



CAIRDE EANLAITH NA GAILLIMHE BIRDWATCH GALWAY

www.birdwatchgalway.org
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER – EDITOR: NEIL SHARKEY
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Issue No. 88 Feb 2015

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

GENERAL MATTERS

Galway birdwatching carries on. The lack of a formal branch structure is not ideal but hope springs eternal! As I type this on February 1st I'm watching six or eight Jackdaws chatter and fight for occupancy of a last year's nest! They certainly are full of hope and plans! Since the November *Newsletter* we had two Galway Bay counts, a Corrib count and a comprehensive Whooper Swan count. This swan survey was co-ordinated in Co Galway by Marianne ten Cate and involved 28 volunteers visiting 103 known Co Galway sites and at least 12 previously unrecorded sites during the weekend of Jan 17th/18th. Well done to Marianne and to all who took part. Likewise to Chris Peppiatt and all involved in the Galway Bay Counts. The final one of the year is on Sunday 8th March. If interested in taking part contact Chris (chris.peppiatt@iol.ie). The first-Saturday-of-the-month Nimmo's Pier outings continue: there were 30 birdwatchers at the January one! Why not get involved? It's the ideal way to see some birds, get advice and generally meet up with other birdwatchers. Thank you, Tom Cuffe!

On Jan 14th I attended a session of the public tribunal hearings on the Galway Port extension proposals. I did so to support the submission being made by Siobhán Egan from BirdWatch Ireland HQ. In this she outlined the reservations that BirdWatch has in relation to the impact on birds in this important site. The proposals for Galway Bay are far reaching and fundamental and it is only right that we made clear our concerns for the well-being of the tens of thousands of seabirds for whom Inner Galway Bay is a vital habitat. Sincere thanks to Shiohán, her colleague Karen and all at BWI HQ for this.

NS

GALWAY CITY YEAR LIST

How many species could I see in a calendar year within the city boundary? This was a small challenge I set for myself for 2014. I used the Galway City Council Administrative boundary (viewable here: http://www.water.galwaycity.ie/gcc_mapconnect/showDatasearchmax.aspx) and counted species seen within this defined area between January 1st 2014 and December 31st 2014. Species seen *from* but not *within* this boundary were not counted, with the exception of species seen from the coast. Species which were heard but not seen were not included in the totals.

A quick scroll through the species list indicated that 100 species would be achievable with relatively little effort. 130 species would require some effort and 150 species would require effort, planning, strong westerly winds at the right time of year and a not small amount of luck. With this in mind I set 150 species as a target to aim for.

January

The first species on the list was Starling in the back garden. Howling winds awaited me at Silver Strand

as did 30 species. A quick spin to Lough Atalia came up trumps with a Gadwall – a species that was on the list of 'probables' I had drawn up. The weather calmed down and I ended the day in fine form with a pair of Barn Owls at dusk, ending the first day of 2014 with 46 species. A walk on the Salthill promenade with the kids late on the afternoon of January 4th to witness the damage caused by the recent storms saw lady luck smile on me in the form of a stunning adult Ross's Gull. Other unexpected January birds were a Barnacle Goose at South Park and a small flock of Greenland White-fronted Geese flying just within the city boundary at Angliham. Tricky species such as Kingfisher, Woodcock and Common Scoter were all recorded in January and I ended the month with Scaup as species no. 96.

February

Quality rather than quantity defined February. A Hen Harrier (the first of four recorded during the year) at Menlo became the first of seven new species added to the list, followed by Raven, Merlin, Forster's Tern (100), Black-tailed Godwit, Jack Snipe and Lesser Black-backed Gull. Total 103.

March

Early migrants were the target for March. Chiffchaff, Manx Shearwater, Willow Warbler and Wheatear all came easily. Reed Bunting took some effort but a Dipper at Mill Street was a potentially tricky species nicely in the bag. Total to date 108.

April

A further 19 species were recorded in April. Rarity of the month went to a Roseate Tern at Lough Rusheen but the highlight was a Buzzard soaring high over NUIG before drifting towards Dangan to soar with a second Buzzard. Total to date 127.

May

Pomarine and Great Skuas, Swift and Sanderling brought the total to 131.

June

Three species were added in June. Storm Petrel, as expected, was easily attained off Silver Strand. Water Rail and Spotted Flycatcher took quite a bit of patience. Total to date 134.

