



CAIRDE EANLAITH NA GAILLIMHE BIRDWATCH GALWAY

www.birdwatchgalway.org
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER – EDITOR: NEIL SHARKEY
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Issue No. 65 May 09

This is a local forum newsletter –
contributions and comments are
most welcome.
Distributed by e mail only

BRANCH MATTERS

Are you one of those fortunates who have to juggle work commitments with various other commitments, be it looking after family and friends, maintaining a house and garden, keeping up a consuming hobby or two, attending events on Galway's busy cultural agenda or, time permitting, listening to music and reading a book or a paper?

No wonder, then, that the national organisers of various surveys and ornithological events find it hard to get people to commit to more than they already have on their plate. Or is it?

Maybe not if you have a job which brings you out and about anyway. Or if you have children or grandchildren, nieces and nephews of an age that they may willingly and enthusiastically accompany you on an outing. Or if your dog needs regular walking (like you do yourself). And, don't forget, every one of us lives in a neighbourhood or a townland, with or without a garden, and visits family and friends in other neighbourhoods and townlands. And each of these areas is home to at least fifteen easy-to-recognise species of birds.

What I am saying is that every day, under whatever circumstances, there are opportunities to look and listen for birds which can be recorded in the context of the various projects run by BirdWatch Ireland. The most important and pressing of these is the new Atlas of Birds of Britain and Ireland. This is a huge undertaking and we need every hand on deck (to speak in *Volvo* terms) to get all corners of Galway covered.

A look on the atlas website www.birdatlas.net at what we have covered so far would send shivers of despair along your spine – especially if you were the man in charge, Brian Caffrey.

Please, make it one more commitment to keep the binoculars at hand and record and submit what you see whenever you see it, be it at home, in the garden, on your way to work, out for a walk or visiting other parts of the county. Actually, Brian doesn't mind us crossing county borders. We may do just that on an Atlas Roving outing in early June. Anybody and everybody are welcome to take part. Just let me know if you would like to come so we can car-pool and cover the maximum area possible on the day.

Marianne ten Cate

GALWAY THREAD ON BIRDFORUM.NET

It is well over a year now since the 'Galway Thread' on Birdforum was started and for me it has been a huge success; I hope others think so too. Going to press there are 929 messages and nearly 41,817 views. There have been 40 contributors to the thread; some have posted over 100 times, some have posted a message only once but they all count. There are 7 contributors from Galway; it would be great to see more locals join up, even if it is only to say hello and that you are keeping in touch with the latest updates. You need to register

with Birdforum to post a message, which is straightforward. Just follow the online instructions. If anyone has any problems let me know and I will see if I can help.

Messages posted have been about issues as complex as identifying American Herring Gulls to straightforward issues such as discussions on garden birds and finding one or two rarities along the way. We also try to help out visiting birders regarding locations within Galway for the latest rare bird find, for example the Little Blue Heron at Letterfrack and the American Herring Gull at Nimmo's or the Ring-necked Duck. Ask a question and someone locally or from other parts may pitch in with an answer.

All in all, I enjoy the forum and check in every day to see who has posted and what the latest on the Galway bird scene is. There are threads on the forum which cover a vast array of discussion on insects, butterflies, flora, cameras, digiscoping and an excellent link to Birdforum TV.

With the facility to post photographs of birds with every message, there is an opportunity for everyone in this digital age to post their photos. And it is not just for the birds: all aspect of nature should be included. So if you have got a photo of butterflies, dragon- or damselflies, flora or a wild mammal let's see it (*photos need to be no larger than 200kb*).

Another feature to the 'Galway Thread' is keeping track of the different species seen throughout the year. In 2008 an unbelievable total of 215 species of birds was seen in County Galway. So, is it possible there may be more seen this year? Who knows. Keep track of the latest on the forum, with the total so far standing at 165 species. This is the link for the thread relating to Ireland, which includes Louth, Cork, Dublin and Donegal: <http://www.birdforum.net/forumdisplay.php?f=400>. This is the link to register (*click it to join*): <http://www.birdforum.net/help/About>. See you in the field and good birding.

