



Skomer NNR Bird Report 2010



South and West Wales
De a Gorllewin Cymru

Compiled by Chris Taylor

Cover photo by Ben Dean

SKOMER ISLAND N.N.R. BIRD REPORT 2010

The island was inhabited between 1st March and 29th November inclusive.

A total of 146 species were recorded in 2010 (145 in 2009 and 2008) including the following.

First

Red-flanked Blue Tail 25 October

Bobolink 8 and 11 October.

Pink-footed Goose 3rd Record (last 2007)

Dartford Warbler 2nd Record (last 1971)

Woodlark 11th record (last 1999)

Generally seabird populations and productivity were healthy except kittiwake (lower population and productivity). The median laying dates in 2009 were all early whereas in 2010 the date were back within normal Skomer limits.

Systematic List

PINK FOOTED GOOSE

Four flew east on 1st March

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

Sixteen on 6 and 7 March and 8 April.

CANADA GOOSE

16 pairs raised 27 young. On eggs by 6 April, first young on 3 May. Large flocks begin to form 4 September and present through the rest of the year..

Monthly maximum:

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
35	31	51	95	40	25	401	510	P

SHELDUCK

Two pairs had duckling but no survived to fledging. One family seen on the east tip of the neck – fortune unknown. Not seen in September (one exception on 18)

EURASIAN WIGEON

Occasional records not exceeding four through March and April. Four 18 September.

EURASIAN TEAL

Confirmed breeding with unconfirmed nest found near to South Pond on 18 May, chick seen 2 June.

Monthly maxima:

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
21	11	3	2	6	4	14	63	80

MALLARD

At least five pairs bred but no young were raised to fledging. First ducklings 5 May.

Monthly maxima:

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
8	13	6	9	6	6	5	36	33

NORTHERN SHOVELER

Breeding not confirmed.

Monthly maxima:

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
10	12	6	3	2	2	10	17	8

POCHARD

Two 10 June.

TUFTED DUCK

Two 22 May. One 14 May. One 8 October

COMMON SCOTER

Thirty flew west past Garland Stone 27 July. Three on 7 and 28 August. Three 18 September. Twenty-nine on 25 September. Six 29 September. Eighty 10 October. One 16 October.

PHEASANT

Present throughout, with an increase noted in October and November.

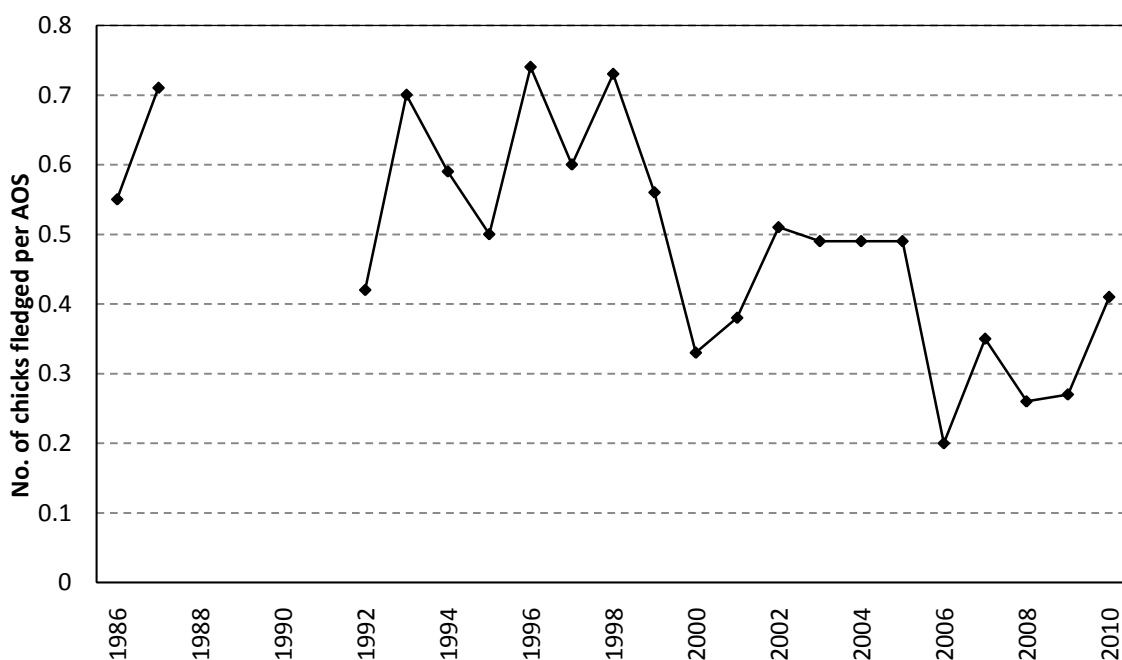
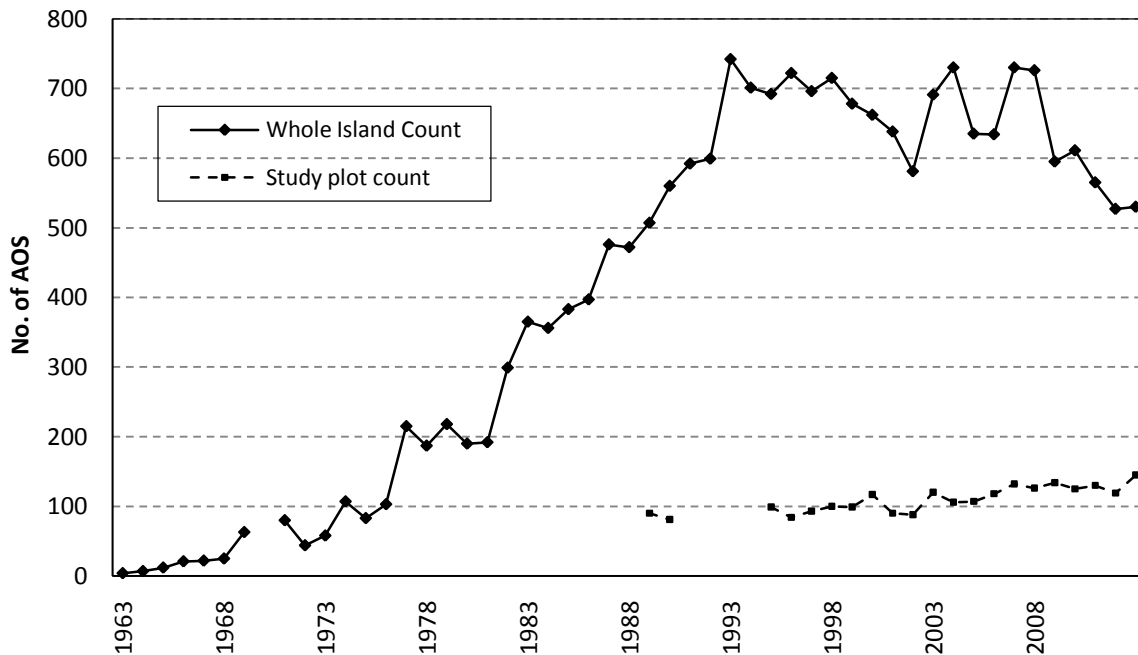
GREAT NORTHERN DIVER

Four 2 November

NORTHERN FULMAR

A mean total of 530 Apparently Occupied Sites (AOS) was counted, which 3AOSs more than 2009 but following a general decline since 1987 – a 10.72% decline over the last five years. The mean breeding success was 0.41 young per AOS is a significant increase on 2009 (0.27). The first egg was recorded on 22 May and the first chick was seen on 6 July. The last few Fulmar were still on the cliffs in early September but had all left by 9 September, a few were seen offshore for the next few days. First returnee seen in North Haven Occupying cliffs from 2 November.

Northern fulmar breeding numbers on Skomer Island 1963-2010. And Northern fulmar breeding success on Skomer Island 1986-87 and 1992-2010.