July

Long-eared Owl was the only addition to the list in July. Efforts to locate calling adults earlier in the year proved fruitless but a family party giving great views on a lovely July evening was one of the highlights of the year. Total to date 135.

August

Much-hoped for strong onshore winds never materialised and a single Sooty Shearwater at Silver Strand was a good find in an extremely poor year for seawatching. A single Ruff at Lough Rusheen brought the total to 137.

September

Completely unexpected was the Great White Egret which flew past one evening at Angliham. Curlew Sandpiper and Little Stint, both at Lough Rusheen, were welcome additions. Total to date 140.

October Whooper Swan, Spotted Redshank and Long-tailed Duck were soon on the list. A juvenile

Long-tailed Skua off Silver Strand was a species I thought would have been easier to come by. A Leach's Petrel at the same site on the 25th of October proved to be the last addition to the list for the year. Total to date 145.

A number of species were recorded within the city boundary in 2014 which I did not manage to see. These included Little Auk, Snow Bunting, Grey Phalarope, Yellow-legged Gull, Slaty-backed Gull, White-tailed Eagle and Yellow-browed Warbler. A notable omission on the list is Fieldfare which, despite much effort, I was unable to find. Overall, I found it to be a most enjoyable effort and intend to repeat the process in a few years' time to see what, if any, difference there will be between the lists.

Aonghus O Donail

GALWAY YEAR LIST MARK 2

Like Aonghus I too did a year list of the birds I saw during 2014. It was less focussed than his and in general confined to the Headford area plus, for seabirds, those that I saw at Nimmo's Pier and on Galway Bay counts. I used the Birdtrack App on my phone by just keying in the birds as I saw them. This excellent site then puts the species and location on a map and gives a detailed summary of all you records. I would recommend this site to anyone with a suitable phone. You can also access it on your laptop.

In my case, I saw 110 species - quite modest as keen birdwatching goes but perhaps an encouragement and indication of what an 'ordinary' birdwatcher can achieve. Like Aonghus, I saw the vast bulk of records in the first two months, with an additional burst of summer arrivals. The really interesting challenge is then to add those remaining species, *i.e.* the elusive final five to ten percent of your eventual total. Imagine my joy when, late in the year, I picked up Kingfisher, Water Rail, Marsh Harrier and the long-sought Treecreeper and Spotted Flycatcher.

Finally, there is what you can see on a 'local patch'. This is usually defined as a small area perhaps around your house or within the limits of a regularly covered favourite walk. In 2014, Deirdre Comerford recorded a remarkable 63 species in such a small walk area in Luimnagh.

All in all, I recommend adding recording to everyday birdwatching as it adds greatly to the enjoyment of every walk and outing.

NS

MARINE LITTER RESEARCH – HELP SAVE OUR SEABIRDS

Research is being conducted at Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) to assess the impact of marine litter on seabirds and their potential as a monitoring tool for marine litter in Ireland. Countless marine species have been known to ingest debris that looks like their prey. Seabirds are highly



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affected. Because debris such as plastic is buoyant, seabirds mistake it for food when searching for prey on the sea surface. Pieces of plastic can be particularly hard to regurgitate for some species and they tend to accumulate them in their stomachs, leaving no space for real food and causing the animals to starve. The main research questions are:

- What is the potential for using fulmars as a monitoring tool in Ireland?
- What are the alternatives for plastic monitoring in seabirds?

Anyone who can provide me with samples or would like to volunteer to help with beach monitoring, please contact me directly through the details below

Phone: 086 3615575

E-Mail: heidi.acampora@research.gmit.ie

Blog: <http://plasticides.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.gmit.ie/research-marine-biology/help-needed-gmit-seabird-project>

Heidi Acampora

FROM STRAUBING TO NIMMO'S PIER

On Thursday October 23rd 2014, a group of 34 pupils from Tuam's Twin Town, Straubing in Bavaria, Germany, visited Nimmo's Pier for an introduction to birdwatching in Ireland under the guidance of Tom Cuffe, Willi Kiefel and 2 teachers from Straubing, Beate Seibold and Christian Schwarz.

The students came as part of the ongoing "Student Exchange Programme" between Tuam and Straubing. Every year, for over 25 years, a group of pupils, aged 14-16, from 5 schools in Straubing visit Tuam and its hinterland for 10 days. While they spend some time at school, they are also encouraged to experience the very different natural environment of the West of Ireland.