Tom Cuffe

YELLOWHAMMERS IN CO. GALWAY SINCE 2000

In *Birds in Counties Galway and Mayo* (1989) Rutledge stated that Yellowhammers had been "formerly common and generally distributed, even on the most exposed inhabited marine islands" and that the 1968-72 Atlas Survey in Galway "found it fairly widely distributed, but absent from much of Connemara". The 1988-91 Atlas Survey again showed a wide distribution in the county, including in all the hectad squares along the south Connemara coast. Yellowhammer is on the current *Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland* Red List (2007) because of a presumed 50% decline in its breeding population over the last 25 years.

The following is a list of the known records in the county since 2000:

2002

3 August: 'Yellowhammers', Cregmore, Claregalway (Sean Doheny).

2004

18 March: 1, Bushy Park (Padraig Keirns).

2005

27 February: 6, Termon nr. Gort (Chris Peppiatt).

15 March: 1, Roscahill (Padraic Reaney).

2006

27 February: 1, Ballagh, Galway City (Padraig Keirns).

14 April: 2, Carraroe, Connemara (Padraic Reaney).

26 November: 6, Frenchfort, Oranmore (Warren Lawless).

2007

23 March: 1, Caheratemore South, between Athenry and Tuam (Pat Roberts).

30 March: 1, Sheeaunpark, between Athenry and Tuam (Pat Roberts).

30 March: 3, Kilskeagh, between Athenry and Tuam (Pat Roberts).

5 April: 2, Kilskeagh (Pat Roberts).

13 April: 2, Kilskeagh (Pat Roberts).

20 April: 1, Kilskeagh (Pat Roberts).

29 May: 1, Clifden (Aonghus O'Donail).

2008

22 March: 3, Oakwood North, Abbey (Paul Troake).

2 November: 1, Angliham (Dermot Breen).

2009

24 February: 3 (1 Male & 2 Female), Doolough nr. Headford (Deirdre Comerford & Neil Sharkey).

26 February: 1, Killina (Killinny East), nr. Kinvara (Brian Crossan).

28 February: 2, Killina (Brian Crossan).

'end of February': 6, Glenrevagh, Corrandulla (Peter Tyndall).

8 April: 1, Ballagh, Galway City (Padraig Keirns).

It seems, from the available records, that yellowhammer are still to be found in East Galway (in the Athenry – Tuam – Corrandulla – Headford - Angliham area) and, as might be expected, in the 'Galway Burren' area (around Gort and Kinvara). There are also still some around Oranmore and just to the west of the city (Ballagh and Roscahill), as well as a very few still in Connemara. It seems likely that the large reduction in tillage in more recent years has caused a decline. However, in my opinion, this is also an under-recorded bird and I feel that the true distribution may be healthier than the short list above appears to indicate.

Given that we are 'in the middle' of the 2007-2011 Atlas Survey project, I can only appeal to people to make records known so that we can get an accurate picture of the distribution and status of this bird. It is likely that people who live in rural Galway see Yellowhammer more often than we realise and do not know that it is a species of interest in Ireland.

Chris Peppiatt



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OMEY ISLAND AND ROSSADILLISK

Omey Island and its surroundings are one of the richest areas in Connemara for waders. It is located about 12km north-west of Clifden. Take the N59 north from Clifden towards Letterfrack and take a left after 3.4km (passing by Streamstown Bay, also worth a look an hour or so after low tide). Follow this road for 8.8km and on reaching the Cladaghduff Church take the left (the strand will be visible to your left before this).

Peak counts of around 200 Ringed Plovers, 150 Sanderling, 150 Golden Plover etc. were recorded here last autumn (numbers of Sanderling declined slightly during the winter). The richest area is on the right-hand side (west side) as you drive out to the island itself, with birds feeding here at low tide and usually roosting in the stony area nearer to the island side. Last autumn a Western Sandpiper, a Buff-breasted Sandpiper, four Curlew Sandpipers (amazingly, all on the same day) and an American Golden Plover were recorded here.

