

BIRDS OF DURSEY ISLAND, CO. CORK : 2007

with notes on mammals, reptiles, amphibians, butterflies, moths and dragonflies

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Days on which there was some coverage by the author, David Cooke and/or Brendan Finch.

Month	Days with some coverage	Total
January	1 – 2 , 4 – 31	30
February	1 – 6, 10, 17	8
March	3, 5 – 20, 24 – 31	25
April	1 – 15, 21 – 22, 27 – 30	21
May	1 – 8, 13 – 31	27
June	1 – 12, 17, 22 – 27	19
July	7, 13 – 15, 21 – 31	15
August	1 – 31	31
September	1 – 9, 15 – 20, 23, 29 – 30	18
October	3, 5 – 31	28
November	1 – 4, 10, 16 – 18, 24 – 25, 30	11
December	1 – 8, 14 – 31	26
Total		259

The author was present on the island on a total of 210 days as follows:

8 January to 6 February
5 March to 20 March
24 March to 13 April
27 April to 8 May
13 May to 12 June
24 July to 8 September
5 October to 30 October
30 November to 8 December
14 December to 31 December

Coverage again fell some way short of the almost complete coverage achieved in 2005, and there were several serious gaps during the main migration seasons, notably in April, May and September. Once again, Brendan Finch visited the island on virtually every weekend of the year, for a total of 82 days, while David Cooke spent 50 days on the island. Kieran Grace and Tony Lancaster made their annual pilgrimage to West Beara in the autumn, and visited the island on 12 dates between 6 and 20 October. As in 2005 and 2006, coverage of the eastern and central parts of the islands was very good, thanks largely to the efforts of DC and BF, while coverage of the extreme western end of the island was poor, particularly in the first half of the year.

On the whole, the weather was unexceptional. The minimum temperature never fell below 1°C (recorded on three dates in January and once in November), while the maximum temperature only exceeded 20°C on 7 June (20.5°C) and 7 September (21.0°C). After several years with very few severe gales, 2007 produced several big storms reminiscent of the old days; winds of force 9 or more were recorded on 11 January (W 9), 18 January (SW 9), 20 January (NW 9), 5 March (S-SW 9), 18 March (NW 9), 1-2 December (W-NW 9-10) and 8 December (9-11). Rainfall was somewhat above average, especially in the latter part of the year, but there were some unusually long dry spells, notably from 22 January to at least 6 February, from 24 March to at least 13 April, and from 27 April to 6 May. As in 2006, there were few periods of south-easterly winds during the main migration seasons, and this was particular the case during the second half of May and in September.

The spring migration was particularly poor this year, with no big falls of migrants and not a single rarity. The autumn migration also got off to a very poor start, with rather few migrants and no rarities in either August or September. However, October produced a good selection of scarce migrants as well as an Irish “mega-rarity” – the first Wood Lark for Dursey Island. Our year’s total of 117 species was below average and well down on the record of 133 set in 2003. Highlights from an island perspective included the first records of Barn Owl and Wood Lark, the third records of Common Shelduck and Red Knot, the third and fourth records of Water Rail, the fifth record of Whooper Swan, and the sixth record of Little Auk. Species formerly considered to be “rarities” in Ireland included the Little Auk (dead), a Richard’s Pipit, two Barred Warblers and a Common Rosefinch. Great Tits (two pairs), Greenfinches (one pair) and Reed Buntings (one pair) again bred successfully on the island, and at least one pair of Sedge Warblers almost certainly bred after an absence in 2006. However, Peregrine, Eurasian Kestrel and Ringed Plover again failed to breed, and there was a marked decline in the breeding population of Common Starlings to only three or four pairs.

As usual, the year began with a “Big Day” on 1 January, but the weather was unhelpful and despite a good thrash round, the day’s total of 37 was well down on the 42 achieved in 2006. Interesting finds included a Glaucous Gull and a Grey Wagtail. Once again, regular stocking of the bird-feeders in Zuma (Ballynacallagh), the Stapleton’s garden (Kilmichael) and our garden (Tilickafinna) persuaded small numbers of Blue Tits, Great Tits, Chaffinches, Greenfinches and Goldfinches to remain on the island for much of the winter, along with a few Redwings and up to three Reed Buntings. Unusual finds in January and February included a Sparrowhawk on 6 January, a dead Little Auk on 10 January, a Great Northern Diver on 13 and 26 January, a second Glaucous Gull on 14 and 15 January, a Fieldfare on 14 January, two Whooper Swans on 22 January, another Grey Wagtail on 1 February, another Fieldfare on 2 February, the first Lesser Black-backed Gull of the year on 10 February, and a record total of 19 Purple Sandpipers on the lower North Slope on 6 January and again on 17 February.

Early March produced little other than the first Merlin of the year on 10th and a maximum of 18 Purple Sandpipers. The first Goldcrest of the spring appeared on 14 March, and this was followed by the first Northern Wheatear on 15th, the first Chiffchaff on 24th, and the first Blackcap on 26th. Goldcrest numbers had increased to four by 26th, and two Siskin appeared on 27th. The month ended with a Coal Tit in song in Tilickafinna on 31 March – the first spring record of this species on Dursey.

Light north-easterly winds produced a steady trickle of migrants in the first week of April, including four Goldcrests on 1st, a Fieldfare, a Blackcap, four Chiffchaffs and the first Willow Warbler on 2nd, and at least eight Chiffchaffs and another Willow Warbler on 3rd. The first of many Collared Doves and a Lesser Redpoll appeared on 5th; there were two Merlins on 6th, and at least three Blackcaps and another Lesser Redpoll on 7th. The first Whimbrel flew by on 9th, and the spring passage of divers began on 11th with a Red-throated Diver and two Great Northern Divers. The first Barn Swallow also arrived on 11th, along with the only two Sand Martins of the year and yet another Lesser Redpoll. There was another Collared Dove on 12th, as well as a Blackcap and two Willow Warblers. An Iceland Gull was seen at Kilmichael Point and again at the Tip on 14th, when there were still seven Purple Sandpipers on the lower North Slope. Two Eurasian Curlews over the Sound on 15th were very unusual for this time of year. There was then a gap in coverage until 21 April, when the only birds of note were a Wood Pigeon, a couple of Blackcaps and the odd Willow Warbler. The month ended with another Collared Dove on 27th, the first Sedge Warbler on 28th, and four Whimbrel and two Common Whitethroats on 29th.

