



# Big Bird Count

## Report 2024

*27th - 30th September 2024*



# Introduction

Between September 27th and 30th 2024 Glamorgan Bird Club carried out its first Big Bird Count where members visited local sites and recorded the bird species present. A total of 28 members covered 30 sites and compiled 37 lists. In total over the four days the club recorded 95 species including two Black Terns and a Firecrest.

The data is presented in the report below, laid out as follows:

1. [A list of the sites covered classified as garden locations, town/city locations, local sites or major sites.](#)
  2. [A map of the recording area with count locations marked.](#)
  3. [Weather report for the recording days.](#)
  4. [The species list. Additionally, the number of appearances on lists is recorded to give an idea of how widespread that species is and comments highlight points of interest.](#)
  5. [Additional information for Chiffchaff, Black Tern, Firecrest and Green Sandpiper.](#)
  6. [Best bird, best list and best photo.](#)
  7. [Next year's spring BBC dates.](#)
-

# Sites Covered

## **Garden Sites: 4**

- Rudry
- Lisvane, Cardiff
- Tonteg
- Caerphilly

## **Town/City Sites: 7**

- Bridgend centre
- Bute Park, Cardiff
- Grangemoor Park, Cardiff
- Porthcawl seafront
- Caerphilly moat
- Roath Park, Cardiff
- Taff embankment, Cardiff

## **Major Sites: 7**

- Kenfig
- Nash Point
- Dunraven Bay area
- Llanishen and Lisvane Reservoirs

- Portobello and Ogmore
- Cosmeston Country Park
- Aberthaw area

## **Local Sites: 12**

- Watermill flood, Ogmore
- St Mary Church, VoG
- Upper Church Village
- Sully – playing fields and island
- Cwrt Yr Ala Road (Cardiff) and Salmon Leaps
- Taff Trail – Trallwn to Cilfynydd
- Eglwysilan Road
- Rudry Road
- River Ely, Peterston-Super-Ely
- Llantrisant Common
- Limpert House, Barry
- Rudry Woods

**Total 30**

# Areas Covered

The red dots show areas covered. They don't attempt to mark each site. One dot can indicate an area where a number of sites were covered. E.g. in Cardiff 5 sites were covered.



Map from AA Classic Routefinder.

# Weather Report

Date	Wind Max Gust (mph)	Wind Dir	Wind Description	Total rain (mm)	Max hour- ly rain (mm)	Min temp c	Max temp c	Total sunshine (hrs)
27.09.24	32	NNE	Windy	4.8	3.8	8.2	12.4	1
28.09.24	21	NW	Breezy	0	0	9.7	16.2	2
29.09.24	41	ESE	Gale force gusts	14.6	4.1	9.1	15.1	3
30.09.24	40	WNW	Gale force gusts	1.2	0.6	8.8	14.3	2
Source: WeatherNet. Based on Cowbridge VoG								

Common Name	Scientific Name	List Appearances	Comments
Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	1	1 on the beach at Witch's Point Southerndown
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	8	Large flock at Portobello and 32 on Caerphilly moat.
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	2	
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	13	
Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	1	
Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	2	8 at Roath Park
Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	4	1 on Kenfig Pool. 4 at Aberthaw.
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	18	
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	3	31 at the Watermill Flood, Ogmere
Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	1	2 drakes at Cosmeston CP
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	7	
Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	1	
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	1	
Feral pigeon	<i>Columba livia f. domestica</i>	7	186 at Caerphilly moat.
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	1	
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	31	
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	6	
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	3	2 calling at Kenfig
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	8	
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	9	30 at Cosmeston CP. 43 at Lisvane/Llanishen.