The island has a medium sized brackish lake called Lough Fahy. The lough to date hasn't hosted much apart from the usual bathing gulls and I have come across very few waders on its shores. It is, however, surrounded by large areas of machair which could produce the likes of more Buff-breasted Sandpipers, American Golden Plovers, Snow and Lapland Buntings, if properly searched at the right time of year. A pair of Corncocks are sometimes seen here. A few pairs of Corncrake can also be found in some of the hay meadows on the island during the summer. Ireland's first Great Spotted Cuckoo was recorded on the island in 1842. And Hoopoe and Yellow-browed Warbler have been recorded in Cladaghduff village.

Rossadillisk is another site worth checking as it is less than 3km north of Cladaghduff Church. On reaching the "main road" at the Church, take a left. Very shortly after this take the next right. Follow this road taking the right hand turn and finally take the next left and follow this straight to the end. This area has much smaller numbers of waders, especially in the winter, but can be better for Dunlin. Up to 20 Purple Sandpipers have been seen on the rocks on the outside of the inlet. The main flock of "smalls" (small waders) can be found in the inner sections of the inlet, usually on the eastern side. Another good spot, especially at high tide, is the spit of land connecting the mainland with the chain of rocks just off the mouth of the inlet. The first of these islands, Gooreen Island, can also be used as a sea watching location. Though not very productive, as Inishbofin and a multitude of other islands are just offshore blocking the view, several Grey Phalaropes, an adult Sabine's Gull and good numbers of Great Skuas were seen from here last autumn. Some good birds have been recorded from the Rossadillisk area in the past, such as Spoonbill (2), Galway's first Killdeer, Black-winged Stilt and Semipalmated Sandpiper (2).

Dermot Breen

BIRDS IN POETRY

Patrick Deely is a native of East Galway who is now a teacher in Dublin. He has published five volumes of poetry and was one of the contributors to the recent Cúirt Festival of Literature in Galway. He has a keen interest in nature and continues to find inspiration in the flora and fauna of the wetland meadows of his childhood. *The Bones of Creation* is the title of a recent collection published by Dedalus Press and *Birdsong* is a fine example of his carefully crafted poems.

Pat Finnegan

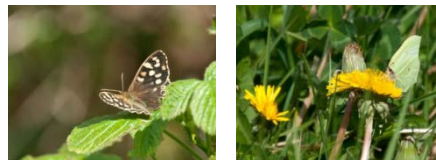
Birdsong

Perspectives through sound: a blackbird's oath, sworn from a chimney-stack;
the mellifluous coos of woodpigeons conjuring sunbeams amid high ivy clusters;
a robin's pipe, happening to approve of cotoneaster berries. But if the tremulous, piercing notes of the thrush are expansions of space and time, rolling me wide and fat, I still hear the magpie's screeched assertion from a wall overlooking the covered-in quarry, that all was winter yesterday, was stone the day before.

Patrick Deeley

HEN HARRIER ENCOUNTER

The phone rang at 11.30 on Sunday morning the 19th of April; it was Tim Griffin. He found a Garganey at Anglingham and a pair of Hen Harriers. I have seen the Harriers there before, but the Garganey was the one that interested me, as I had not seen one. I got to Anglingham at about 1.30pm, got the gear ready, over the gate and headed for 'Hags walk'. On the way a few butterflies got the



camera trigger finger going with Meadow Browns, Brimstone, Peacock and Orange Tip.

I set up and settled down on my uncomfortable 3-legged stool. Scanning the lake for the Garganey and seeing the regulars, Tufted Duck, Scaup, checking for Lesser Scaup, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Teal, checking for that vertical white line for Green-winged Teal and hearing the screech of the Water Rail in the reeds.

Over an hour and a half past and I contemplated moving somewhere else, when a dark shadow from the corner of my eye flew past within 20 feet of me and about 10 feet off the ground. In my head I shouted 'Harrier'. It was moving fast; I leaned to my right for the camera, started tracking the bird – damn, not turned on, come on, start aaahhh. The bird had travelled some distance. Tracked the bird, squeezed the button and rattled off 30 shots in about a minute, lens fully extended at 500mm.

That one minute of close encounter is what birding is all about. Sitting on an uncomfortable



stool for one and a half hours meant nothing.