Light south-easterly winds at the beginning of May produced another Sedge Warbler, another Common Whitethroat and a Spotted Flycatcher on 1st, followed by eight Sedge Warblers, a Reed Warbler, three Blackcaps, six Willow Warblers and a Siskin on 2nd. Most of these birds had left by the next day, but new arrivals included the first Golden Plover of the spring, five Whimbrel and another Collared Dove. The first two small parties of Common Scoters were seen offshore on 5 May and three more Golden Plovers appeared, increasing to four on 6th. The only sizeable flocks of Whimbrel (26 and 31) passed north off the Tip on 6th, along with two Great Skuas, and a Grasshopper Warbler was found in song in Kilmichael late that evening. Two more Great Skuas passed offshore on 7th, but then apart from a few Great Northern Divers at sea, there was little of note until 20 May, when three Common Shelducks flew west over the sea off Tilickafinna. The 20th also produced the first Grey Heron of the spring and yet another Collared Dove. The last ten days of May were very quiet, with little other than another Grey Heron, a Golden Plover and three Sedge Warblers on 26th, two Collared Doves and four House Martins on 28th, and a few Great Northern Divers offshore.

The first ten days of June usually produce a good assortment of late spring migrants including the odd semi-rarity, but despite light south-easterly winds on 1st, 5th and 8th/9th, this year was very disappointing, with only a Collared Dove and a Spotted Flycatcher on 1st, two more Collared Doves and a Willow Warbler on 5th, and a Wood Pigeon on 6th. At sea, two Pomarine Skuas passed north off the Tip on 3rd. A Chiffchaff on 11th was the last migrant of the spring, and the rest of the month was very quiet.

July was unusually quiet, with nothing of note except an early Chiffchaff on 15th, and three Black-headed Gulls and a Willow Warbler on 31st. However, there was a little flurry of activity in early August as the autumn migration got underway. A Common Sandpiper was found at Kilmichael Point on 4th, the first two Sooty Shearwaters appeared offshore on 5th, and the first Sparrowhawk of the autumn turned up on 6th. A Grey Heron and several House

Martins were present on 7th and 8th, while several small flocks of Common Scoters passed by at sea. Another Willow Warbler arrived on 8th, and this was followed by a Common Whitethroat on 9th. The middle of the month was very quiet, with little other than a Whimbrel on 17th, but light northerly and north-easterly breezes in the last week of August produced the first of several Willow Warblers on 23rd, three Common Snipe on 25th, another Grey Heron, a Whimbrel, an early Goldcrest and two House Sparrows on 26th, the first Merlin of the autumn on 28th, and the first Grey Wagtail on 29th. The two House Sparrows remained in Tilickafinna until 3 September, with one individual lingering on until at least 9th.

September began well with a Red Knot on Illanebeg on 2nd. Light variable winds from 4th to 9th produced a trickle of migrants, including a Merlin and four House Martins on 4th, a Sedge Warbler, a Garden Warbler, a Spotted Flycatcher and the first two Blue Tits of the autumn on 6th, a Common Whitethroat, another Garden Warbler, another Goldcrest and the first Chaffinch of the autumn on 7th, three Grey Wagtails and another Spotted Flycatcher on 8th, and five House Martins, another Goldcrest and a third Spotted Flycatcher on 9th. However, there was then a gap in coverage until the middle of the month, when there was little of note except a few Willow Warblers, a Goldcrest on 15th, a Merlin on 16th, a Whimbrel on 18th, and a Grey Heron on 20th. Thereafter coverage was patchy to the end of the month, and the only birds of note were a Grey Heron on 23rd, and a Common Whitethroat and a Pied Flycatcher on 30th.

There was no coverage on 1 and 2 October, and the only birds of note on 3rd were a Blackcap, two Willow Warblers, a Goldcrest and five Blue Tits. Full coverage was resumed in the afternoon of 5 October, by which time the wind had swung round to the south-east. The only birds of note found that day were a Merlin, a Lesser Whitethroat, two Chiffchaffs, a Willow Warbler and a Siskin, but the next day brought a substantial fall of migrants including a Richard's Pipit, a Redwing, a Barred Warbler, a second Lesser Whitethroat, three Blackcaps, no less than six Yellow-browed Warblers, five Chiffchaffs, two Siskins, 12 Lesser Redpolls, a Lapland Bunting, and the first little flocks of Chaffinches and Goldfinches. This marked the beginning of a very interesting ten-day period with a good turnover of night migrants and some interesting long-staying individuals, notably two Lesser Whitethroats (one of which remained until 17th) and four Yellow-browed Warblers (one of which remained until 16th). The undoubted highlight of 7th was a Barn Owl in the garden at Zuma, but the Richard's Pipit was still around and new arrivals included the first Hen Harrier and another Redwing. The next day produced the first Arctic Tern of the autumn and the only Ring Ouzel of the year – an obliging bird which remained until 11th. Sea-watching on 10th produced six more Arctic Terns along with two Sooty Shearwaters, while on land there was a Black Redstart and a Lapland Bunting. Following a night of light variable winds, the 11th produced an interesting crop of migrants including a second Hen Harrier, a Long-eared Owl, a Yellow Wagtail, a Whinchat, another Barred Warbler, another Lesser Whitethroat and a Common Rosefinch, as well as the first Arctic Skua of the year. New arrivals on 12th included a Stock Dove, another Black Redstart, two more Yellow-browed Warblers and at least 100 Siskins, while 13th produced another Hen Harrier, a Short-eared Owl, two more Black Redstarts, a Common Redstart, another Whinchat and a Mistle Thrush. On 14th, 11 Golden Plovers was seen flying over Kilmichael, but the main interest was at sea, with seven Sooty Shearwaters, 30 Grey Phalaropes and 12 Great Skuas appearing off the Tip. There were still at least 21 Grey Phalaropes off the Tip on 15th, along with the first Great Northern Diver of the autumn and