MANX SHEARWATER

First individual heard on the night of 15 March. First young ready to fledge on 13 August. Numbers declined by 24 September, young still being seen occasionally at night by the end of October. Manx Shearwater study plots on Skomer suggested a large decrease in population (65% on last year). Over the years there has been a significant rise in the numbers of responses though this rise has not been steady and the between-year variation within individual plots has sometime been surprisingly large. Last year's responses (1181) was 30% higher than the number in 2008, an increase hardly likely to be explained by a population rise in a species with as low as reproductive rate as a shearwater, so a reduction in the number of responses was to be expected. This decrease is not supported on other study birds on the island (the Isthmus). Breeding success 0.88 (good year). Adult survival rate (2008) 78.11%, overall an increasing trend.

BALEARIC SHEARWATER

One 29 August

EUROPEAN STORM PETREL

First recorded 6th May. No survey or monitoring work was carried out on Storm Petrels this year. Several visits were made to the North Haven colony to observe the birds and between two and a dozen were seen on each occasion.

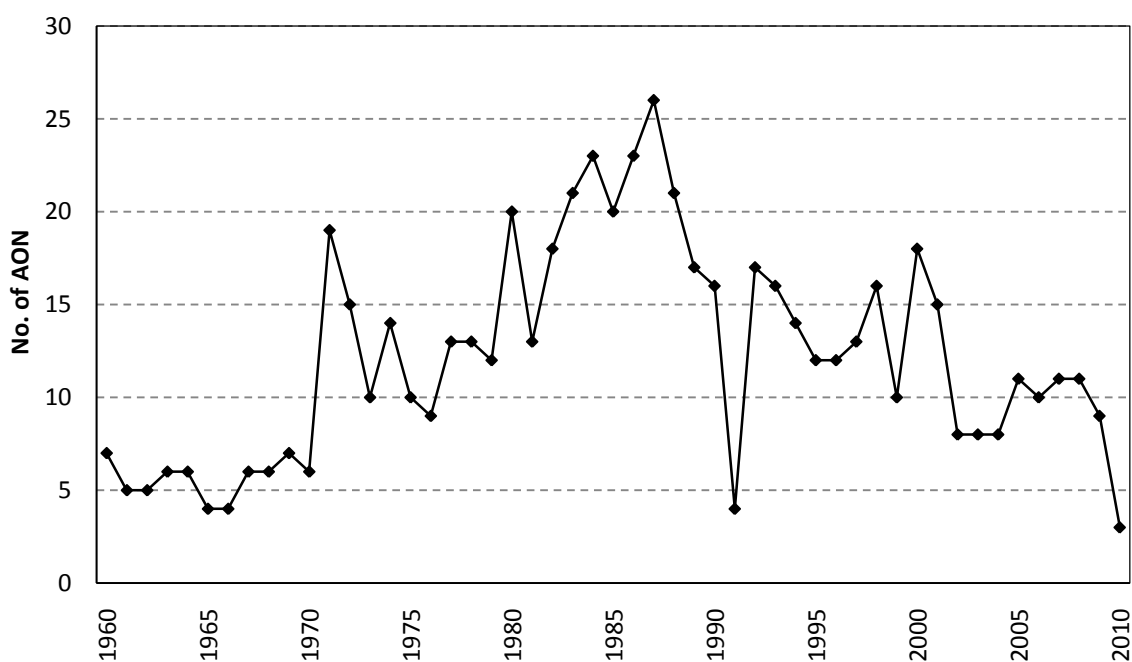
GANNET

Present throughout the year

GREAT CORMORANT

The number of breeding great cormorant on Skomer has fluctuated at a rather low level over the past four decades. In 2010 only three pairs were seen on the South side of the Mew Stone. As a result productivity was difficult to monitor. No pairs nested on the north side.

Great Cormorant Apparently Occupied Nests on Skomer 1960 - 2010

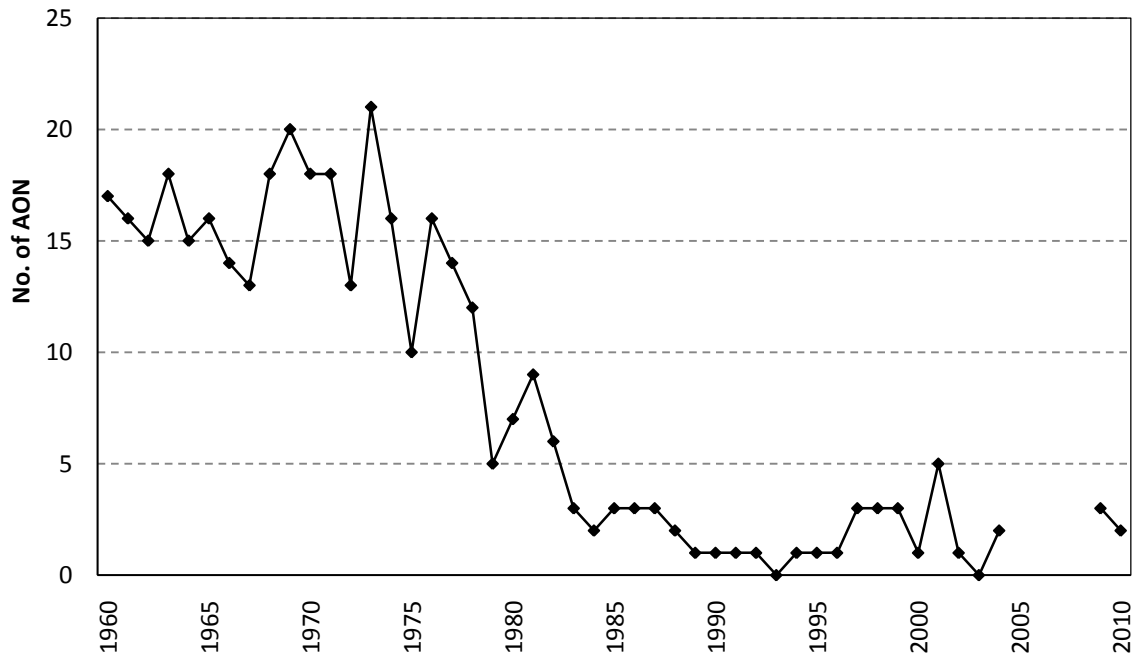


EUROPEAN SHAG

Nest building observed on 8 April.

Two or three pairs nested on the north coast. Middlesholm 55 pairs monitored by Pems. Ringing group No consistent monitoring of the breeding success of European shags on Skomer took place in 2010, but young were seen during June cliff counts. On nearby Middleholm there were 52 Apparently Occupied Nests. 2.42 chicks per AON were raised (South Pembrokeshire Ringing Group, SPRG).

European shag breeding numbers on Skomer Island 1960-2010 (not Middleholm).



LITTLE EGRET

One north pond 23 August

GREY HERON

Two flew over 2 May. Two 1 September, One 2, 5, 7, 14 September.

OSPREY

One flew East on 28 May.

RED KITE

One 15 March, 19 April

HEN HARRIER

One or two birds present at different times

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
10	14	1	0	0	0	0	7	11

MARSH HARRIER

One 4 May.

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK

No. of bird days in month

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
2	10	2	0	0	0	8	9	13

GOSHAWK

One seen on 27 April. First for Skomer.

COMMON BUZZARD

Five nests fledged three young. Pairs of buzzard were at South Castle, North Castle, South Stream outlet, Bull Hole and Wick Basin.

Groups of 8 regularly spotted in March, April. Groups of three or four in May and June. One or two seen regularly in July – October. Twelve regularly seen in November.

KESTREL

One or two present through March and April. One seen regularly in May. No further sightings until 15 August, then daily, including five 1 March. Up to three seen most days in November.

MERLIN

One 6 March, 14 15 22 April, 15 and 16 May. One 4, 11, 16, 17, 18 and 25 October. One 3, 7, 17 and 21 November.

PEREGRINE

Three pairs of Peregrine nested at Protheroe's Dock, Double Cliff and around the corner from High Cliff. Two young fledged from Double Cliff, two from the site near High Cliff but no fledglings were ever seen from the pair on Protheroe's Dock.

Present throughout the year, most active during the breeding season.

WATER RAIL

Present in low numbers (one or two) on 7 days in March, 3 days in April, 2 days in May, 2 days in June. One heard 20 June. 17 bird days in September including thirteen 31 September. 31 bird days in October including fourteen on 11 October. Up to fourteen regularly counted in November.