When I scanned through the shots on the camera, I noticed the bird had tags on both wings with the letter 'E'. I sent a text to a few of the lads to let them know. They replied 'make sure you let Barry O'Donoghue know'. Barry is part of the Hen Harrier Research Group of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. This is part of Barry's reply, who has a wonderful enthusiasm for these beautiful birds:

"From the tag details, I can tell you this lady was born and reared in the Slieve Aughty Mountains on the Galway Side, less than 40km SE of where you saw her. She was the only female of 3, which fledged that nest before 15th July 2008. She is one of a small amount, which fledged in the Aughties last year; they are a population in trouble (perhaps due to forestry). Where she has been up to now I cannot say, where she is going too hopefully we will find out."

Tom Cuffe

NEWSLETTER DATES

The Galway members *Newsletter* is sent out four times a year - in February, May, August and November. The closing date for contributions is the end of the months previous. The Quarterly Bird Report (calendar months) normally accompanies the *Newsletter* and ideally all reports of sightings should be made through the link on our web site. The address is on the *Newsletter* heading. Again, **the deadline for sighting reports is the end of the month after each quarter – April, July, October and January.** Reports or sightings received after those dates will be included by appendix in the next report.

The co-operation of all would be greatly appreciated. NS

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMME

Wednesday 13 May, branch meeting, Anno Santo Hotel, Threadneedle Road, Salthill, 8pm.

All members are welcome to attend.

Sunday 17 May, National Dawn Chorus Day; meet at 4.30am in the car park of the NUIG Sports Grounds in Dangan. Everybody is welcome to come and join.

There will be a **Roving outing** for the new Atlas of the Birds of Britain and Ireland with the national organiser, Brian Caffrey, during the first two weeks of June - date, time and location to be confirmed. Please let Marianne know if you are interested in taking part. We will organise car-pooling.

Wednesday 17 June, 8pm. Last branch meeting before the summer break at Jo Gordon's, 11 The Links, Ballymoneen Road, Galway. **MTC**

BirdWatch Galway (Branch of BirdWatch Ireland) 1st Quarter 2009

QUARTERLY BIRD REPORT COMPILED BY CHRIS PEPIATT

DATE OF ISSUE: 17th May 2009

1st January: 3 (Ad. male & 2 ringtail) Hen Harrier, Curraghline, Lough Corrib (John Keogh & Chris Peppiatt).

1st January: Little Egret, Oranmore (Brian McVicker).

1st January: Female Brambling, Ballycrissane (Alex Copland). (1)

2nd January: Common Sandpiper & 2-Ad. Win. Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Ronan McLoughlin).

2nd January: Ad. Win. Forster's Tern, again present, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City. (2)

2nd January: 65 Scaup, Lough Atalia, Galway City (Ronan McLoughlin).

2nd January: Black-throated Diver, Silver Strand, Galway City (per BINS).

3rd January: Fem. Ring-necked Duck, male Lesser Scaup-type hybrid, male Tufted Duck X Pochard hybrid & 70 Scaup, Angliham, Lough Corrib (Dermot Breen).

3rd January: 30 Waxwing, Tuam (per Robert Vaughan).

3rd January: Ad. female Surf Scoter, again present, Silver Strand, Galway City. (3)

4th January: Little Gull, Galway City docks, Galway City (Tom Cuffe).

4th January: 2 (1st & 2nd Win.) Iceland Gull & Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Tom Cuffe).

5th January: 3rd Win. Kumlien's Gull & 1st Win. Glaucous Gull, Clifden Quay (Dermot Breen).

7th January: 4 Hen Harrier, Fem. Marsh Harrier, Merlin, Sparrowhawk, 2 Pink-footed Goose & Little Egret, Curraghline, Lough Corrib (Aonghus O'Donail). (4)

8th January: Ad. Win. American Herring Gull, again present, Galway City docks, Galway City. (5)

10th January: 5 (Ad., 2-1st Win., 2nd Win. & 3rd Win.) Iceland Gull (the latter two birds possibly Kumlien's Gulls), 1st Win. Glaucous Gull, Ad. 'argentatus' race Herring Gull & 2-Ad. Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Dermot Breen).

10th January: Ad. Iceland Gull & Kumlien's-type Gull, Long Walk, Galway City (Tom Cuffe).

10th January: 1st Win. Iceland Gull, Waterside, Galway City (Tom Cuffe).

12th January: Possible Pacific Diver, Galway Bay near to Galway City (Paul Cooke. Awaiting confirmation from video footage).