another Arctic Tern, while elsewhere on the island there were two more Black Redstarts and a male Snow Bunting. The only new arrivals on 16th were a few more Chiffchaffs (bringing the total to at least 14), but 17th produced a Water Rail in Tilickafinna, a Black-headed Gull off the Tip, the first Rooks (10) and Jackdaws (2) of the year, and another House Sparrow. The first Fieldfare of the autumn arrived on 18th along with two more Rooks, while a male Snow Bunting seen at the Tip may have been the same individual as that on 15th. A strong southerly breeze on 18th had backed to SSE by the morning of 19th, and this produced another interesting fall of migrants including a Jack Snipe, a Stock Dove, a Wood Pigeon, three Black Redstarts, 30 Fieldfares, another Yellow-browed Warbler (the ninth of the autumn) and two Firecrests on 19th, followed by a Long-eared Owl, a Wood Lark, two more Black Redstarts, 40 Fieldfares, two more Firecrests, a Brambling and 60 Siskins on 20th. The Wood Lark was seen again early the next morning, along with one of the Firecrests and the Brambling, but the only new arrival on 21st was a Garden Warbler. There was little of note on 22nd other than an Arctic Tern, a new Black Redstart and as many as 50 Fieldfares, and the only new arrival on 23rd was a fine adult male Black Redstart, but a south-easterly breeze that night produced another influx of migrants on 24th including 11 Redwings, more Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs, another Jackdaw, two Rooks, 100 Chaffinches and two Bramblings. Most of these birds moved off quickly, and there was little of note for the next few days except four Merlins, four House Sparrows and at least 150 Chaffinches on 25th, two more Bramblings on 26th, and a Hen Harrier and four Purple Sandpipers on 28th. A sea-watch from the Tip on 29th produced an immature Sabine's Gull along with two Sooty Shearwaters and a late Arctic Skua; Purple Sandpiper numbers had increased to seven, and another Black Redstart appeared in Tilickafinna. The month ended quietly with two Eurasian Curlews and a Brambling on 30th, and nothing of note on 31st.

November began with a Brambling in Kilmichael on 1st and 2nd. A small influx of migrants on 3rd included a Fieldfare, 25 Redwings, two Blackcaps, eight Chiffchaffs, 20 Chaffinches, another Brambling and 26 Siskins, while a Great Northern Diver, three Pomarine Skuas and a Great Skua were seen off the Tip. The first Woodcock of the year appeared on 4th along with a Hen Harrier and 22 Fieldfares. Thereafter, coverage was very poor to the end of the month, and the only birds of note apart from a few Redwings were five Common Scoters, a Woodcock and two Chiffchaffs on 10th, a Blackcap and a Chiffchaff on 17th, a Grey Heron, a Merlin, 10 Purple Sandpipers, a Fieldfare and two Chiffchaffs on 18th, and a Merlin and a Chiffchaff on 24th.

Early December was wet and windy, and produced nothing of note except for a Chiffchaff on 1st and 4th. After another gap in coverage from 9 to 13 December, there was a Great Northern Diver off the north coast on 15th. The second half of the month began with a long dry spell accompanied by south-easterly winds, and this produced a Ringed Plover on 16th, a Fieldfare on 18th, a Grey Heron and a Water Rail on 20th, a Merlin and a Woodcock on 24th, a Red-throated Diver on 25th, and a Merlin again on 26th. The Water Rail, which first appeared feeding on bread crumbs on the 'bird table' in our garden, remained until the end of the year, and is still present at the time of writing (22 January 2008). Only a few Redwings were present on the island until 22nd, then numbers increased to 10 on 23rd, 17 on 24th, 32 on 25th and 50 on 26th. As in 2005 and 2006, a few Chaffinches, Greenfinches and Goldfinches remained on the island until the end of the year, along with three Blue Tits, three Great Tits and up to four Reed Buntings.

As regards mammals and other large creatures, 2007 was a good year for Common Otters with five sightings of up to three individuals in January (twice), February, March and December. However, it was a rather poor year for Grey Seals, with no records of more than four individuals in a day and only one record in the last four months of the year. Small bats were observed on only three occasions, one of these being on the unusually early date of 2 February, and there were only two reports of Pygmy Shrews. The highlight of the cetacean year was a pod of four Killer Whales that passed south-east off Tilickafinna on 11 April. Otherwise it was a poor year for cetaceans, with only two sightings of a small school of Bottle-nosed Dolphins in June, only two sightings of Risso's Dolphins, both in October, and only 10 sightings of Minke Whales, all in September and October, although on one occasion at least four individuals were present. Common Dolphins were recorded on 10 occasions between 26 August and 24 October, with schools of at least 60 individuals feeding offshore on three occasions. In contrast, it was a very good year for Basking Sharks, with five sightings in June including an exceptional total of 17 individuals on 17th. Ocean Sunfishes were recorded on two occasions in late July and once in early October.

2007 was generally a poor year for immigrant Lepidoptera, although there was one notable arrival in the second week of June which produced the island's first Striped Hawk-moth. Red Admirals, Painted Ladys and Silver Ys appeared in good numbers on several occasions, but only one Clouded Yellow and two Hummingbird Hawk-moths were recorded all year. There were no unusually early butterflies this year, the first of the season being a Peacock on 27 March and a Small Tortoiseshell on 29 March. The resident butterflies had mixed fortunes, with Green Hairstreak, Small Copper and Common Blue having a rather poor year, while Dark Green Fritillary and Grayling appear to have done well. The butterfly season ended with a few Painted Ladys on 25 October and the last Red Admiral on 28 October.

For the third year running, a moth-trap was in operation in our garden in Tilickafinna. Trapping was carried out on 55 nights between 7 April and 6 September, and produced a total of 450 'macros' of 48 species (see Table 1). Five of these were first records for the island, of which the most notable was a Sweet Gale Moth *Acronicta euphorbiae* on 10 June. Day-flying moths of note included a Small Yellow Underwing *Panemeria tenebrata* on 4 May.

Dursey Island is always very poor for dragonflies, and 2007 was even poorer than usual, the only dragonflies recorded being an unidentified hawker *Aeshna* sp. in our garden on 15 August, and unidentified hawkers at the Tip and in our garden on 6 October.