The birdwatching trip has only recently been added by the Tuam-Straubing Twinning Committee, the facilitators of the exchange programs on the Tuam side. This was already the 2nd such birdwatching visit to Nimmo's Pier (the inaugural one took place in October 2013 under "terrible weather" conditions. This year, this group of pupils was luckier with the weather and also the number and variety of birds they saw).

Some of the pupils had some limited experience in birdwatching in their local environment, mainly around the Danube River. But Tom Cuffe's tour was a different kettle of fish altogether. From the general introductory "Talk on Nimmo's Pier and The Galway Bay Bird Habitat" many students also got their first experience with birdwatching equipment such as binoculars and telescopes. In fact, Tom had managed to provide all 34 pupils and the 2 teachers with a set of binoculars.

In order to keep the interest up for the tour, Tom gave all pupils a "Galway Bay Bird Guide" in both English and German in the form of a "score card". By the way, Tom had prepared the German version himself!

Many pupils asked Tom (mainly) and also myself a lot of questions, especially on the "rare birds"

which Tom pointed out, but also general questions on the sea and marine environment. The tour itself stretched from Nimmo's Pier to the entry to the causeway to Mutton Island. It lasted 90 minutes.

When they left Tuam for Straubing the next day, the teachers as well as a number of the students thanked the Twinning Committee for including Nimmo's Pier in the program. I'm also sure that some of them will show their parents and friends at home their scores of the birds they saw in Galway.

Last but not least, the "Straubinger Tagblatt" carried a small report on 30/10/2014 on this exchange program with a specific mention of the tour on Nimmo's Pier with a group photograph.

Willi Kiefel

SEASONAL PASSINGS

This Christmas, Fr James Kelly of the Tuam Archdiocese - a lifelong friend - wrote me a poem by way of Christmas greeting which I feel should get a wider audience. Especially for those of us who have used up a nearly full quota of years, the arrival and departure of our migrant birds takes on special meaning as we might reflect on how often we have seen them come and depart.

NS

FAREWELL

*I should know after all these years
but it still comes as a surprise
that late September evening
the air ominously still
even though the overhanging wires above
are draped in wings
each swallow draped in private fear
intuiting a journey call*

*Next evening I searched eagerly
but there was nothing there
they had kept their tryst with me
had made their last farewell
after all the summer I had watched for them
and now they were gone
and something of myself went with them*

Fr James Kelly

RAPTORS IN THE FAR EAST OF GALWAY

Earlier in the day, I had watched a Kestrel on the summit of a ridge of milled peat, hunched over and plucking at a prey item for almost half an hour as the sun rose just to the right of it. Now I could see two small falcons facing me, perched not twenty metres from each other on the top of a ragged pile of odd-shaped fossil bogwood. Both birds could have been an extension of the wood pile, in colour and attitude, the work of some sculptor who was expert in carving remarkably life-like images of birds. The left hand bird was a female Merlin; it showed its brown/grey wings when preening and its flanks, ruffling in the wind, were white with dark

markings. I looked over to the other falcon sitting there. It seemed the same size and I was about to jump to a hasty conclusion that this too was a Merlin when it rose and flew a few metres from the pile, hovered not far from the ground and returned to its perch. Nature is generous in giving her clues. I could now study at leisure the differences between Merlin and Kestrel. The Merlin slipped away close to the ground and the Kestrel flew to the top of a tree. In the past month, a Peregrine had disturbed an unseen flock of Greenland White-fronted Geese from the nearby River Suck callows; a Sparrowhawk had rushed past me inches from the ground; and a juvenile male Hen Harrier had floated determinedly past this same pile of bogwood. The fossil bogwood collection is the remains of woodland gradually overwhelmed and laid waste by encroaching *Sphagnum* bog several thousand years ago. Even as I walk past, rich russet-coloured stumps of Scots Pine are still being plucked by a digger from just beneath the present black milled peat surface and placed in linear piles on the edge of the production field. In situ these stumps and fallen logs might be regarded as a museum; piled up like this they look like museum items, albeit not rare items, carelessly stored on some backroom shelf. Examining the pile I could imagine woodland of tall buttressed Scots Pines with occasional fine oaks. Perhaps a Goshawk lived there with a Merlin nesting on the encroaching bog. A Peregrine would still have found abundant wildfowl to pursue on the callows of the river snaking through a landscape which was becoming ever boggier thousands of years ago.