MOORHEN

Present all year round. Moorhen chicks present on all ponds. First chicks 20 May.

COOT

One on North Pond 18 August. One Moorey Mere 16 October.

OYSTERCATCHER

42 Apparently Occupied Territories. High Tide roost at High Cliff used throughout year but particularly out of the breeding season. Chicks recorded on 4 June.

Monthly maxima:

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
168	56	60	P	P	P	P (28)	P	120

RINGED PLOVER

One 22 and 23 May. Two 26 – 29 August

GOLDEN PLOVER

One bird seen on 27 and 29 April. One 5 May. One 7, 12, 15-18, 25 October.

LAPWING

One carcass found on 24 April. One 1 September. One 8 November

CURLEW SANDPIPER

One 12 October

PURPLE SANDPIPER

Twelve 13 May at South Castle

DUNLIN

Up to three birds seen on 4 days in April. Up to five on 7 days in May, usually one. One 25 – 29 August. One 4 – 7 and 21 September. Six on 30 and 31 October. 7 bird days in November.

SNIPE

Up to three birds seen at a time in March and April. Maximum four in October. Six in November

Number of observed bird days

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
15	5	2	0	0	2	6	20	19

JACK SNIPE

One 15 October.

WOODCOCK

Two 31 October. Up to three on five bird days in November.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT

One 7 July.

WHIMBREL

Seen on 7 days in April (maximum eight). 7 Days in May (Max. three). 2 days in August. 5 days in September. One 21 and 27 November.

CURLEW

Three broods of Curlews were recorded, with only two young surviving in total. Chicks seen 13 May.

Monthly maxima:

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
15	7	6	6	6	10	24	P	29

REDSHANK

Two 26 July, one 30 July. One 13 August.

GREEN SANDPIPER

One 8 October

COMMON SANDPIPER

One observed on 21 April. Three 13 July, one 14, 26, 28 and 30 July. 7 bird days through August (max. 7). 5 bird days in September (one bird each)

TURNSTONE

Up to five present on 6 bird days in March.

Up to six present on 3 days in April

Up to three present on 4 days in May.

Four 21 August. Three present on 3 days in September. 7 bird days in October usually numbering five. 18 bird days in November, max. seven.

ARCTIC SKUA

One 17 May. One 23 August.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL

Two juveniles 2 August. One 12 and 24 October.

BLACK-HEADED GULL

Up to four birds seen 23, 24, 26 and 31 May. One 13 July. Twelve 1 September, three 2 September. Two 8 and 11 October. Five on 12 October. Two 15 October. Eight 20 October. Three 22 October. Sixty 27 October. Irregular sightings in November.

COMMON GULL

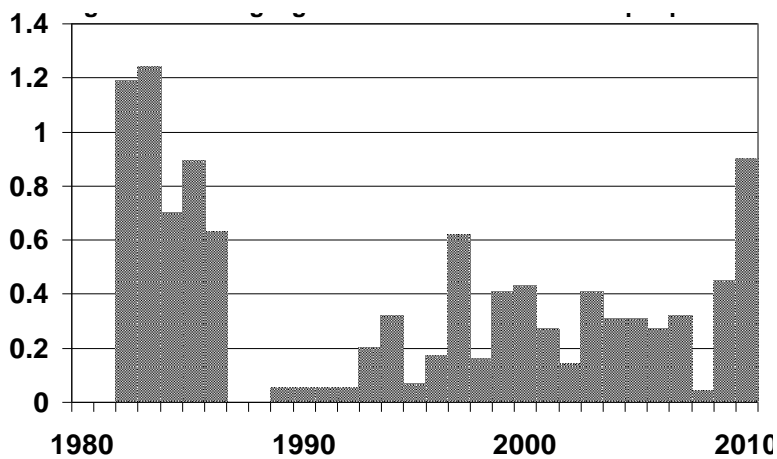
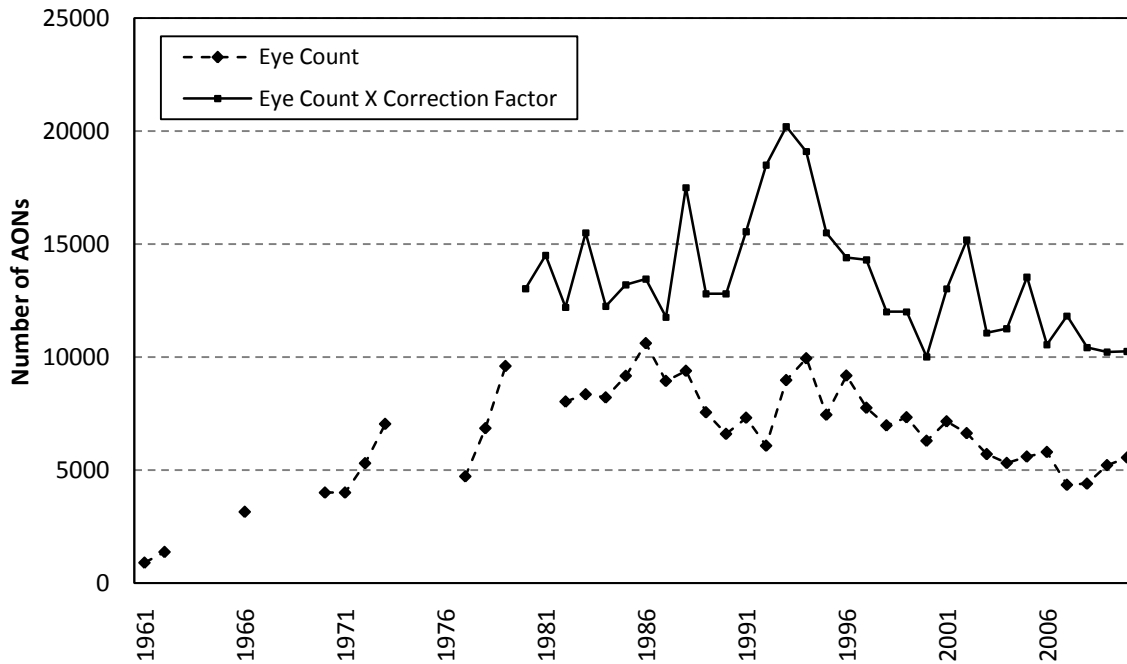
Two 12 November, one 14 November, three 18 November and one 26 November.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

Breeding success has increased for the second year in a row (0.89 in 2010). The population show is stable on the last few years (10249).

Sighted upon wardens return but not see after 12 November.

Lesser black-backed gull breeding numbers on Skomer Island 1961-2010 and Number of fledgling Lesser Black-backed Gulls per pair.