Common Name	Scientific Name	List Appearances	Comments
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	1	
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	10	
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	6	35 at Limpert House, Barry
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	1	1 at Limpert House, Barry
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	4	
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	3	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	2	2 at Ogmore estuary
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	1	Peterston Super Ely
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	1	1 at East Aberthaw
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	3	
Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	2 birds	Observed by JW, Dan J-J, AJ, DFE and AB at Kenfig on 28.09. Found by Neil Donaghy. Also, a second bird on Lisvane Reservoir observed by NMW, VN, AC and TC. Found by JB on the 28th. Present on the 29th and 30th. See additional species information.
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	16	
Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>	2	9 at Porthcawl Seafront and 1 at East Aberthaw
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	22	
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	4	
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	16	
Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	1	



Common Name	Scientific Name	List Appearances	Comments
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	12	
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	4	1 in Bute Park
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	10	
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	9	
Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	1	
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	4	
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	14	13 at Aberthaw
Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	1	
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	5	
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopus major</i>	6	
Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	8	
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	9	
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	1	
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	9	
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	29	
Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	3	Observed from Witch's Point and Nash Point. Also, two at Porthcawl Seafront.
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	27	
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	7	120 in the fields behind Dunraven Bay, 14 at Limpert House, Barry
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	32	

Common Name	Scientific Name	List Appearances	Comments
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	13	9 at Eglwysilan Road
Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	7	
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	22	
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	20	
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	6	9 observed at Eglwysilan Road. 25 at Limpert House, Barry. c20 at Aberthaw.
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	2	
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	17	c100 at Aberthaw
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	6	
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	4	
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	13	
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilos</i>	1	1 at Aberthaw
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	19	29 ringed at Kenfig between 7.30 am and 10.45 am on Sept 28th. See additional species information.
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	6	3 at Aberthaw.
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	1	St Mary Church VoG. Found by RP who reports 9 sightings in the last 7 years here. See additional species information.
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	8	
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	18	
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	3	
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	1	

Common Name	Scientific Name	List Appearances	Comments
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	17	
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	10	
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	4	
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	23	
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	25	
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	12	
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	8	Cwrt Yr Ala Rd, Dunraven, Porthcawl Seafront, Aberthaw and Ogmore-by-Sea.
Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	1	New site discovered (AR)
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	13	
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	15	
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	10	
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	13	8 Highest site count for the observer at that site. 9 at St Mary Church VoG.
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	11	
Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	5	
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	7	
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	5	
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	3	
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	11	40 at Limpert House, Barry
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	18	

Common Name	Scientific Name	List Appearances	Comments
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	2	
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	2	c10 at Aberthaw.
95 species. IOC World Bird List 14.2 Aug 2024			

# Additional Species Information

## Chiffchaff

The BBC weekend coincided with a large movement of migrating Chiffchaffs. This is reflected in the number of lists containing Chiffchaff sightings – 19. Also, in that weekend's ringing totals. Andy Bevan and his ringing team caught 29 juvenile Chiffchaffs between 7.30am and 10.45am on 28.09.24 at Kenfig. When the birds were checked and weighed, they were found to be in good condition. A further 44 Chiffchaffs were ringed at Goldcliff and 15 at Oxwich on that day.



Chiffchaff by Nick McNeil-Watson

## **Black Tern**

Two Black Terns were spotted during the BBC. Recent East Glamorgan records of this rare marsh tern as follows:

2018 – 1 autumn record.

2019 – Good spring for the species in this year with 47 birds recorded. 2 autumn records.

2020 – No records in the spring or autumn.

2021 – 1 spring record (a flock of 10 birds). No autumn records.

2022 – A flock of four birds from Lavernock Point on 14.05 and 15.05. 1 x juv appeared at Lamby Lake on 05.09. The bird was joined by an adult on 10.09. Last sighting of both was on 14/09.

2023 – 2 going up channel observed from Irongate Point, Porthcawl on September 19th.



Black Tern by Tim Collier

## Firecrest

We had one Firecrest recorded. Recent East Glamorgan Firecrest records as follows:

2018 – 4 winter/spring records and 2 autumn records.

2019 – 2 winter/spring records and 10 autumn records.