Stephen Heery

SABINE AND HIS GULL

General Sir Edward Sabine (1788-1883) combined a successful military career with notable achievements in physics and astronomy, as well as being an explorer. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1818 and was the Royal Society's Treasurer from 1859 until 1861 and its President between 1862 and 1871. The gull was discovered by Edward's brother Joseph, who named it after his famous sibling, on the expedition in search of the Northwest Passage led by John Ross in 1818. (John Ross was the uncle of James Clark Ross of Ross's Gull fame). Sir Edward was the expedition's astronomer and geologist but as a keen ornithologist he was also expected to write up the expedition's zoological findings. Ross and Edward quarreled however and the task fell to the ship's surgeon and assistant surgeon. It was then edited and corrected by William Leach. Following the dispute, Joseph Sabine was quick to publish 'A Memoir of the birds of Greenland' in the *Transactions of the Linnean Society* in 1819 before the official report could appear and also wrote the official description the gull himself.

From: *Whose Bird?* by Bo Beolens and Ml. Watkins

BirdWatch Galway (Branch of BirdWatch Ireland) 4th.Quarter 2014

QUARTERLY BIRD REPORT COMPILED BY CHRIS PEPIATT

DATE OF ISSUE: 23rd August 2015

1st October: Pied Flycatcher, 2 Willow Warbler, 3 Chiffchaff, & Jack Snipe, Slyne Head (Dermot Breen & Aonghus O'Donaill). (1)

2nd October: Yellow-browed Warbler, Waterside, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donaill).

3rd October: Hoopoe, Cleggan village (J. Power & F. O'Connell).

4th October: 1st Win. Little Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Ted Little).

5th October: Juv. Common Rosefinch, Inishbofin (B. Sheridan, M. McLoughlin, J. Power, F. O'Connell & B. Wheeler).

5th October: Rose-coloured Starling, Inishbofin (per Irish Birding).

5th October: 2 Peregrine, Inishmore (Hubert Servignat).

5th October: Leach's Petrel, Pomarine Skua, 2 Arctic Skua, Common Sandpiper, Willow Warbler & 5 Chiffchaff, Inishmore (Andrea Kelly, Paul Kelly & Dermot Breen).

5th October: Male Merlin, Scaillp an Chat, Inverin (Lorcan Scott).

6th October: Lapland Bunting, 7 Willow Warbler & 14 Chiffchaff, Inishmore (Andrea Kelly, Paul Kelly & Dermot Breen).

6th October: 2 (Ad. & Juv.) Pomarine Skua, Galway Bay (Niall Keogh).

6th October: 2 Juv. Common Rosefinch, 3 Grey Phalarope, 4 Great Skua & Sooty Shearwater, Inishbofin (B. Sheridan, M. McLoughlin, J. Power, F. O'Connell & B. Wheeler).

6th October: 7 Chiffchaff, Slyne Head (Aonghus O'Donaill).

7th October: Barred Warbler, Whinchat & Yellow-browed Warbler, Inishbofin (B. Sheridan, M. McLoughlin, J. Power, F. O'Connell & B. Wheeler).

7th October: Common Buzzard, Clarinbridge (Mark Helmore).

7th October: Garden Warbler & Pomarine Skua, Inishmore (Andrea & Paul Kelly).

7th October: Kingfisher, Mannin, Ballyconneely (Kevin Cathcart).

8th October: Tree Pipit, Kilmurvey Wood, Inishmore (Andrea & Paul Kelly).

8th October: 2 Pomarine Skua, Inishmore (Andrea Kelly, Paul Kelly & Dermot Breen).

8th October: 2 Whinchat, Pied Flycatcher, Whitethroat & 80+ Barnacle Goose, Inishbofin (B. Sheridan, M. McLoughlin, J. Power, F. O'Connell & B. Wheeler).

8th October: Kingfisher, Lough Atalia, Galway city (Neil Ellis).

9th October: Pectoral Sandpiper, Muckrush, Lough Corrib (Aonghus O'Donaill).

9th October: Yellow-browed Warbler, Inishmore (Hugh Delaney).

9th October: Garden Warbler, 2 Brambling & 5 Great Skua, Inishbofin (B. Sheridan, M. McLoughlin, J. Power, F. O'Connell & B. Wheeler).