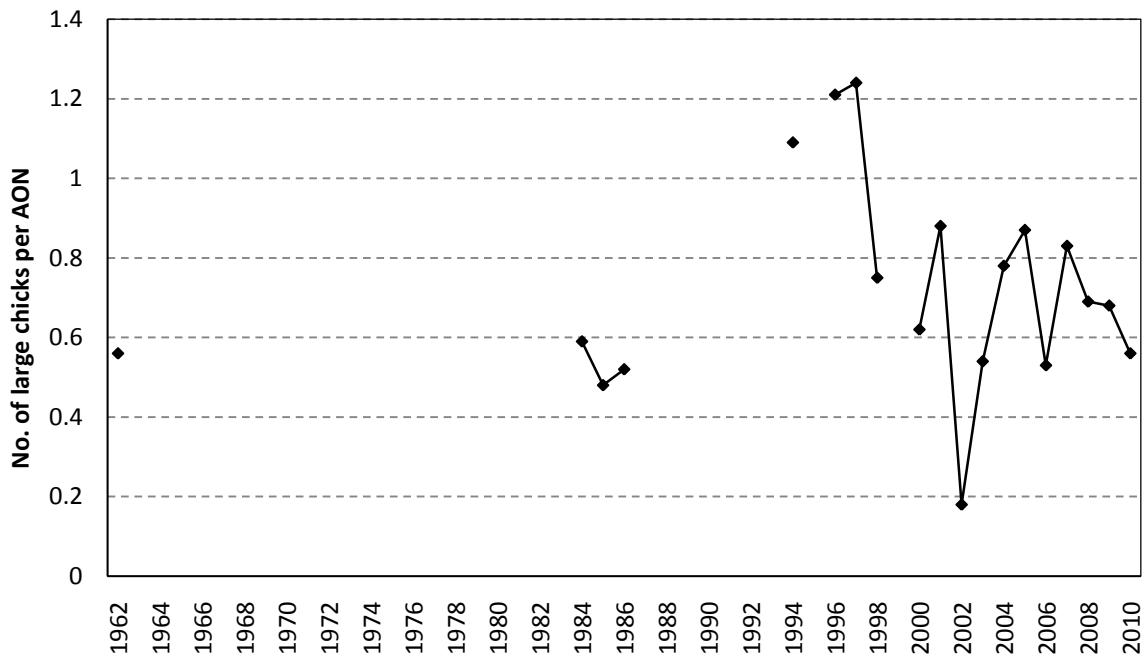
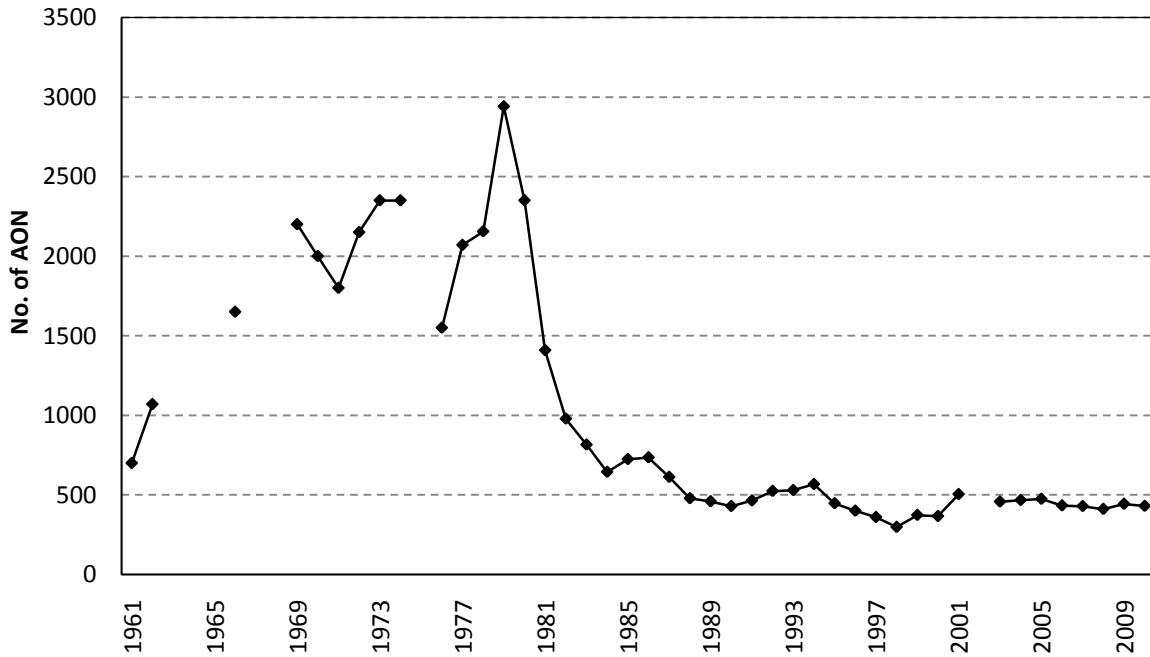


HERRING GULL

A total of 431 Apparently Occupied Nests were observed in 2010. This has been a similar figure for the past 10 years after a dramatic decline in the 1980s.

251 of these were coastal nesting birds with the remainder nesting inland (180). This meant 58% of Herring Gulls nested on the coast.

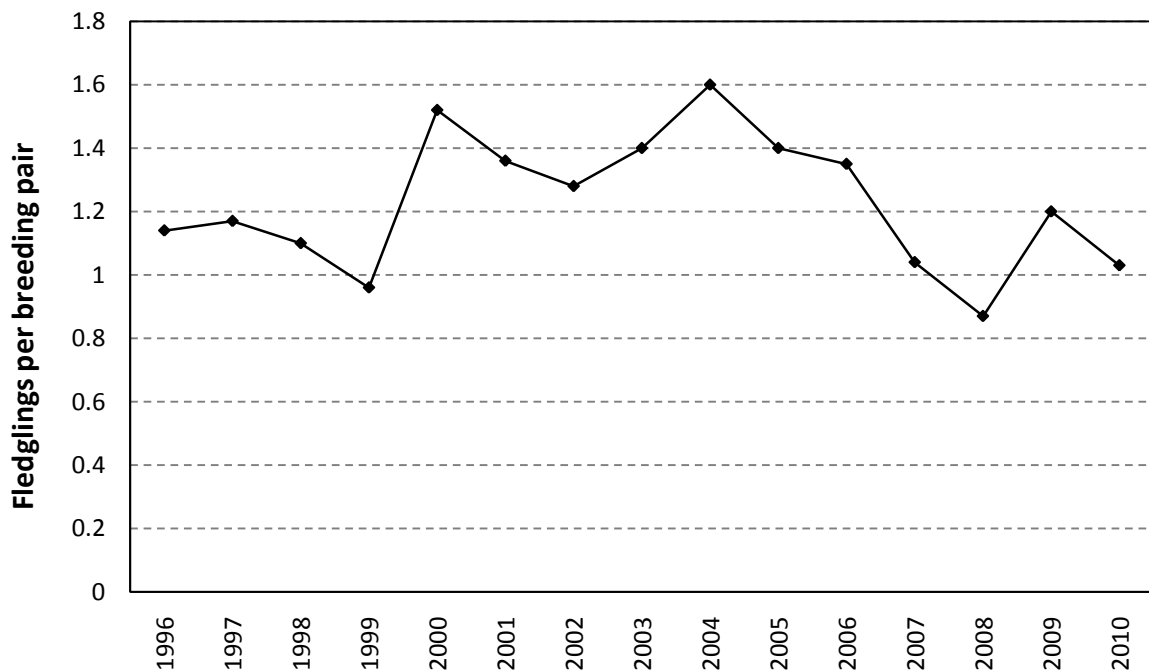
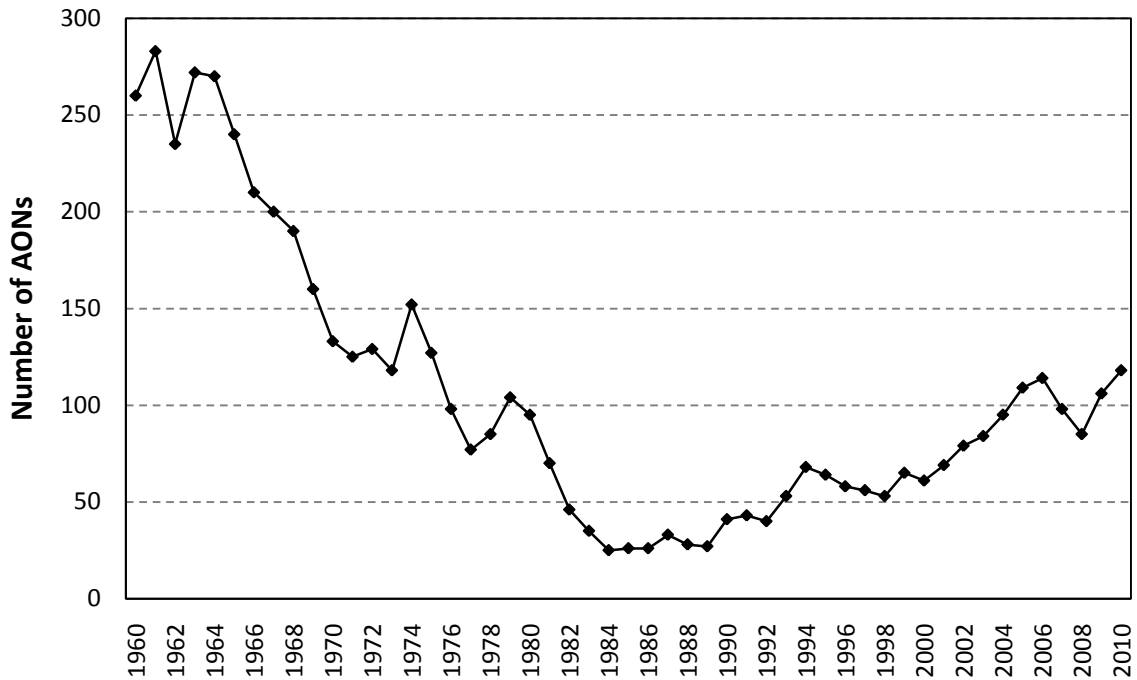
Herring gull breeding numbers on Skomer Island 1961-2010 and Breeding success of coast-nesting herring gulls on Skomer Island, 1962-2010.



GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

In 2010, the breeding population of great black-backed gull on Skomer has continued its two year increase to 118 Apparently Occupied Nest in 2010 (+11.32% from 2009). It would seem the GBBG population has seen a recovery back to the 2006 figures. This would seem to correlate to the recovery of the rabbit population on Skomer since the outbreak of Myximitosis in 2006/2007. Greater Black Backed Gull productivity slightly decreased to 1.03 per AON.

Great black-backed gull breeding numbers on Skomer Island 1960-2010 and Great black-backed gull breeding success on Skomer Island 1996-2010

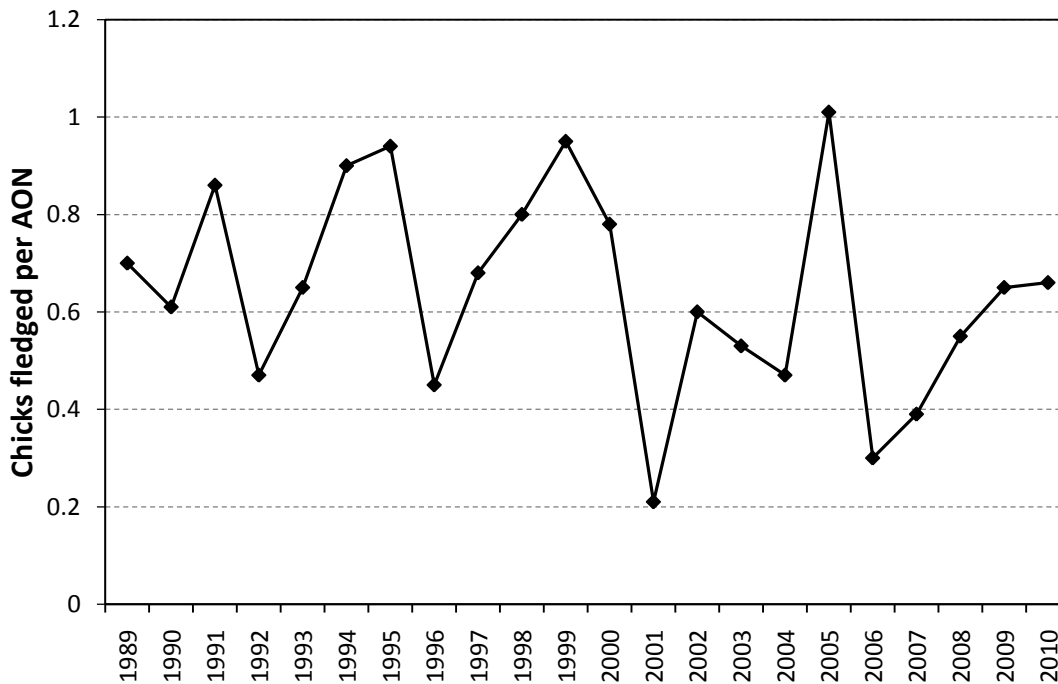
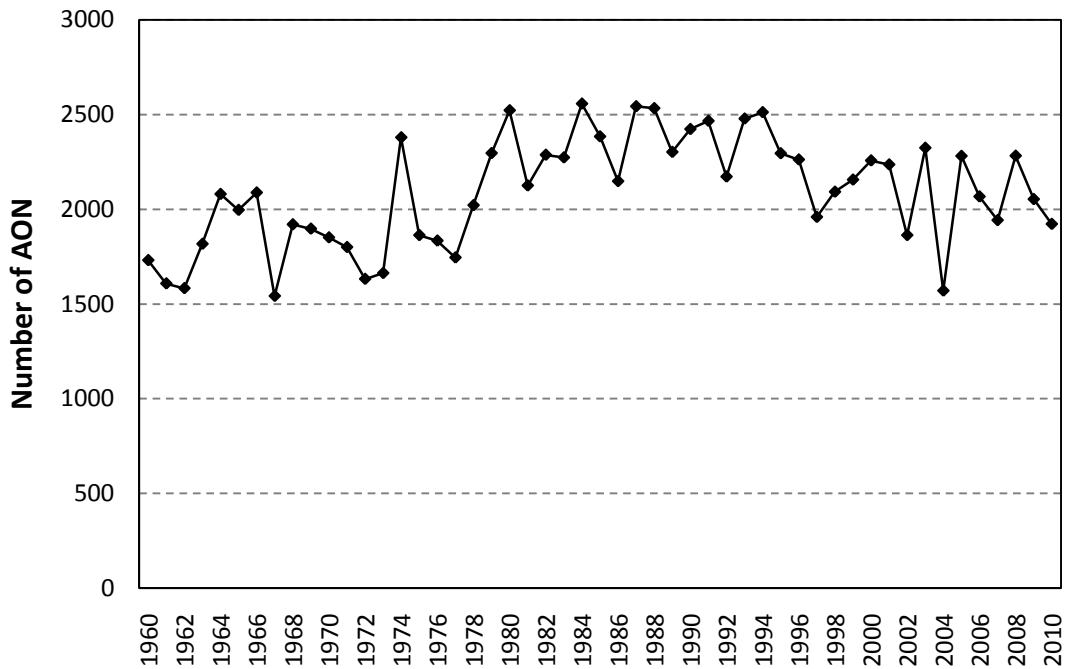


BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE

For the second year running there has been a decline in population, this year by 6.06% (10.43% in 2009). The mean productivity of 0.64 shows a continued improvement on the poor season in 2006.

Nest building was first seen on April 30th which the same as last year which was eight days earlier than last the previous. The first egg was on May 21st, 11 days later than last year but within the normal time frame of the past 5 years.

Black-legged kittiwake breeding numbers on Skomer Island 1960-2010 and Black-legged kittiwake breeding success on Skomer Island 1989-2010.



