were at Tayport, 50 Velvet Scoters were off East Weymss on 29th, a Red-necked Grebe was at Anstruther and Manx Shearwaters were noted past Dysart, East Weymss, Anstruther and Ruddons Point. Coble Shore held a Little Ringed Plover. A Wood Sandpiper was at Kilrenny Mill and Green Sandpipers were at the Wilderness and Guardbridge. Whimbrels were seen at East Weymss, Tayport, Eden Estuary, and Outhead (eight on 28th). Dysart logged a Long-tailed Skua on 17th. Little Gulls were at Edenside (18 on 11th) and Tentsmuir, a Whinchat was at Outhead and Grasshopper Warblers were heard at Kilminning and Kilrenny Mill.

August 2022

Kilrenny Mill had a White-rumped Sandpiper (5th); a Honey Buzzard was over Inverkeithing on 27th; an American Golden Plover was at Coble Shore (22nd); a Pectoral Sandpiper was at the Eden Estuary Centre (12th); Guardbridge had a Spoonbill. East Weymss held 93 Mediterranean Gulls on 25th (a Scottish record). Fife Ness monthly totals included a Fea's Petrel (20th), three Great Shearwaters, 66 Sooty Shearwaters, 1765

Manx Shearwaters (245 on 17th), one Balearic Shearwater (11th), 65 Arctic Skuas, 27 Great Skuas, five Pomarine Skuas, two Long-tailed Skuas, seven Black Terns, six Arctic Terns, one Roseate Tern, nine Red-throated Divers, one Black-throated Diver, one Mediterranean Gull, 13 Little Gulls, 140 Whimbrels (71 on 18th) and 19 Knot. Letham Pools held Back-tailed Godwits (incl. a few ssp *islandica*), Little Ringed Plovers, Ringed Plovers, Dunlin, Ruff, Common Snipe (20 on 29th), Greenshanks (seven on 30th), Redshanks, Green and Common Sandpipers, a Grey Wagtail, a juvenile Yellow Wagtail, Arctic Terns, Grey Partridges, a Whinchat and a Hobby (20th). Kinghorn logged Manx Shearwaters, Great Northern, Red-throated and Black-throated Divers, Arctic, Long-tailed, Pomarine and Great Skuas, Mediterranean and Little Gulls, Black-tailed Godwits, Whimbrels, Golden Plovers, Knot, Greenshanks, Red-necked Grebes, and Little and Arctic Terns. Vis mig at Ferry Hills on 25th included 146 Tree Pipits and 176 Meadow Pipits. A Whooper Swan was on Cameron Reservoir (8th), a Ruddy Shelduck was in Dalgety Bay (20th) and 30 Pochard were noted at Loch Gelly. Guardbridge held 14 Little Egret on 1st. Ospreys were at the Eden Estuary, Tayport and Ballo Reservoir; Red Kites were at Newport, Dairsie and Ferry Hills; Marsh Harriers were at Dunbog, Wilderness, Kilmany and Caiply; Kittocks Den had a Hobby, and a Merlin was at Wilderness. A Little Ringed Plover showed at Kilrenny Mill, and there were Ringed Plovers at Ballo Reservoir, Wilderness and Loch Gelly; Green Sandpipers at Ballo Reservoir, Angle Park, Wilderness, Morton Lochs, Lochore Meadows and Ferry Hills (over); Common Sandpipers at Ballo Reservoir, Ruddons Point, Cameron Reservoir, Eden Estuary and Loch Gelly and Spotted Redshanks at Cameron Reservoir and Guardbridge. Whimbrels on passage were noted at Seafeld, Dysart, Ruddons Point, Boarhills (54 on 13th), Eden Estuary, Balcomie Beach and Ferry Hills. Pomarine Skuas were logged at Dysart, Dalgety Bay, Burntisland and Ferry Hills. Little Gulls were at Dysart, Tayport, Outhead and Dalgety Bay; Mediterranean Gulls were at Dysart, Kirckaldy, Pathhead, Guardbridge, Edenside, Anstruther, Kilrenny Mill, Kingsbarns and Kinghorn. Kingsbarns held Little Terns. A good showing of Black Terns included records from Dysart, Outhead, Ruddons Point, Dalgety Bay, Pettycur Sands and Burntisland. Balcomie Beach had a Yellow Wagtail (sp), there were Grasshopper Warblers at Outhead (13th) and Cameron Reservoir. Spotted Flycatchers were noted at Cameron Reservoir and Kilminning, with Pied Flycatchers at Kilminning and Boarhills,

Sightings should be sent to David Heeley at dw.heeley@btinternet.com or 50 High Street, Newburgh, Fife KY14 6AQ.)

The SOC is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation Reg. No SC009859