16th January: 3 (2nd Win. male, Ad. female & Juv. female) Hen Harrier, female Merlin, 4 Sparrowhawk & female Kestrel, Curraghline, Lough Corrib (Aonghus O'Donail).

16th January: Kittiwake, city docks, Galway City (Tom Cuffe).

16th January: 2 (Ad. & 1st Win.) Iceland Gull, Long Walk, Galway City (Tom Cuffe).

18th January: Female Goosander, Rahasane Turlough (Dermot Breen). (6)

18th January: Jack Snipe, Sky Road, Clifden (Chris Lansdell).

18th January: 12 Greenland 'rostrata' Redpoll, Clifden Pier (Chris Lansdell).

18th January: 3 Purple Sandpiper, Aughrus Point (Chris Lansdell).

18th January: Grey Phalarope, Barna (Paul Troake).

19th January: Grey Phalarope, Rusheen Bay, Galway City (Paul Troake).

19th January: Little Auk, Nr. Clifden (Dermot Breen).

19th January: 20 Twite & 2 Chough, Dog's Bay, Roundstone (Chris Lansdell).

20th January: Juv. female Peregrine, sand quarry near Tuam (Jim Glennon). (7)

22nd January: 1st Win. Kumlien's Gull & Ad. Iceland Gull, Clifden (Dermot Breen).

22nd January: Ad. Glaucous Gull & Iceland Gull (poss. 3rd Win Kumlien's), Ross (Dermot Breen).

22nd January: Jack Snipe, Lough Kip (Brendan Power).

24th January: 4-1st Win. Iceland Gull, 3rd Win Kumlien's Gull & 2nd Win. Glaucous Gull, Rossaveal (Dermot Breen).

24th January: 3 (2-1st Win. & 4th Win.) Iceland Gull, Ad. Mediterranean Gull & 2-Ad. Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Dermot Breen).

25th January: Little Auk, Traught (Dave McNamara).

25th January: 1st Win. Glaucous Gull, Shanmuckinish Castle, Co. Clare (Dermot Breen, Neil Sharkey & Tom Chadwick).

25th January: Drake Green-winged Teal, Bell Harbour, Co. Clare (Dermot Breen, Neil Sharkey & Tom Chadwick).

25th January: Curlew Sandpiper, Kilcaimin (Paul Troake & Chris Peppiatt).

25th January: Long-eared Owl, Moycullen (Aonghus O'Donail).

26th January: c. 5,000 Starlings, 3 km East of Oranbeg (John Carey).

27th January: 2 Ad. Win. Mediterranean Gull, Mannin Bay, Nr. Ballyconneely (Dermot Breen).

28th January: 35-40 Greenland White-fronted Goose, flew in from South to roost at Loughaunieran (Paul Troake).

30th January: Green Sandpiper, near Tuam (Jen Fisher & Dervla O'Dowd).

31st January: 4 Waxwing, Inchagoill Road, off Seamus Quirke Road, Galway City (Aonghus O'Donail). (8)