SANDWICH TERN

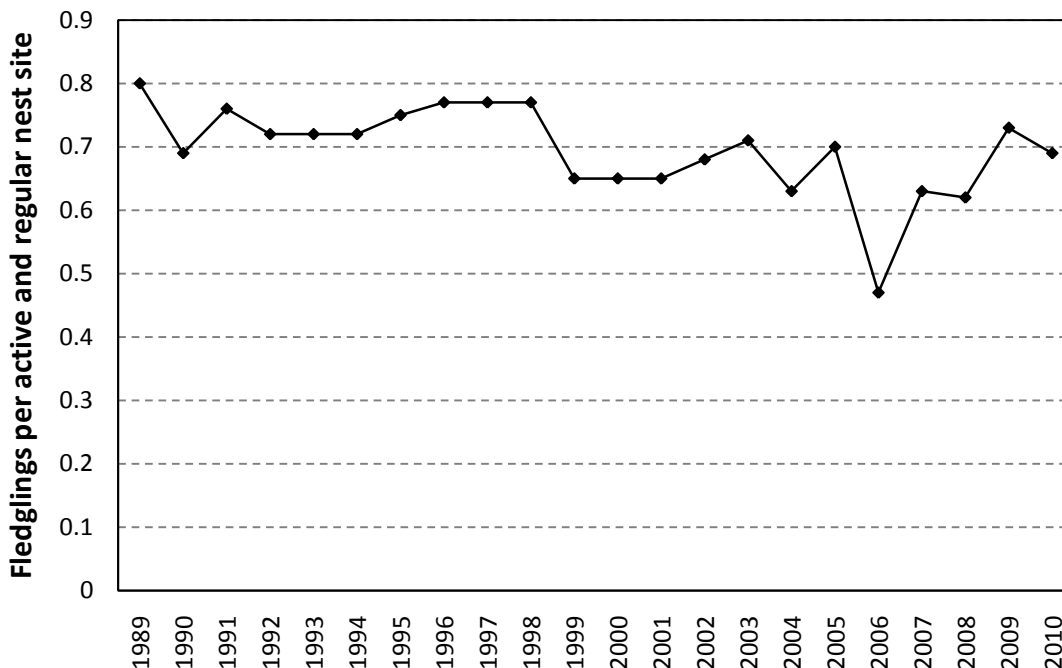
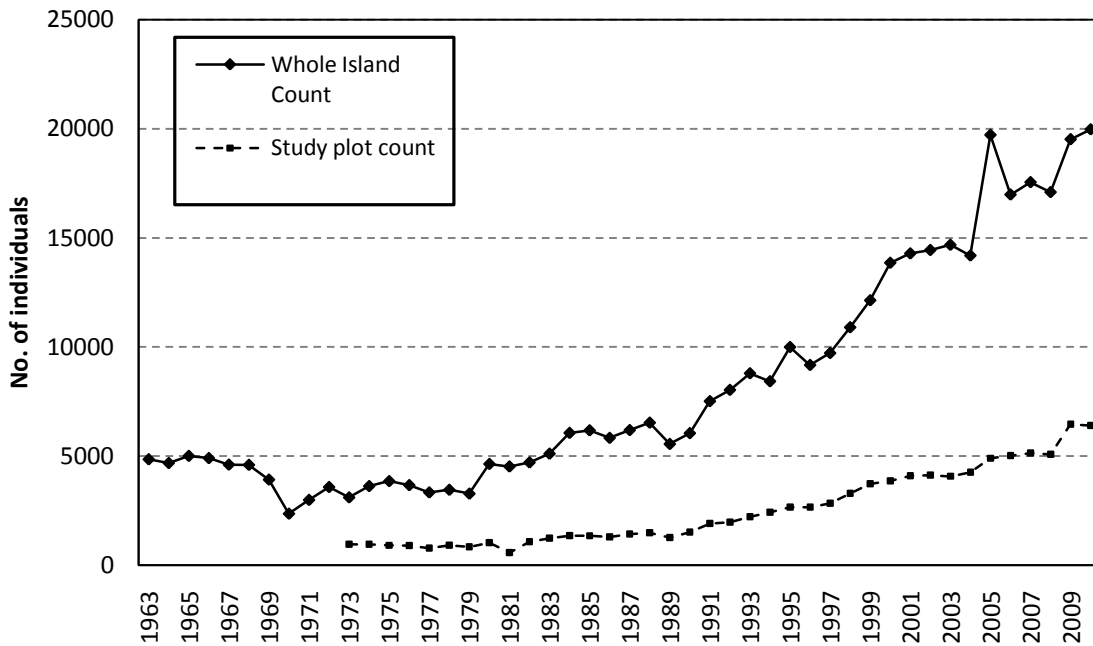
One on 24 April. One 17 September. Two 5 October.

COMMON GUILLEMOT

The population showed a 2.31% increase on 2009 and is the highest on record (the second highest being 19711 in 2005). Study plot populations have not expanded this year. Productivity at 0.69 was slightly lower than 2009 (0.73). The median fledging date was in line with last five years, but the year before it was 14 days early.

Four hundred seen on cliffs on 9 November.

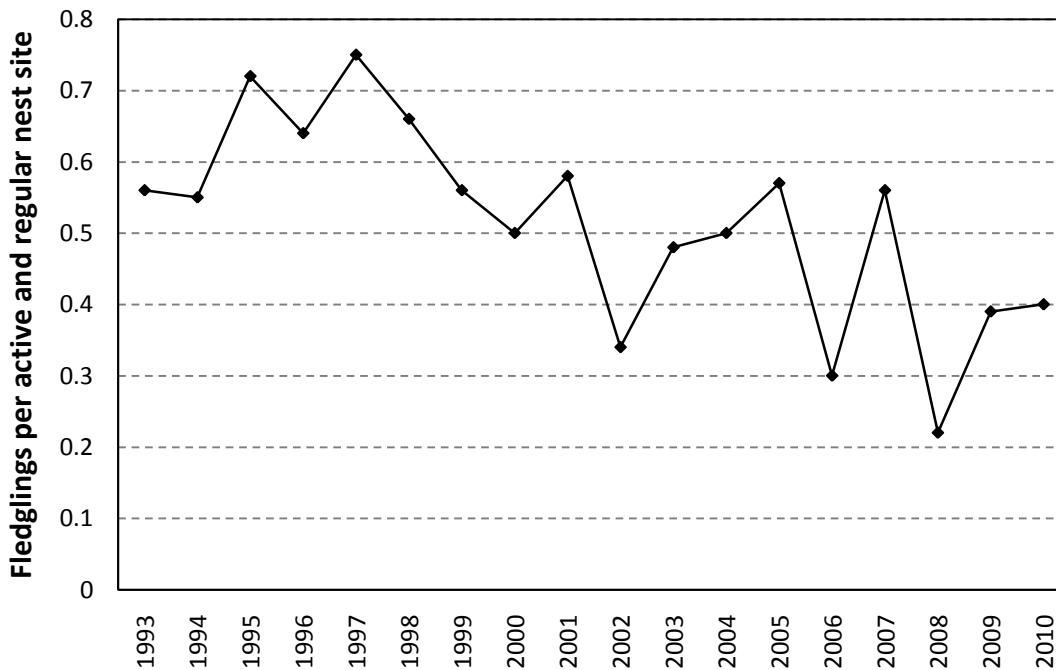
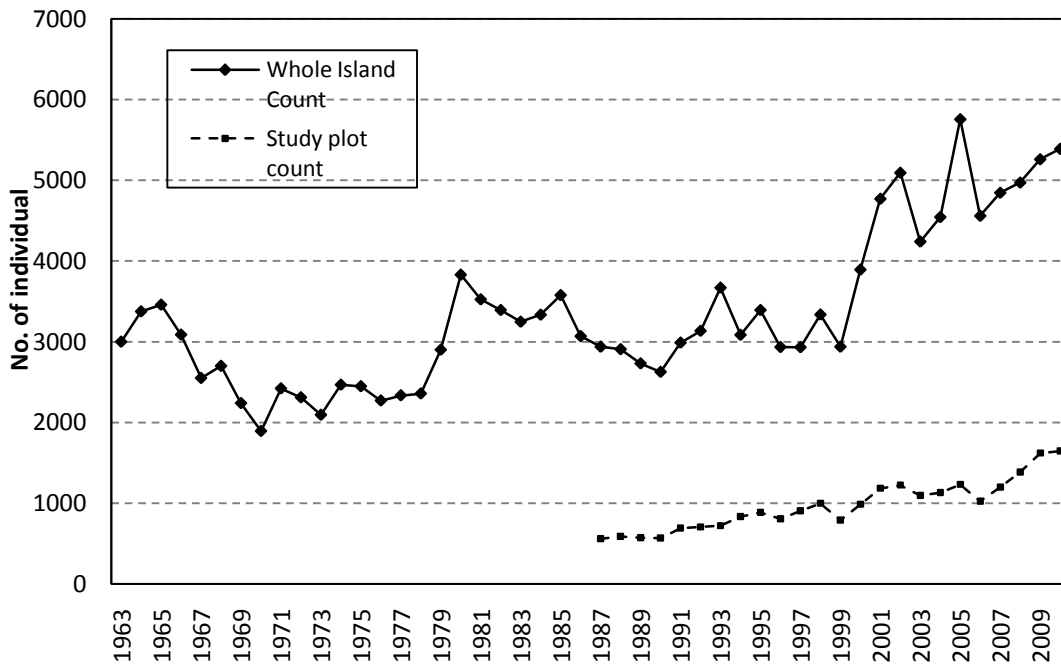
Common guillemot breeding numbers on Skomer Island 1963-2010. Common guillemot breeding success on Skomer Island 1989-2010.