Note: In the Systematic List that follows, an attempt has been made to incorporate the observations of other visiting birders, notably David Cooke (DC), Brendan Finch (BF), Kieran Finch (KF), Mike Fox (MF), Kieran Grace (KG), Tony Lancaster (AL), Tony Mee (TM), Finn Moore (FiM), Forrest Moore (FoM), Mike O'Sullivan (MO), Paul Rowe (PR) and Joanna Scott (JS). The author wishes to express his appreciation to these observers for providing details of their observations.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

An average year for this species, with a total of eight records, all but one in the first half

of the year. One flying west off Tilickafinna on 2 February; one on the sea off the Tip on 15 March; one flying north off the Tip on 26 March; singletons flying west off Tilickafinna on 11 April and 5 May; one flying north off the Tip on 6 May; and one flying west off Tilickafinna on 29 May. One flew south-west along the north coast near the Tip on 25 December.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One in the Sound on 13 January and again on 26 January. The spring passage began early with two flying west off Tilickafinna on 11 April. Then singletons flying west off Tilickafinna on 5, 6 and 7 May, followed by three on 18 May, five on 19 May and one on 20 May. One in the Sound on 23 May; one flying north off the Tip on 27 May; one flying west off Tilickafinna on 28 May, and one in the Sound on 31 May. There were three records in autumn: one flying south off the Tip on 15 October, one flying north off the Tip on 3 November, and one on the sea off the north coast on 15 December.

Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Present throughout the year and a common breeding bird. As usual, very scarce from late September to late October, except during stormy weather, and somewhat irregular in November and December.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Another rather poor year for this species. The first of the autumn were two flying north off the Tip on 5 August. All other records were of birds passing south off the Tip in October: three on 10th, four on 13th, seven on 14th, one on 15th and two on 29th.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The first of the season were two moving north off the Tip on 15 March. Abundant offshore throughout the spring and summer until early September. The only birds recorded in October were singletons on 6th and 13th, five on 14th, seven on 15th and one on 20th. One off the Tip on 3 November was the last of the year.

Northern Gannet *Sula bassana*

Abundant offshore throughout the year, except in December, when only small numbers were recorded.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Present throughout the year in small numbers. Up to eight were recorded almost daily, mostly in the Sound or flying along the south and north coasts to and from the breeding colony on the Cow.

European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Present throughout the year, nesting at several localities around the island. Counts seldom exceeded 20 in a day, but 39 were counted on 24 June, and there was a single flock of 60 in the Sound on 28 August.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Another good year for this species. One in upper Kilmichael Valley on 20 May and possibly the same bird on Illanebeg on 26 May. An immature flying west over Tilickafinna on 7 August and probably the same bird flying west over Tilickafinna the next day. Then single individuals were recorded on a total of 13 dates between 26 August and 18 November, mostly in the jetty/Illanebeg area but also occasionally in the Kilmichael area. An immature in Kilmichael Valley on 20 December was unusually late.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Two adults flying east over the eastern half of the island at 1030 hrs on 22 January (BF, DS). The birds were first seen over the hillside west of Kilmichael and were watched as they continued high towards the east over Ballynacallagh and the Sound. This was the fifth record of Whooper Swan on Dursey Island.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Three birds flew west high over the sea off Tilickafinna at 1230 hrs on 20 May (DS, BF). This was only the third record of Common Shelduck on Dursey Island.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Ten birds (in two parties of five) flew west off Tilickafinna on 5 May. There was the usual westward passage in summer, but the numbers recorded were very low, undoubtedly because of the poor coverage in June and July. A flock of 25 flew west off Tilickafinna on 7 August, followed by seven on 8 August and six on 13 August. Two flew north off the Tip on 16 August. There were three records in late autumn: seven flying north off the Tip on 15 October; four flying north off the Tip on 29 October, and five flying west off Tilickafinna on 10 November.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

The first of the year was a bird thought to be an immature male over the High Cliffs on 7 October. A female/immature was seen at several localities around the island on 11 and 12 October, and this was joined by a second individual on 13th. One of these was seen again on 16th, 17th, 19th and 20th. A female/immature below Kilmichael on 28 October and again on 4 November may have been a different individual.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

A poor year after a very good year in 2006. A bird in Tilickafinna on 6 January was very unusual. The only records in spring were single females in Tilickafinna on 31 March and Kilmichael Valley on 11 April. The autumn passage began with one on 5 August. Then singletons recorded on 11 dates to 29 August, with two 17 August. Thereafter unusually scarce, the only records being a male in Tilickafinna on 7 September, singletons on 18 September and 29 September, an immature male in Tilickafinna on 5 and 6 October, and one in Kilmichael Valley on 21 October.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Recorded throughout the year, but very scarce in the early part of the year. As in 2004, 2005 and 2006, there was no evidence of breeding on the island, although an adult male, an adult female and two immatures were seen on many occasions in late summer and autumn. One or two birds were observed on 10 dates in January and early February, but the only other records in the first half of the year were an adult male in Tilickafinna on 19 May and possibly the same adult male below Kilmichael on 9 June. One or two birds recorded regularly from 14 July to the end of October, with at least three birds present on 27 July and on five dates in October. Two were still present on 3 November, but thereafter only single birds were recorded on 11 dates to the end of the year.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

The only records in spring were a female at the West End on 10 March, possibly the same bird in Tilickafinna on 14 March, an immature male near the jetty on 1 April, possibly the same immature male in Tilickafinna on 5 April, and two immature males together in Tilickafinna on 6 April. Autumn passage began early with an immature male in Tilickafinna on 28 August, a female in Tilickafinna on 4 September, and a bird in

Kilmichael on 16 September. One or two birds were recorded almost daily from 5 October to 4 November, with three on 15 and 20 October and four on 25 October. Thereafter single individuals in Ballynacallagh on 18 November, in Dead Horse Gully on 24 November, at the Tip on 24 December, and in Kilmichael on 26 December.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Unusually scarce in the early party of the year and not recorded until 24 March, when there was a single bird in Tilickafinna. A pair appeared in Tilickafinna the next day, and two birds were also seen on 13 April, but otherwise only single individuals were recorded on three dates in April, five dates in May, two dates in July, and six dates in August. The only record in September was a single bird on 29th. However, recorded on 13 dates in October, with at least two individuals on 6th, 7th and 15th, and three individuals (including an immature) on 12th and 14th. The only records thereafter were single birds on 4 November, 22 December and 30 December. There were no signs of adults carrying prey to a nest-site, and it is very unlikely that the birds bred on the island this year.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

An adult showed briefly in our garden in Tilickafinna in the early morning of 17 October, but could not be relocated despite a diligent search. Another adult appeared in our garden on 20 December and remained until the end of the year (and well into 2008). This bird spent much of its time feeding on bread-crumbs on our bird table and, indeed, was never seen anywhere else in the garden. These two birds constitute only the third and fourth records of Water Rail on Dursey Island.

Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Present throughout the year in very small numbers, mainly around the Sound and Illanebeg, but also occasionally below Tilickafinna, at the Tip and along the north-west coast. Numbers during the summer months were comparable to those in 2006, with a maximum count of 14 on 8 June, but only the odd individual was recorded in January and December. The highest monthly counts were one in January, six in February, seven in March, 10 in April, 10 in May, 14 in June, 10 in July, two in August, 12 in September, eight in October, five in November, and one in December. At least one pair bred on Illanebeg.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The only records were of single birds on Illanebeg on 29 January, 3 March and 24 March, and near the jetty on 12 December.

European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

A rather poor year for this species. The only records in spring were one in Tilickafinna fields on 3 May, three on the West Hill on 5 May, four on the West Hill the next day, and one over Tilickafinna on 26 May. The only records in autumn were one over Kilmichael and one at the West End on 8 October, two at the West End on 10 October, a party of 11 flying south-west near the school in Kilmichael on 14 October, and one on the West Hill on 15 October.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus*

A first-winter bird feeding on the rocks on the south side of Illanebeg in the morning of 2 September (BF, DS). The bird eventually flew off west with two unidentified small waders. This was only the third record of Red Knot on Dursey Island.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Another very good year for this species, thanks to frequent coverage of the regular roost site on the lower north slope of the island (east of Gull-bathing Area) by BF. Up to 19 Purple Sandpipers were recorded at this site on 12 occasions between 1 January and 14 April (seven birds), and up to 10 birds on eight occasions between 28 October (four birds) and 31 December. Monthly maxima were as follows: January – 19; February – 19; March – 17; April – 9; October – 7; November – 10; and December – 3. The only records elsewhere on the island were one at Kilmichael Point on 4 November and one on Illanebeg on 31 December.

Jack Snipe *Limnocryptes minimus*

One flushed from the roadside in Ballynacallagh on 19 October (AL).

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Fairly common and widespread during the early months of the year and again from October to the end of the year. Up to six in a day on six dates in January, up to three in a day on four dates in February, and one or two on seven dates in March. One flying east over Tilickafinna on 6 April was the last of the spring. The autumn migration began early with a group of three flying east over Kilmichael on 25 August (DC). Then none until one on 6 October followed by up to eight in a day on 11 dates to 19 October and a single on 28 October. One or two on six dates in November, and up to eight in a day on nine dates in December.

Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

One on the road in Kilmichael Valley in the early morning of 4 November (DC), one in our garden in Tilickafinna on 10 November (BF), and one by the road at the High Cliffs after dark on 24 December (DC).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

The spring passage began early with a single bird flying west off Tilickafinna on 9 April, but was otherwise rather poor. Four on Illanebeg on 29 April, five near the jetty on 3 May, one flying west off Tilickafinna on 4 May, flocks of 26 and 31 flying north off the Tip on 6 May, and one near the jetty on 20 May. The only records in autumn were one flying west off Tilickafinna on 17 August, one at the Tip on 26 August, and one on 18 September.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

After several very poor years for this species on Dursey, 2007 produced a total of eight records including one record in spring. Two birds flew across the Sound to Illanebeg on 15 April (BF). One or two birds were recorded on seven occasions between 2 September and 3 November as follows: two at Kilmichael Point on 2 September; one below Kilmichael on 18 September; one over Tilickafinna on 6 October; one below Kilmichael on 14 October; two below Kilmichael on 30 October; and singles in this area on 2 and 3 November.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

One at Kilmichael Point on 4 August (DC). This is the first record of Common Sandpiper on Dursey Island since January 2003 and only the second record since 1996.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Another rather poor year for this species, with no records of more than five birds. Fourteen of the 15 records were from the rocky shore near the jetty and around Illanebeg as follows: five on 1 January, three on 7 January, one on 13 January, two on 10 February,

one on 14 April and two on 15 April, two on 6 October, two on 14 October, one on 18 November, one on 16 December, three on 26 and 28 December, five on 30 December, and one on 31 December. The only other record was one bird with seven Purple Sandpipers on the lower north slope on 10 March.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicaria*

About 30 on the sea and flying south-west off the Tip on 14 October (BF, FiM, FoM), and 21 on the sea and flying south-west off the Tip on 15 October (KG, AL, DS).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Two adult light-phase birds flying north off the Tip on 3 June (N. Linehan). Three immatures flying south off the Tip on 3 November (DC, PR).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A very poor year for this species, with no records in spring and only seven records in autumn, all in October: one flying south off the Tip on 11th, five flying south off the Tip on 12th, one in the Sound and five off the Tip on 13th, two flying south off the Tip on 15th, two off the Tip on 19th, one off Tilickafinna on 20th, and one off the Tip on 29th.

Great Skua *Catharacta skua*

The spring passage was very poor with only two records: two birds flying north off the Tip on 6 May, and two flying west off Tilickafinna on 7 May. The first of the autumn were single birds off Tilickafinna on 16 and 26 August, but there was then a gap until one appeared off Tilickafinna on 6 October. Then up to six were recorded almost daily until the end of October, with 12 on 14th, 14 on 15th and eight on 17th, mostly foraging off the Tip but with a few also off Tilickafinna. Two off the Tip on 29 October and one off the Tip on 3 November were the last.

Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*

A first-winter bird flying south off the Tip at 1100 hrs on 29 October (BF, TM).

Blackheaded Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Another poor year for this species, with only three records, all in the second half of the year: three adults flying west off Tilickafinna on 31 July; one in the Sound on 6 October; and one off the Tip on 17 and 18 October.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

One or two on eight dates in January and February, mostly in the Sound, and singles off Tilickafinna on 14 March and off the Tip on 15 March. The first of the autumn was an adult in the Sound on 6 October. Then up to three on four dates between 9 and 23 October, one on 17 November, and one or two on three dates in December.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

An adult in the Sound on 24 January, and possibly the same bird in the Sound on 10 February. Then none until one on 7 March, six on 8 March, and one to three on four dates to 19 March. Thereafter, up to 12 in a day throughout the spring and summer, with several pairs again breeding on the island. The main departure occurred around 17 August, and the only later records were one on 19 August, two on 23 August and one on 26 August – an unusually early date for the last of the year.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Common throughout the year, and nesting at the usual sites.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*

A first-winter bird first seen at Kilmichael Point (DC) and then later at the Tip (BF) on 14

April.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

An immature off the Tip on 1 January (PR). A second-winter bird flying west past Tilickafinna at 0920 hrs on 14 January and again at 0920 hrs on 15 January (BF, DS).