31st January: 5,000 Golden Plover, 3,000 Lapwing, 260 Black-tailed Godwit, 9 Whooper Swan, 1,000 Wigeon & 2 Little Egret, Rahasane Turlough (Pete Capsey & John Carey).
31st January: 3 (2-Ad. & 1-1st Win.) Iceland Gull & Common Sandpiper, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Chris Cook).
31st January: 50 Scaup & Common Sandpiper, Lough Atalia, Galway City (Chris Cook).
31st January: Pair Blackcap, Loughrea (Pete Capsey).
31st January: Ad. Kumlien's Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Ken Shaw).
31st January: 4 (Ad. & 3-1st Win.) Iceland Gull & 2nd Win. Kumlien's Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Dermot Breen).
31st January: 28 Greenland White-fronted Goose, Lough Aclougher, Nr. Lettercraffroe (Tom Chadwick).
31st January: 25 Greenland White-fronted Goose, Rostaff Lake (Dermot Breen).
31st January: 80 Scaup, Lough Atalia, Galway City (Dermot Breen).
2nd February: 175 Black Guillemot, off Ballyconneely Golf Course beach (Dermot Breen).
2nd February: Fem. Marsh Harrier, Lough Corrib (Tim Griffin).
3rd February: 4 Purple Sandpiper & 2 dead Little Auk, Dog's Bay/Gorteen, Nr. Roundstone (Dermot Breen).
5th February: 74 Whooper Swan, Cloonmore, Claretuam (Ger O'Donohoe).
9th February: Buzzard, Labane, Nr. Ardrahan (Paul Troake & Jen Fisher).
10th February: Red-necked Grebe, again present, Blackrock, Salthill, Galway City. (9)
14th February: 3rd Win. Kumlien's Gull, Clifden (Dermot Breen).
14th February: 2-1st Win. Iceland Gull, Rossaveal (Dermot Breen).
14th February: 2 (Ad. & 2nd Win.) Kumlien's Gull, 12+ Iceland Gull, 3 Glaucous Gull, Ad. Little Gull & 2 Ad. Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Dermot Breen).
15th February: 183 Whooper Swan, 65 Greenland White-fronted Goose, 1 Greylag Goose, 4,000 Wigeon, 2,000 Teal, 260 Shoveler, 100 Pintail, 11 Little Egret, 6,000 Golden Plover, 3,000 Lapwing, 350 Black-tailed Godwit, 74 Redshank, 67 Curlew, 100 Dunlin & Greenshank, Rahasane Turlough (Pete Capsey & John Carey).
16th February: 45 Greenland White-fronted Goose, 1 Greylag Goose & 3 Ruff, Rahasane Turlough (Tom Chadwick).
16th February: Slavonian Grebe & 1st Win. Little Gull, Traught (Tom Chadwick). (10)
17th February: 35 Curlew & 43 Oystercatcher, Renmore playing fields, Galway City (Ger O'Donohoe).
18th February: 8 Waxwing, GMIT car park, Galway City (Cilian Roden).
18th February: Colour-ringed Brent Goose, with other birds, South Park, Galway City (Dave McNamara).
19th February: 24 Little Egret, flying west in the evening over Moran's of the Weir, Clarinbridge (Pádraig Keirns).
19th February: Ferruginous Duck X Pochard hybrid, Lough Rea (Mary Finnegan & Pat Finnegan).
20th February: 30 Greenland White-fronted Goose, Salthill, Galway City (Neil Ellis).
21st February: Dipper & Female Blackcap, Loughrea town (Pete Capsey).
21st February: 3rd Win. Kumlien's/Iceland Gull, 6 (Ad. & 5-1st Win.) Iceland Gull & 3-1st Win. Glaucous Gull, Rossaveal (Dermot Breen).
22nd February: Little Egret, Casla [Costelloe] (Dermot Boyd).
22nd February: Spotted Redshank, Rahasane Turlough (Michael Davis).
22nd February: 2 Buzzard, Abbey (Paul Troake).
22nd February: Ad. Mediterranean Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Tom Cuffe).
23rd February: 1st Win. Glaucous Gull, picked up dead near Ballyconneely (Martin O'Malley).
23rd February: 3rd Win. Kumlien's Gull, Clifden (Steve Arlow).
24th February: 3 (Male & 2 Female) Yellowhammer, Doolough, Nr. Headford (Deirdre Comerford & Neil Sharkey).
24th February: 3rd Win. Kumlien's Gull, Rossaveal (Steve Arlow).
24th February: Long-eared Owl, Gortnahultra, Gurteen, Nr. Ballinasloe (Pat Roberts).
25th February: Little Egret, Ballinasloe (Dermot Breen).
25th February: Merlin, Blackrock, Salthill, Galway City (Michael O'Mahony).
26th February: Ad. Kumlien's Gull, 3 Iceland Gull, 2 Glaucous Gull & Ad. Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Tom Cuffe & Chris Peppiatt).
26th February: Yellowhammer, Killina (Killinny East), Nr. Kinvara (Brian Crossan).
27th February: 8 (2-Ad., 2nd Win. & 4-1st Win.) Iceland Gull, 2nd Win. Glaucous Gull, 4-Ad. Ring-billed Gull & Ad. Kumlien's Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Paul Slade).
27th February: 9 Iceland Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Tom Cuffe).
27th February: 3 Sandwich Tern, Silver Strand, Galway City (Paul Slade).
27th February: 1st Win. Kumlien's Gull, 3 (2nd Win. & 2-1st Win.) Glaucous Gull, 9 (2-Ad. & 7-1st Win.) Iceland Gull & 2 Little Egret, Rossaveal (Paul Slade).