RAZORBILL

Whole island population showed a 5.2% increase on 2009 figures and is the second highest on record since annual records began in 1963. Study plot population increased by 1.7% making it the highest since study plot counts began in 1987. Productivity was 0.4 (mean since 1993 0.55). In 2000 the median fledging date was 12 days earlier than last year, this year saw a return to previous date range.

Razorbill breeding numbers on Skomer Island 1963-2010 and Razorbill breeding success on Skomer Island 1963-2010.

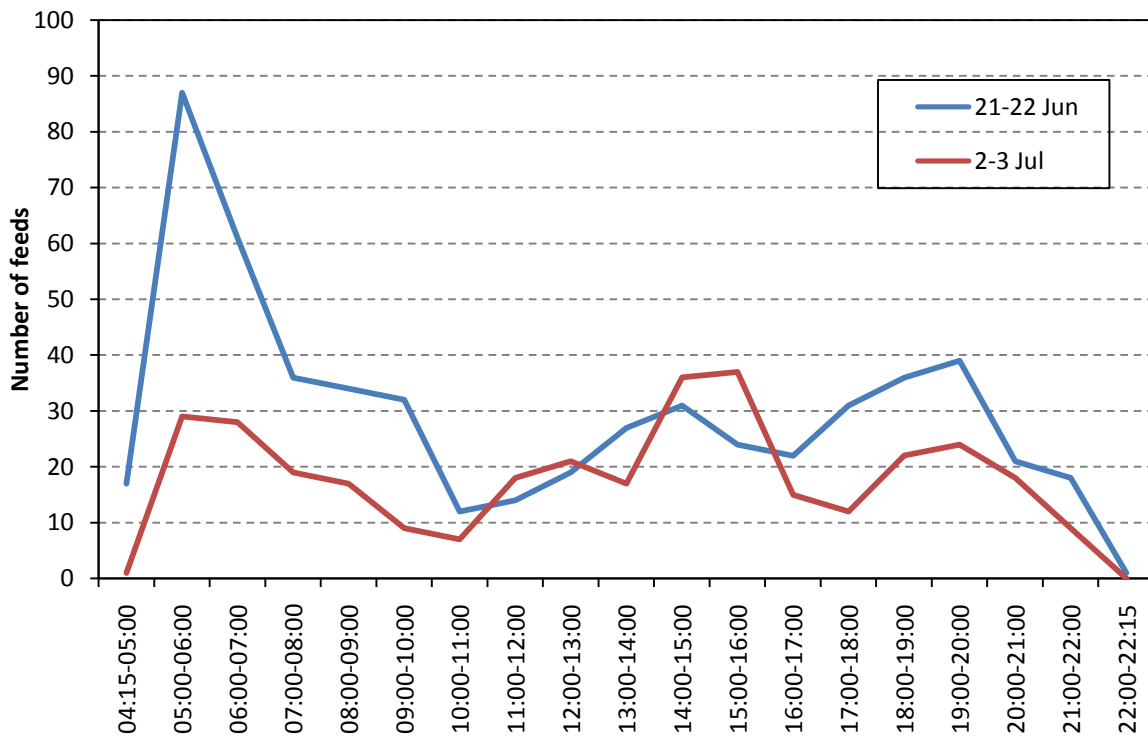
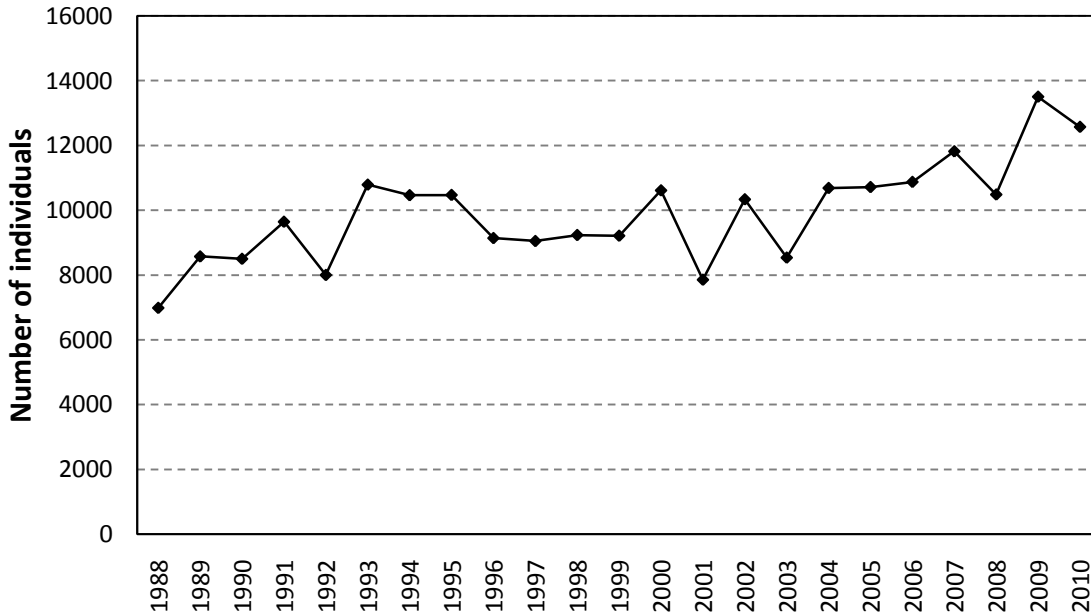


ATLANTIC PUFFIN

The spring count was slightly down by 6.23% on 2009. Productivity was exceptionally good at 0.8. Plenty of Sand-eels and Sprats were seen being brought ashore and no Snake pipe-fish were seen. Possibly as a result of increased rabbit numbers meaning greater black backed gulls were less predatory on pufflings.

Maximum spring counts of Atlantic puffin on Skomer Island 1989-2010.

Feeding rates of Puffins in relation to time of day.



FERAL PIGEON

Seen irregularly through year: two in April, five in May, daily through June, July. Few in August and September

STOCK DOVE

During October: two on 11, five on 20, four on 24 and one 25

WOODPIGEON

Five pairs established territories an attempted to breed on the island.

Present in March - November (one hundred and fifteen on 7 November, fifty-five 24 November,)

COLLARED DOVE

Three 10 May, one 12, 19 and 27 May. 2, 18, 21 June. One 2, 18 and 28 September, one 9 November

TURTLE DOVE

One present on 28 and 29 April.

BARN OWL

Roosting in March at North Haven (buildings) and Moorey Mere (hide). Recorded twice in April. Recorded on 6 occasions in October, 4 times in November.

LITTLE OWL

Two pairs fledged three young. Two pairs established territories around central fields area and one to the west of the farm.

Present through most of the year until after breeding.

LONG-EARED OWL

One North Valley 1 October.

SHORT-EARED OWL

After the bumper year in 2009 (9 territories) there were four last year. Territories covered most of the island including one on the Neck.

SWIFT

First one on 21 April.

Number of bird days

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
0	3	12	6	5	3	0	0	0

HOOPOE

One bird present from 18 April – 29 April. First at South Stream then at the Farm.

WYRNECK

One on 7, 13, 14, 26, 28 and 30 September. One 3 and 7 October. One 29 November.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER

One 26 and 30 September. One recorded on 9 bird days between 1 – 12 October. 8 bird days in November.

SKYLARK

Population of 26 breeding pairs. Migration of 120 on 16 October and 250 on 27 October. 275 1 November.

WOODLARK

One 1 November (11th record last seen in 1999)

SAND MARTIN

First seen: One 16 March and Five 19 March, several on 16 bird days during April including on the 9th - c100 around 6pm but moving through all day. 10 bird days in May. Four 30 June. Fifteen on 27 August. 180 on 1 September, present through till 7 September.

SWALLOW

Seven pairs were known to breed on Skomer (10 in 2009)

First seen on 22 March, big passage on 9 April.

500 1 September, 150 2 September, 200 10 October, 500 11 October, 200 12 October, 500 16 October.