Great Blackbacked Gull *Larus marinus*

Common throughout the year. The highest counts of 200 on 3 September and 170 on 29 October were made at the day roost on the North Slope east of Gull-bathing Area.

Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Present offshore throughout the year. The only counts exceeding 100 were 150 on 14 January, 150 on 12 October, 165 on 13 October, 300 on 15 October, 200 on 20 October, and 200 on 23 October.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Four records, all in October: one flying south off the Tip on 8th; six flying south off the Tip on 10th; one flying west off the Tip on 15th; and one flying south-west off Tilickafinna on 22nd.

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Present offshore throughout the year. The highest count was 150 on 13 April.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Present offshore in small numbers throughout the year.

Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle*

Two in the Sound on 22 January and one there on 25 January. Then none until two in the Sound on 3 March. Thereafter up to three birds recorded on 27 dates to 25 August, mostly in the Sound, but also occasionally at the Tip. Singles in the Sound on 5 October and 3 November were the last of the year.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

The fresh remains of a bird were found on the west slope of the West Hill on 10 January (DS). The bird had been very recently killed and plucked, presumably by a Peregrine. This was the sixth record of Little Auk on Dursey Island, and the third individual to be found dead.

Atlantic Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

The first of the year were 20 flying west off Tilickafinna on 9 April. Then two on 11 April, six on 5 May, five on 18 May and one on 28 May, all flying west off Tilickafinna. One off the Tip on 15 July, and a late individual off the Tip on 16 August.

[Rock Dove *Columba livia*]

For the first time since records began, no wild or feral Rock Doves or racing pigeons were recorded on the island.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

One being chased by a Great Skua off the Tip on 12 October eventually flew off to the north (KG, AL). One circling our garden in Tilickafinna at 1035 hrs on 19 October eventually flew off to the east (DS). These were the ninth and tenth records of Stock Dove on Dursey Island.

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

One seen going to roost in our garden in Tilickafinna in the evening of 21 April and still present the next day (BF). One circled our garden and then flew down to Ivy Gully in the late evening of 6 June (DS, JS). One appeared briefly in our garden in the early afternoon

of 19 October (DS).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A good year, with records on 16 dates involving 10 to 12 individuals. One in our garden in Tilickafinna on 5, 6 and 7 April. One in our garden very briefly on 12 April, one in our garden for much of the day on 27 April, and one in our garden very briefly on 3 May. One around Bernie O’Leary’s house in Tilickafinna on 20 May. Two in our garden on 28, 29 and 30 May. One in our garden on 1 and 2 June. One in Kilmichael Valley on 3 June. Two in our garden on 5 and 7 June. One around Bernie O’Leary’s house on 8 June.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

One roosting on an old Magpie’s nest in a tall *Olearia* hedge in the garden of Zuma in Ballynacallagh on 7 October (DS, JS, BF). This is the first record of Barn Owl on Dursey Island.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One in a tall conifer in our garden in Tilickafinna on 11 October (DS, JS, KG), and one in the trees in Kilmichael Valley on 20 October (KG). These were the sixth and seventh records of Long-eared Owl on Dursey.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

One flushed from bracken near the Main Bog on the north slope of the West Hill on 13 October (AL).

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*

One on a recently burned area of heather and gorse on the hillside near our house in Tilickafinna on 20 and 21 October (DS, JS). The bird was first located at 1610 hrs on 20th and was still present in the same area early the next morning, but was not seen after 0850 hrs, despite a thorough search. This is the first record of Wood Lark on Dursey Island.

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

The first of the spring were at least ten, including several birds in song, on the West Hill on 3 March. Then common throughout the spring and early summer, becoming inconspicuous by the end of July. Only small numbers of birds were recorded in August and early September, suggesting that many of the breeding population had left the island. Most of the birds recorded in September and October were probably passage migrants. These included 12 at the west end of the island on 15 September, seven on 6 October, seven on 17 October, 12 on 19 October, and seven on 24 October. Three birds were still present at the beginning November, and there was a single bird in Kilmichael on 16, 17 and 18 November – the last of the year.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

A very poor year for this species with only one record: two birds flew east over Tilickafinna on 11 April.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

The first of the spring was a bird in our garden in Tilickafinna on 11 April. This was followed by one flying east over Tilickafinna on 13 April and one at the West End on 14 April. Numbers increased only slowly and there were still only about six on the island by 27 and 28 April. Up to 12 were present throughout May, with higher counts of 15 on 20th and 30 on 26th. Thereafter up to 12 were present throughout the spring and summer, with five or six pairs nesting. Numbers began to build up in early August, and there was a pronounced influx in the last week of August, with 30 on 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 50 on 25th

and 40 on 28th. Numbers remained high in early September, with 30 on 4th and 40 on 5th, but had fallen to 12 by 8 September and only four remained on 15th. The only other records were two on 16 September, three on 20 September, two on 23 September, and a very late individual on 10 October.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

2007 was a poor year for this species, and unusual in that there were more records in autumn than in spring. The only spring records were four in Tilickafinna on 28 May and one in Tilickafinna on 31 May. Three in Tilickafinna on 7 August, one in Tilickafinna on 8 August, four in Tilickafinna on 4 September, and five in Kilmichael on 9 September.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

One flew east over Tilickafinna at 0900 hrs on 6 October (DS), and presumably the same bird was heard calling over Tilickafinna fields at 1215 hrs on 7 October (DS). This was the thirteenth record of this species on Dursey Island.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Present throughout the year, and the commonest breeding passerine on the island. Good numbers remained on the island throughout the winter of 2006/2007, with up to 60 present in January and 30 in February. There were signs of an influx in mid- and late March, with counts of 40 on 15th and 50 on 24th, and obvious signs of autumn passage on many dates in September and October, with a peak count of at least 200 on 7 October. However, numbers declined rapidly after the end of October, and no more than 10 were recorded in a day in December.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

A common resident around the coastline, occasionally coming into the interior of the island, especially during gales. Up to 18 were recorded in a day.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

A very poor year for this species, with only one record: a bird flying east over Tilickafinna at 1245 hrs on 11 October (DS).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

One in Tilickafinna on 1 January, and one at the small pond below Kilmichael on 1 February. Then none until one in Tilickafinna on 29 August. Two over the north slope on 3 September, one in Tilickafinna from 3 to 8 September, and two in Kilmichael Valley also on 8 September. One or two on 12 dates from 6 to 21 October, mostly in Kilmichael Valley and Tilickafinna. One in Kilmichael Valley on 29 October and again on 3 November.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Present throughout the year, with about four pairs breeding on the island. Numbers never exceeded eight in a day until late May, when the first fledged young appeared (two broods on 20th), then up to 12 on several occasions in summer increasing to 20 on 1 August. Thereafter, 15 on many dates to 4 September and 12 on many dates to 14 October. Numbers then decreased to eight by the end of October, and no more than six were recorded in a day to the end of the year.