2020 – 6 winter/spring records and 8 autumn records.

2021 – 11 winter/spring records and 1/ 2 autumn record(s). 1 confirmed breeding record this year also.

2022- 2 spring records and 16 autumn/winter records

2023 - 8 spring records and 13 winter records. One pair including a singing male was recorded in June.



Firecrest by Tim Collier





Green Sandpiper by Nick McNeil-Watson

## **Green Sandpiper**

This is a very important species for us in East Glamorgan. The UK has an estimated wintering population of 290 birds. In Wales we have an over wintering population of between 100-150 birds. We have a nationally significant number of birds who spend approximately 9-10 months of the year on the Ely floodplain, leaving only to breed in northern Scandinavia and Russia in June and July. They are known to be site faithful birds and individuals probably return to the Ely floodplain year after year.

Between November 2020 and January 2024, the Ely Valley Green Sandpiper Study Group surveyed the population wintering along the accessible parts of the Ely from Miskin to St Fagans. The group undertook coordinated monthly counts throughout the late autumn and winter, coinciding with WeBS Core Count dates. Many of the Group are club members and our job was to locate and count all the birds present. The data confirmed the importance of the site with counts of between seven and fifteen birds recorded, although three counts had maximum counts of 18 birds.

Group member, Daniel Jenkins-Jones, wrote a paper on the results which has been published in *Milvus*, the journal of The Welsh Ornithological Society.



# Big Bird Count Winners

As voted for by the committee.

## **Best Bird**

Winner: Black Tern at Lisvane Reservoir (JB)

Runner Up: Firecrest at St Mary Church (RP)

## **Best Photo**

Joint winners: Black Tern, Kenfig (AJ); Wigeon, Roath Park (VN) and Rock Pipit, Ogmore Estuary (AJ).

Runners up: Black Tern in flight, Lisvane Reservoir (NMW) and Mediterranean Gulls, Porthcawl (SR).

## **Best List**

This was a very difficult category to judge as there were many lists where the observer had obviously used a lot of skill however results are as follows:

BBC Best List September 2024 - Aberthaw (RB)

Runners Up: Porthcawl Seafront (SR); St Mary Church (RP); Caerphilly garden list (AJ); Roath Park Lake (VN); Rudry Woods (AB) and Lisvane and Llanishen Reservoirs (NMW).

Well done to all and many thanks to everyone who participated.



TOP: Rock Pipit, Ogmore Estuary by Angharad Jones

BOTTOM: Wigeon, Roath Park by Vicky Newsway





BOTTOM LEFT: Black Tern, Kenfig by Angharad Jones



BOTTOM RIGHT: Black Tern in Flight, Lisvane Reservoir by Nick McNeil-Watson



OUR NEXT EVENT

# BIG BIRD COUNT 2025

*Save the date*

Friday April 25th to Monday April 28th

# Contributors

Adcock, Tim (TA)	Jones, Ceri (CJ)
Banks, Julia (JB)	May, Hilary (HM)
Beck, Sheryl (SB)	McNeil-Watson, Nick (NMW)
Bevan, Andy (AB)	Newsday, Vicky (VN)
Brockway, Richard (RB)	O’Keeffe, Beth (BOK)
Collier, Tim (TC)	Penny, Liz (LP)
Cripps, Alan (AC)	Ponting, Ray (RP)
Duffy, John (JD)	Roberts, William (WR)
Foster Evans, Dylan (DFE)	Robertson, Josh (JR)
Gardiner, Barrie (BG)	Rosney, Alan (AR)
Goodwin, John (JG)	Rosser, Steve (SR)
Jenkins-Jones, Daniel (D J-J)	Western, John (JW)
Johnston, Dave (DJ)	Wilson, John (JDW)
Jones, Angharad (AJ)	

Thanks for additional support to: D J-J for Green Sandpiper information; NMW and TC for photos; TC for helping to draw up the photo shortlist; Jenna Clark for formatting the report.