HOUSE MARTIN

First observed 7 April, large passage on 8 and 9 April. Regularly seen in May with a maximum count twenty 20 and 22 May. 7 bird days in June. 5 bird days in September. Twelve 11 October

TREE PIPIT

One 18 and 29 April. One 13 May. One 1 and 22 September. One 11 October

MEADOW PIPIT

c. 75 territories were established on the island (79 in 2009)

ROCK PIPIT

c. 30-40 territories were established on Skomer (c.40 in 2009)

YELLOW WAGTAIL

One 4 and 21 September and three 22 September

GREY WAGTAIL

Two 27 August, one 28 August. 13 bird days in September (max. six on 18 September). One 1 and 16 October, One 1, 2, 6 and 10 November

PIED WAGTAIL

Two pairs of pied wagtails successfully raised young.

Up to Eight individuals seen throughout year.

WHITE WAGTAIL

In April two on 10 and one on 15, 18 and 21 April. One on 10 May. Present 1 – 7 September including thirty eight on 7 September.

WREN

39 territories were established in 2010, this is a large drop from 2009 (67 territories).

DUNNOCK

Six territories were established in 2010

ROBIN

Present most of the year no records after 12 November.

RED-SPOTTED BLUETHROAT *svecica*

One 21 May at the back of the farm.



RED-FLANKED BLUETAIL

One north valley 25 October.



BLACK REDSTART

2 individuals spotted around the farm on 16 and 17 March. One on 19 March. One 14 June.

COMMON REDSTART

First seen on 18 April then up to two on 6 bird days on April. One 13 May. One 18 September.

WHINCHAT

One on 28 and 29 April. Three 7 September. One 29 September.

STONECHAT

First seen on 17 March.

No breeding attempts registered (second year in a row). Individuals present in March (up to four) but only 3 bird days in April, May, June and July. 13 day in September. Fifteen on 11 September.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR

First observed on 6 March at bull hole. Observed carrying nesting material on 26 April.

10 Apparently Occupied Territories.

Seven of *leucorhoa* (Greenland) Wheater on 12-14 May

RING OUZEL

Two 15 April, One 18 and 19 April. One 24 and 25 October

BLACKBIRD

Present all year round.

10 territories were established.

FIELDFARE

One 6 May. 8 bird days in November max eight.

SONG THRUSH

Up to four individuals seen on 6 days in March.

Up to three individuals seen on 4 days in April.

One seen 2 May. One seen 4 June. 17 bird days in November max. 20.

REDWING

Observed on 12 days in March with 8 on 2 March. 20 bird days in November, twenty one 7 November

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER

One seen on 20 April in South Stream, then on 23, 28, 29 (two) and 30. One 4, 15, 22 May. One 9 October.

SEDGE WARBLER

First recorded 15 April, thereafter daily with 12 on 29 April, May, June, July, August and September until 22 September. 3 bird days in October.

15 territories were established.

REED WARBLER

One on 22 April in South Stream. One 4 September.

ICTERINE WARBLER

One 31 August – Ivy at North Haven. One 2 September.

DARTFORD WARBLER

One 30 October



LESSER WHITETHROAT

One individual seen on 28, 29 and 30 April and 26, 27, 28 September.

WHITETHROAT

First seen on 18 April, then one or two regularly present in April, May, June, July

Two pairs established territories.

GARDEN WARBLER

One on 29 April. One 24 May. One 1 and 2 September. One 1 October.

BARRED WARBLER

One 26 September (7th record). One 7 October.

BLACKCAP

First seen: One on 15 April, then most days up to 8 individuals in April. One 4 days in May. One 22 June. Two 7, 13 – 15, 17-21 and 29-30 September. 14 bird days in October (max fourteen on 11 October). Two or three daily in November until 13th.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER

One 12 and 15 October.

CHIFFCHAFF

First observed 16 March (five individuals) and seen irregularly for the rest of the month. Observed on 21 bird days in April with maximum Fifty 7 April. 13 bird days in May, 7 in June. Three bird days August. 15 bird days in September. Up to four present daily in November.

WILLOW WARBLER

First observed 15 April and 13 birds days after including eighty on 23 April. Present through year. Sixty 5 September.

WOOD WARBLER

One seen 28 and 29 April

GOLDCREST

One on 16 March. One on 14, 17, 20, 28 and 30 September. Daily in October (Fifteen 17 October). Two 1 and 14 November

FIRECREST

One 17 October.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER

One on 29 April. 15 bird days in May including ten on 19 May. One 11 June. One 14 and 27 June. One or two present on 14 days in September. One 5 and 9-11 October

PIED FLYCATCHER

One on 24 April. One 8 May at Mathews Wick. Two 1 September. One 4 and 10 October.

LONG-TAILED TIT

Seven 30 October. Twenty-eight 1 November. Seven 19 November

COAL TIT

Three 7, 12 and (two) 17 October.

BLUE TIT

First seen in autumn on 26 September with twenty-eight on 30 September. Seen daily in October One-Hundred 4 October. Present daily in November until 20th. Thirty 1 November.

GREAT TIT

Five 30 September. Seen daily in October. Twelve on 7, 11 and 12 October. One or two present until 20 November.

MAGPIE

Present all year

CHOUGH

Seen regularly through the season.

Four pairs nested at the Lantern, Tom's House, Wick Basin and the Basin with a possible territory at Pigstone Bay. Two pairs did not raise young successfully; these were the pairs at Pigstone Bay and The Basin. Six young fledged from the other two sites in total, giving a breeding success per AOT of 1.5.

JACKDAW

Five pairs breed at North Haven, Wick Basin, The Basin, Pigstone Bay and Bull Hole.

Monthly maxima:

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
35	30	50	50	20	50	40	150	1500

ROOK

One 19 April. Nine 30 September. Fifteen 4 October, one 9 October, eight on 11 and 12 October, two 17 October. Six 21 October, One 24 October

CARRION CROW

Present through the year.
Ten nests were recorded.

RAVEN

Ravens were on eggs by the time the wardens returned to the island (1st March), chicks observed by late April.

Five pairs nested and raised eight young (same as 2009). Pairs were on Mew Stone, near the Amos, Amy's Reach, North Coast and one near Pyg Stone Bay.

Flocks forty two on 28 August. Eighty seven 2 September, ninety eight 15 September.

COMMON STARLING

Present in most days of March with flocks up to 11. Three days in April (Max. 3). Three days in June, 10 in July. 7 days in September. All day in October from 6 October including 1500 24 and 28 October, 1000 31 October, 9000 1 November, 300 13 November and 500 14 November.

HOUSE SPARROW

Four 27 September, one 30 September. 16 bird days in October including sixteen on 17 October. Four 1 November.

TREE SPARROW

One 9 – 11 October,

CHAFFINCH

First recorded 21 March, occasional sightings since. Fifty 30 September. Present all days of October including 320 on 19, 140 on 10, 120 on 22, 150 on 30 and 700 on 31. Seventy-five 1 November, ten 14 November and fifteen 19 November.

BRAMBLING

Three 11 October, one 17 October, seven 20 October, one 22 October and steady and low numbers until seven hundred on 31 October. Four 1 November then one on 14 and 19 November.

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH

One seen 8 June. Three 27 September. 12 bird days in October including thirteen on 11 October and fifteen on 22 October. 16 bird days in November, max. twelve 1 November.

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH

First seen 7 April then further 7 bird days in April (Max. 15). 7 bird days in May (max. 7). 11 bird days in June (max 6). 18 birds days in July (max 8) 30 bird days in July (max 35). All days in September including sixty on 18 September. Most days in October including thirty on 31 October. Most days in November until 19th.

EURASIAN SISKIN

15 bird days in October including forty 16 October. 6 bird days in November.

COMMON LINNET

One individual first observed on 19 March. Seen on most days during breeding season. Flocks in September and October including thirty five on 31 September. Two-hundred and twenty on 9 October. Present in November.

Two Apparently occupied territories.

REDPOLL

One 28 April. One 7 October. Five 20 October. One 24 October.

LAPLAND BUNTING

One 7, 18, 21 and 22 September. 13 bird days in October including sixteen on 21 October. Five 1 November. Two 13 and 16 November

SNOW BUNTING

One 1, 9, (two)12 and 21 October. One 1 November.

REED BUNTING

First seen 15 March. Then on most days thereafter. ten on April 24.
Five Apparently Occupied Territories

BOBOLINK

One North Valley 8 and 11 October.



Chris Taylor