10th October: 2 Yellow-browed Warbler, 3 Blackcap & 3 Redpoll (one poss. North-western-type), Inishmore (Dermot Breen).

10th October: Yellow-browed Warbler, 2 Brambling & Ring Ouzel, Inishbofin (B. Sheridan, M. McLoughlin, J. Power, F. O'Connell & B. Wheeler).

11th October: Fieldfare, Reed Warbler, 2 Brambling & 4 Snow Bunting, Inishbofin (B. Sheridan, M. McLoughlin, J. Power, F. O'Connell & B. Wheeler).

11th October: Probable Semi-palmated Sandpiper & 3 Little Stint, Lough Rusheen, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donaill).

12th October: 1st Win. Fem. Lesser Scaup, Rahasane turlough (Dermot Breen & Cathal Forkan).

12th October: 1st Win. Glaucous Gull, 1st Win. Little Gull, 3 Little Stint & Spotted Redshank, Rusheen Bay, Galway city (Dermot Breen, Cathal Forkan & Aonghus O'Donaill).

12th October: 6 Spotted Redshank, Kilcaimin (Dermot Breen & Cathal Forkan).

12th October: 14 Greenland White-fronted Goose, Rahasane turlough (Dave Suddaby).

13th October: Black-necked Grebe, Ballinakill Harbour (Dermot Breen).

13th October: Red-breasted Flycatcher & 3 Yellow-browed Warbler, Inishbofin (Anthony McGeehan).

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| 14th October: 2 Yellow-browed Warbler, Jack Snipe & Common Buzzard, Slyne Head (Dermot Breen & Aonghus O'Donaill). |
| 14th October: Common Buzzard & Kingfisher, Ringeelaun (Paul Troake). |
| 14th October: Pied Flycatcher & 5 Brambling, Inishbofin (Anthony McGeehan). |
| 15th October: 38 Arctic Skua, 6 Pomarine Skua, 2 Long-tailed Duck, 5 Common Scoter, 2-1st Win. Little Gull & 1st Win. Mediterranean Gull, 10:30-11:15, Sliver Strand, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donaill). |
| 15th October: 116 Arctic Skua, 17 Pomarine Skua, 4 Great Skua & 4 Long-tailed Duck, 17:00-18:30, Sliver Strand, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donaill). |
| 15th October: 3 Brambling, Inishbofin (Anthony McGeehan). |
| 16th October: Arctic Skua & 2 Long-tailed Duck, Sliver Strand, Galway city (Ted Little). |
| 18th October: 20 Arctic Skua, 1 Pomarine Skua, 1,000 Kittiwake & 150 Gannet, between Sliver Strand and Bearna (Chris Peppiatt). |
| 18th October: 2 (1st Win. & Ad.) Mediterranean Gull, Juv. Little Gull, Great Skua, Pomarine Skua & Merlin, Kileenaran (Paul Troake). |
| 18th October: 2nd Win. Mediterranean Gull & Juv. Pomarine Skua, Traught (Paul Troake). |
| 18th October: Ad. Mediterranean Gull, Corranroo Bay (Paul Troake). |
| 19th October: 155 Arctic Skua, 20 Pomarine Skua, 5 Great Skua, 2 Storm Petrel & 8 Little Gull, 08:30-11:10, Sliver Strand, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donaill). |
| 19th October: 1st Win. Little Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Chris Peppiatt). |
| 19th October: 17 Pomarine Skua, 12 Arctic Skua, Great Skua, 3(2nd Win. & 2-1st Win.) Little Gull, 6 Storm Petrel, Long-tailed Duck & Merlin, Silver Strand, Galway city (Paul Troake). |
| 19th October: 5 Pomarine Skua, 5 Arctic Skua, Great Skua, 1st Win. Little Gull & 1st Win. Mediterranean Gull, Blackrock, Salthill, Galway city (Paul Troake). |
| 19th October: Spotted Redshank, 3(2-1st Win. & Ad.) Mediterranean Gull & 2(1st Win. & 2nd Win.) Little Gull, Rusheen Bay, Galway city (Paul Troake). |
| 20th October: Merlin, Tarrea Pier (Paul Troake). |
| 20th October: 33 Little Egret, Kilcaimin (Neil Ellis). |
| 21st October: Juv. American Golden Plover, Aillebrack, Ballyconneely (Dermot Breen). (2) |
| 21st October: 23 Arctic Skua, 10 Pomarine Skua, 6 Storm Petrel, 3 Little Gull, Little Stint & Merlin, 08:30-11:10, Sliver Strand/Rusheen Bay, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donaill). |
| 23rd October: 5 Redwing, Toureen (Paul Troake). |
| 24th October: Juv. Long-tailed Skua, 23 Arctic Skua, 3 Pomarine Skua, Storm Petrel, Ad. Little Gull & 1st Win. Mediterranean Gull, Silver Strand, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donaill). |
| 25th October: 4 Leach's Petrel & Grey Phalarope, one kilometre South of Mutton Island, Galway city, from the RV Celtic Explorer (Ciaran Cronin). |
| 25th October: 2 Leach's Petrel, 10 Little Gull, 10 Pomarine Skua, 2 Arctic Skua & Ad. Mediterranean Gull, Silver Strand, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donaill). |
| 25th October: 1st Win. Mediterranean Gull, Rusheen Bay, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donaill). |
| 25th October: Male Long-tailed Duck, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Cathal Forkan). |
| 25th October: White-tailed Eagle, Muckrush, Lough Corrib (Neil Ellis). |
| 25th October: Merlin, Barranny, Lough Corrib (Neil Ellis). |
| 26th October: 4 Snow Bunting, Ballyloughaun, Galway city (Mike Russell). |
| 27th October: 3 Snow Bunting, Inishmore (Mick Boyle). |
| 27th October: 3 Storm Petrel, Leach's Petrel, Pomarine Skua & Imm. Mediterranean Gull, Mutton Island, Galway city (Marcin Pisula). |
| 28th October: 47 Red-breasted Merganser, Mannin Bay, Ballyconneely (Miryam & Michael Harris). |
| 30th October: Great White Egret, Tarrea Pier (Paul Troake). |
| 31st October: 3 Dipper, Lough Muc, near Lettergesh (Miryam & Michael Harris). |
| 31st October: Siberian (' <i>tristis</i> ' race) Chiffchaff, Inishbofin (Anthony McGeehan). (3) |