28th February: 2 Yellowhammer, Killina (Killinny East), Nr. Kinvara (Brian Crossan).
28th February: 2 (Ad. & 3rd Win.) Kumlien's Gull & 2-1st Win. Iceland Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Paul Slade).
28th February: 1st Win. Little Gull & Ad. Win. Mediterranean Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Tim Griffin).
1st March: 52 Little Egret, Iceland Gull, Whooper Swan, 400 Teal, 1,000 Wigeon, 60 Pintail, 52 Shoveler, 1,500 Golden Plover, Greenshank, 105 Curlew, Sparrowhawk & Peregrine, Rahasane Turlough (Pete Capsey).
1st March: 56 Little Egret & female Merlin, Rahasane Turlough (Paul Slade).
1st March: Sparrowhawk, Tuam Road, Galway City (John Carey).
1st March: 2-2nd Win. Glaucous Gull, Ad. Ring-billed Gull, 2 (Ad. & 3rd Win.) Kumlien's Gull & 4 (3rd Win. & 3-1st Win.) Iceland Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Paul Slade).
7th March: 3rd Win. Kumlien's Gull, Clifden (Dermot Breen).
7th March: 2 (2nd Win. & 3rd Win.) Kumlien's Gull & 6 (Ad. & 5-1st Win.) Iceland Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Dermot Breen).
8th March: White phase Gyr Falcon, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Niall Hatch <i>et al.</i>).
8th March: 2 Blackcap, Kiloughter, Menlo (Margaret O'Keeffe).
10th March: Female American Wigeon, Inchiquin, Lough Corrib (Neil Sharkey & Deirdre Comerford).
11th March: 2 Twite, Grattan Road, Salthill, Galway City (Paul Troake). (11)
14th March: Merlin & 2 Purple Sandpiper, Aughinish, Co. Clare (Dermot Breen, Deirdre Comerford & Úna Fleming).
14th March: 2 Sandwich Tern, 1st Win. Little Gull & Black-throated Diver, Newtownlynch Pier (Dermot Breen, Deirdre Comerford & Úna Fleming).
14th March: 2nd Win. Iceland Gull, Kinvara (Dermot Breen, Deirdre Comerford & Úna Fleming).
14th March: Drake Green-winged Teal X Teal hybrid & Merlin, Brandy Harbour (Dermot Breen, Deirdre Comerford & Úna Fleming).
14th March: 8 Sand Martin, Rahasane Turlough (Dermot Breen).
14th March: Barn Owl, Ellagh, Headford (Neil Sharkey).
16th March: 2 (1st & 3rd Win.) Kumlien's Gull, Clifden (Dermot Breen).
17th March: Male Wheatear, Bunowen, Ballyconneely (Dermot Breen).
17th March: 5 Gadwall, Termon North Turlough (Chris Peppiatt).
17th March: 68 Greenland White-fronted Goose, 34 Little Egret, c.500 Black-tailed Godwit & Chiffchaff singing, Rahasane Turlough (Chris Peppiatt).
18th March: House Martin, Lettera, Headford (Neil Sharkey).
18th March: 2 Merlin, 2 Hen Harrier & 24 Greenland White-fronted Goose, Curraghline, Lough Corrib (Tom Chadwick).
18th March: Pair displaying Long-eared Owl & Woodcock, near Moycullen (Aonghus O'Donail).
18th March: 2 Blackcap, Ragoon, Galway City (Mary Finnegan).
18th March: Chiffchaff, Rossaveal (Con Breen).
20th March: Male Green-winged Teal, Barr an Pointe, Inishmore (Dermot Breen). (12)
20th March: 1st Win. Kumlien's Gull, Kilronan, Inishmore (Dermot Breen).
21st March: 11 (10-1st Win. & Ad.) Iceland Gull, Rossaveal (Dermot Breen & Tim Griffin).
21st March: Wheatear, Blackcap & 12 Long-tailed Duck, Inishmore (Hugh Delaney).
21st March: 6 Manx Shearwater, off Kilronan, Inishmore (Hugh Delaney).
22nd March: male Ring-necked Duck, Lydacan Turlough (Michael Davis). (13)
22nd March: 38 Little Egret & 2 Chiffchaff, Rahasane Turlough (Tom Chadwick).
22nd March: 3 Chiffchaff & Sparrowhawk, Dangan, Galway City (John Carey).
22nd March: 7 Little Egret, Renville, Oranmore (Neil Ellis).
22nd March: 100 Brent Goose, Tawin (Neil Ellis).
24th March: 3-1st Win. Iceland Gull & Ad. Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Lars Rudolf).
25th March: 2-1st Win. Iceland Gull, Ad. Ring-billed Gull, 30 Sandwich Tern, 30 Turnstone & 2 Great Northern Diver, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Lars Rudolf).
25th March: 4 Ad. Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Tim Griffin).
27th March: 8 (Ad. & 7-1st Win.) Iceland Gull, Rossaveal (Derek Charles).
28th March: 2 Ad. Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway City (Derek Charles).
29th March: Sparrowhawk killing Pigeon, Middle Street, Galway City (Alex Black).
30th March: 10 Waxwing, Bishop O'Donnell Road, Galway City (Ann Fleming).
30th March: Male Smew, Glenamaddy Lake (Martin Ryan).
30th March: 2 Gadwall, Kiltullagh Lough (Martin Ryan).
30th March: 2 Corncrake, Inishturbot (Paddy Pryce).