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| 1st November: Garden Warbler, Inishbofin (Anthony McGeehan). |
| 1st November: 3 Whooper Swan, Kinvara (Paul Troake). |
| 1st November: Sum. plumage Black-throated Diver & 2 Sandwich Tern, Traught (Paul Troake). |
| 2nd November: Ringtail Hen Harrier, Baranny, Lough Corrib (Neil Ellis). |
| 3rd November: Ad. Little Gull, Nr. Renmore Golf Course (Neil Ellis). |
| 3rd November: 2 Eider, Inishbofin (Anthony McGeehan). |
| 4th November: 1st Win. Glaucous Gull, Lough Anillaun, Cleggan (Dermot Breen). |
| 6th November: Fem. Long-tailed Duck, Ballinakill Lough, Cleggan (Dermot Breen). |
| 6th November: Kingfisher & Dipper, Galway city, canal (Josh Baryia). |
| 10th November: 1st Win. Mediterranean Gull, Corranroo bay (Paul Troake). |
| 15th November: 2 (male & ringtail) Hen Harrier, Muckrush, Lough Corrib (Neil Ellis). |
| 16th November: Male Ring-necked Duck, Lough Rea (Dermot Breen). |
| 16th November: 2 Ad. Ring-billed Gull & 1st Win. Mediterranean Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Tom Cuffe). |
| 16th November: Marsh Harrier, Muckrush, Lough Corrib (Neil Sharkey & Eamonn Delaney). |
| 23rd November: Great White Egret, Aughinish, Co. Clare (Chris Peppiatt). |
| 23rd November: Ad. Win. Forster's Tern, Kinvara Bay (Chris Peppiatt). |
| 23rd November: Red-necked Grebe, 1.5 km north of Menlo, Lough Corrib (Seamus Cuddy). |
| 24th November: Black-necked Grebe & Black-throated Diver, Ballinakill Harbour (Dermot Breen). |
| 28th November: Yellowhammer, Ballinderreen turlough (Paul Troake). |
| 29th November: Ad. Yellow-legged Gull, 1st Win. Iceland Gull & 1st Win. Glaucous Gull, Roscam Point, Oranmore (Dermot Breen). |
| 29th November: 1st Win. Ring-billed Gull & 1st Win. Glaucous Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Tom Cuffe & Dermot Breen). |
| 30th November: 3 (1st Win., 2nd Win. & Ad.) Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Dermot Breen). (4) |
| 30th November: Peregrine, Killeeneen, Craughwell (Ralph Wheatley). |
| 1st December: Great White Egret, Curraghline, Lough Corrib (Neil Ellis). (5) |
| 2nd December: 30 Greenland White-fronted Goose & 50 Whooper Swan, Belclare turlough (Ted Little). |
| 2nd December: Dipper, River Clarin, Athenry (Peter Capsey). |
| 6th December: 3 (2nd Win. & 2-Ad.) Ring-billed Gull & 1st Win. Little Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Cathal Forkan). |
| 7th December: 1st Win. Little Gull & 3 Sandwich Tern (including a colour-ringed individual from Grampian), Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Dermot Breen <i>et al.</i>). |
| 13th December: White-tailed Eagle, 2 Hen Harrier & Merlin, Lough Corrib (Dermot Breen & Cathal Forkan). |
| 13th December: Male Ring-necked Duck & 3 Long-tailed Duck, Lough Rea (Dermot Breen & Cathal Forkan). |
| 15th December: 1st Win. Glaucous Gull & 2nd Win. Iceland Gull, Rossaveal (Dermot Breen). |
| 15th December: Ad. Win. Forster's Tern, Mutton Island, Galway city (Tom Murtagh). |
| 15th December: 140 Barnacle Goose, Cruagh Island (John Lovatt). |
| 15th December: 2 Eider, Cleggan Bay, (John Lovatt). (6) |
| 16th December: 6-7 Chough, Bunowen Castle, Ballyconneely (Ted Little). |
| 20th December: Little Auk & Ad. Win. Forster's Tern, Newtownlynch Pier, Nr. Kinvara (Dermot Breen). |
| 20th December: 4 (1st Win., 2nd Win. & 2-Ad. Win.) Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Dermot Breen). |
| 20th December: Sparrowhawk, Bohermore, Galway city (Jonathan Cripps). |
| 24th December: 1st Win. Iceland Gull & 3(1st Win., 2nd Win. & Ad. Win.) Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's |

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| Pier, Galway city (Tom Cuffe). |
| 27th December: Ad. Win. Forster's Tern, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Aonghus O'Donail). |
| 27th December: 4 (1st Win., 2nd Win. & 2Ad. Win.) Ring-billed Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Pat Lonergan). |
| 30th December: Merlin, Tullycross (Andrew Kelly). |
| 31st December: 1st Win. Ring-billed Gull & Ad. Win. Mediterranean Gull, Nimmo's Pier, Galway city (Cathal Forkan). |
| 31st December: 56 Greenland White-fronted Goose & 5 Whooper Swan, Belclare turlough (Neil Ellis). |
| 31st December: Siberian (' <i>tristis</i> ' race) Chiffchaff, Inishbofin (Anthony McGeehan). |
| 31st December: 2 Peregrine & 1st Win. Mediterranean Gull, Kinvara (Paul Troake). |

NOTES:

- (1) This Pied Flycatcher may be the same bird as was present at Slyne Head on the 26th and 28th of September 2014.
- (2) This American Golden Plover was again present on the 22nd and 24th of October and the 3rd of November.
- (3) This Siberian Chiffchaff was again present on the 1st, 4th and 5th of November.
- (4) The same number and ages of Ring-billed Gull were also present at Nimmo's Pier of the 7th December 2014.
- (5) This Great White Egret (in all probability the same bird that was present on the south side of Galway Bay on the 30th October and 23rd November 2014) was again present at Lough Corrib (this time in the Muckrush area) on the 7th, 8th, 13th and 15th of December 2014.
- (6) These two Eider may well have been the same birds that were recorded at Inishbofin on the 3rd of November 2014.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Ring-necked Duck, Pectoral Sandpiper, American Golden Plover, unconfirmed Semi-palmated Sandpiper, Yellow-legged Gull, Hoopoe, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Tree Pipit, Ring Ouzel, Rose-coloured Starling, at least 2 Common Rosefinch, Barred Warbler & at least 9 Yellow-browed Warbler.

FIRST WINTER MIGRANTS:

Barnacle Goose (8th October), Fieldfare (11th October), Greenland White-fronted Goose (12th October), Redwing (23rd October), Whooper Swan (1st November).

OTHER BEASTIES:

Otter: Bridge Lough, Nr. Traught, 23rd November (Chris Peppiatt).