NOTES:

- (1) This Brambling was present until the 14th of February.
- (2) The Forster's Tern (probably the one that has been present during winter since November 2003), present in the previous quarter, was in Galway Bay until the 25th of March at least.
- (3) The female Surf Scoter (present in the previous quarter and possibly one of the two seen in the previous winter) was present between Nimmo's Pier and Silver Strand until the 8th of February at least.
- (4) These two Pink-footed Geese (present since the previous quarter) were with the Lough Corrib Greenland White-front flock until the 18th of March at least.
- (5) The adult American Herring Gull (present since the last quarter) was sometimes elusive, but was also recorded in the Nimmo's Pier/docks area on the 11th and 25th of January, the 21st and 27th of February, the 1st, 3rd, 6th, 7th, 11th and 15th of March at least.
- (6) The female Goosander was also recorded at Rahasane Turlough on the 1st and 15th of March.
- (7) This Peregrine was present in the area until the 1st of February at least.
- (8) Up to four Waxwings were present at this location until the 8th of February.
- (9) The Red-necked Grebe (present since the 15th of November 2008) stayed in the Blackrock area until the 25th of March at least.
- (10) The Slavonian Grebe was also recorded on the 17th of February.
- (11) These two Twite were present in the area until the 19th of March.
- (12) This Green-winged Teal was also recorded on the 21st of March.
- (13) This drake Ring-necked Duck was present until the end of the quarter.

OTHER BEASTS

2 Otter, Parkmore Quay, 14th March (Dermot Breen).

HIGHLIGHTS:

Divers and grebes: Possible Pacific Diver, Red-necked Grebe, Slavonian Grebe.

Heron: Up to 56 Little Egret together (when will breeding be proved?).

Waders: Green Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, 3 Ruff, 2 Jack Snipe and 2 Grey Phalarope.

Wildfowl: Drake Smew, female Goosander, female American Wigeon, Surf Scoter, 2 Green-winged Teal, 2 Ring-necked Duck, 2 Pink-footed Geese and the regular (apparently wild) Greylag (3rd winter with with Greenland White-fronts at Rahasane Turlough).

Raptors and Owls: White phase Gyr Falcon, Barn Owl and 3-4 Long-eared Owl.

Gulls, Skuas and Terns: Adult American Herring Gull, at least 5 Kumlien's Gulls and Forster's Tern.

Others: Waxwing (at least 10 in Galway City and a possible 30 more in Tuam), 22 Twite and 5 Yellowhammer.

First migrants: early Corncrake (30th March, possibly as early as 24th March), Sand Martin (14th March), Wheatear (17th March), House Martin (18th March).