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A common resident, widespread over the entire island. The first song was heard on 26 January.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

A fairly common resident, largely confined to village areas. The first fledged young were seen on 1 May.

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A common resident. Once again, early nesting attempts seem to have been fruitless, and the first fledged juveniles were not seen until late May. There were some signs of an influx in October, with high counts of 15 on 9th and 22nd.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

There were no records in spring. South-easterly winds in October produced at least 14 birds: one at the Tip on 10 October; one in Tilickafinna from 12 to 17 October; one in Kilmichael and a second bird in Tilickafinna on 13 October; one on the High Cliffs and another individual in Tilickafinna on 15 October; two at the West End and one in Bernie's Gully on 19 October; one in Ballynacallagh and one in the Main Bog on 20 October; a female/immature in Tilickafinna on 22 and 24 October; an adult male in Tilickafinna on 23 October; and another female/immature in Tilickafinna on 29 October.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A poor year with only a single record: a female by the school in Kilmichael on 13 October (AL *et al.*).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

A very poor year with only two individuals in autumn: a dull first-winter female in our garden in Tilickafinna on 11 October (DS), and another first-winter bird around Bernie O'Leary's house in Tilickafinna from 13 to 16 October (KG, AL).

Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Present year round, but relatively scarce before late March. A female was seen gathering nest material in our garden on 28 January. 2007 appears to have been another good breeding season, and the species was very common in autumn. The first fledged juveniles were observed on 1 May. Once again, the late autumn gales seem to have taken their toll, and numbers were much reduced by the end of the year.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

This year was unusual in that there was a very slow build up in numbers in early spring. The first of the year was a male in Tilickafinna on 15 March, followed by a male near the jetty on 18 March. However, a thorough search of the island on 24 March produced only four birds: one at the Tip, one in Tilickafinna and two on the High Cliffs, and it was not until early April that numbers exceeded 10 in a day. Thereafter, common throughout the spring and summer, with the first juveniles appearing on 23 May. After a count of 20 on 1 August, numbers dwindled rapidly, and no more than five were recorded in a day in the second half of August. Most of the island population had departed by the end of the month, and no more than three were recorded in a day in September. There was a small influx of migrants in the first half of October, with up to five birds almost daily from 3rd to 16th, mainly near the West End, but the only bird thereafter was a singleton on 19 October.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

An adult female or first-winter male frequented our garden in Tilickafinna from 8 to 11 October (DS *et al.*).

Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A fairly common resident. Four or five pairs nested in Tilickafinna, mostly in our garden,

where the first fledged young appeared on 27 April. There were small influxes of migrants on 8, 10 and 15 October, but counts never exceeded 20 in day.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

A very good year for this species, with three records in the early part of the year and unusually large numbers in autumn. One in Kilmichael on 14 January, one in Tilickafinna on 2 February, and one in Tilickafinna on 2 April. The first of the autumn was one in Kilmichael on 18 October. At least 30 were present on the island the next day, increasing to 40 on 20th and 50 on 22nd. Numbers then fell to seven on 23rd, 12 on 24th and five on 25th. A further arrival occurred in early November, with one on 3rd followed by 22 on 4th. There was still a single bird in Dead Horse Gully on 18 November, and a very late individual in our garden in Tilickafinna on 18 December.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Present in small numbers throughout the year, with some evidence of immigrant wintering birds in the early part of the year and again at the end of the year. Several pairs bred on the island and were conspicuous in song in early spring, but the birds were then remarkably inconspicuous from early May to the end of September. A nest was found in the Stapletons' garden on 1 April, and the first fledged juveniles were recorded on 20 May. There were at least two small influxes of migrants in October, with counts of 10 birds mostly near the west end of the island on 10th and 22nd.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Relatively uncommon in the early months of the year and unusually scarce in autumn, but commoner than usual at the end of the year. There were four records in January: one bird in Tilickafinna on 1st, one in Kilmichael and one in Tilickafinna on 6th, one in Kilmichael on 14th, and two in Tilickafinna on 25th. The only other record in the first half of the year was one bird in Kilmichael on 3 March. The first of the autumn was a bird in our garden in Tilickafinna on 6 October. This was joined by a second bird on 7th, but these had disappeared by 8th and the next was not until 13 October, when another bird appeared in our garden. This individual remained until 23 October. Another individual appeared in Kilmichael on 18 and 20 October, and there was a second individual in Tilickafinna on 22nd. The first real arrival of the autumn occurred on 24th, when 11 birds appeared, but these soon moved off and there were only five on 25th and singletons 28th, 29th and 31st. A further arrival occurred in early November, with 25 birds appearing on 3rd and 20 on 4th. One to four were then recorded on seven dates in the second half of November and first three weeks of December. Cold weather in late December produced an arrival of 10 on 23rd, 17 on 24th, 32 on 25th and 50 on 26th, with numbers then falling to 23 on 30th and 31st.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Only one record: a single bird at the Tip on 13 October (AL).

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

A bird in full song in a dense tangle of brambles and bracken near the Stapletons' house in Kilmichael at 2100 hrs on 6 May (DS, JS).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Sedge Warblers appear to have bred again on Dursey Island, following the first recorded instance in 2005. The spring passage began with a bird in song in our garden in Tilickafinna on 28 April and another bird in song in our garden on 1 May. Eight were

recorded on 2 May, including four in our garden, one in Kilmichael, two in Kilmichael Valley and one in Ballynacallagh. Only one of these remained (in our garden) on 3 May. Another appeared in our garden on 13 May. There were three birds on 26 May: one in song in a marshy field below Kilmichael, one in song near the Stapletons' garden, and one in Kilmichael Valley. A single male was watched for some time as it gave short bursts of song and apparently defended a territory in the marshy field below Kilmichael on 3 and 4 June. There was still a bird in this field on 9 June, and it was thought likely that a pair was breeding in the area. However, the site was not visited again for some time, and conclusive proof of breeding is lacking. The only record in autumn was a single bird in our garden in Tilickafinna on 6 September.

European Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

A very poor year for this species, with only one record: a single bird in song in dense *Rosa rugosa* in our garden in Tilickafinna on 2 May (DS). An unstreaked *Acrocephalus* warbler was seen in the garden of Zuma in Ballynacallagh on 15 October (KG).

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

A first-winter bird in our garden in Tilickafinna on 6 October (DS, JS, KG), and a first-winter bird in the Stapletons' garden in Kilmichael on 11 and 12 October (KG, AL). These were the seventh and eighth records of Barred Warbler on Dursey Island, and the first records since 2002.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

One in our garden in Tilickafinna on 5 October was joined by a second individual on 6th. These two very vocal birds remained in one small area of the garden until 14 October. Only one remained on 15th, and this had left by the next day. Another individual appeared in David Cooke's garden in Kilmichael on 11 October, and possibly the same individual was present in Kilmichael Valley from 13 to 17 October.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Another poor year, with only three individuals in spring and three individuals in autumn. Two in Kilmichael Valley on 29 April and 2 May, and one in our garden in Tilickafinna on 1 and 2 May. One in our garden on 9 and 10 August; one in our garden from 7 to 9 September; and one in our garden on 30 September.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

A poor year with only three individuals recorded. One in our garden in Tilickafinna on 6 September was joined by a second bird on 7 September, and one of these remained until 8th. One was found in Kilmichael Valley on 21 October.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

A fairly good spring passage with at least 15 individuals involved. The first, a female, appeared in our garden in Tilickafinna on 26 March. The next was another female, also in our garden, on 2 April. Then single individuals were recorded on eight dates to 5 May, with three on 7 April, two on 13 April, two on 21 and 22 April, and three on 2 May. A female in our garden on 3 October was the first of the autumn, followed by three on 6 October. Then one to three birds almost daily to 30 October, with four on 14th, 16th and 21st, and five on 20th and 24th. Two in Kilmichael on 3 November and two in Tilickafinna on 4 November. A female in our garden on 17 November was the last of the year.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

An exceptional year, with a total of nine individuals recorded during the period 6-19 October. Six individuals arrived on 6 October: three in our garden in Tilickafinna, two in Kilmichael Valley and one in the garden of Zuma in Ballynacallagh. One of the Tilickafinna birds and the Zuma bird were not seen again, but the other two birds in our garden and the two birds in Kilmichael Valley remained until 14th. One of the two birds in our garden stayed one day longer, while one of the birds in Kilmichael Valley remained until 16th. Two new individuals arrived on 12 October, one in our garden and one in the Stapletons' garden in Kilmichael. The former, which frequented a different part of the garden to the two long-staying individuals, stayed for only one day, but the other bird remained in the Stapletons' garden until 16th. No Yellow-browed Warblers were found on the island on 17th and 18th, and a bird found in Kilmichael Valley on 19th was believed to be a new individual. This stayed only one day.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

One in our garden in Tilickafinna on 24 March and one in Kilmichael Valley on 25 March were the first of the spring. Thereafter, one or two were recorded almost daily to 15 April, with four on 2 April, eight on 3 April and three on 7 April. One or two were recorded almost daily from 27 April to 20 May, and there were late individuals in our garden from 2 to 4 June and on 11 June. Early autumn migrants included one in our garden on 15 July, two in Kilmichael and one in Ballynacallagh during the period 3-5 August, one in Kilmichael on 26 August, and two in Tilickafinna and one in Kilmichael during the period 7-9 September. There was then a gap until a single bird on 3 October. Thereafter, usually between five and ten in a day until the end of October, with 13 on 13th, 11 on 14th, 14 on 16th, 11 on 19th, 11 on 22nd, 16 on 24th, 13 on 25th and 14 on 28th. After four on 1 and 2 November, there were eight on 3rd, seven on 4th, two on 10th, one on 17th, two on 18th and one on 24th. A bird in our garden on 1 and 4 December was the last of the year.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A rather poor spring migration with no big arrivals. The first was one in our garden in Tilickafinna on 2 April, and this was joined by a second individual on 3rd. Thereafter, one or two individuals were recorded on 10 dates to 1 May, mostly in our garden. There was small arrival on 2 May, when there were three in our garden, two in Kilmichael and one in Ballynacallagh, but all had left by the next day, and the only other bird in spring was one in our garden on 5 June. The autumn migration began with a young bird in our garden on 31 July. Then one or two individuals were recorded on nine dates in August and 14 dates in September. The only records in October were one in Kilmichael and one in our garden on 3rd, and one in our garden on 5th and 6th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

One in our garden in Tilickafinna on 14 and 15 March was the first of the year. Then two in our garden from 24 to 29 March, with a third bird in our garden and another bird near the Tip on 26th, and a bird in Ballynacallagh on 27th. Four in our garden on 1 April and three there on 2nd and 3rd. As in 2006, the autumn migration was very protracted but there were no large falls. A single bird in our garden on 26 and 27 August was followed by another from 7 to 9 September, one in Kilmichael Valley on 8 September, and one in our garden on 15 September. One on 3 October, then two or three on 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th, singles on 12th, 13th and 14th, two on 19th, and singles on 20th and 22nd.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

One near the Tip and one in Bernie's Gully, Tilickafinna, on 19 October (KG, AL); two near the Tip on 20 October (KG, AL), and one in Kilmichael Valley from 20 to 22 October (DS).

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

A poor year with only five individuals recorded, all in our garden in Tilickafinna. One on 1 and 2 May, and one from 1 to 3 June. One on 6 and 7 September was joined by a second individual on 8th and a third individual on 9th.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Another poor year, with only one record: a single bird by the road on the High Cliffs on 30 September (BF).

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

A bird in song in the conifers in our garden for about ten minutes in the morning of 31 March (DS). This is the first record of a Coal Tit on Dursey Island in spring: all of the 13 previous records have been in October.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

The two birds that had been around since October 2006 were still present in January – a dull bird in the garden at Zuma and a brighter individual in the Stapletons' garden. The brighter individual was last seen on 25 January, while the dull individual lingered until 10 February. Then none until two in our garden on 6 September and three the next day, followed by two in the Kilmichael area on 15 and 23 September, one in Kilmichael on 29 September, and two in Ballynacallagh on 30 September. Five birds were present on 3 October: two in Ballynacallagh, two in Kilmichael and one in Tilickafinna. Thereafter, recorded almost daily throughout October and early November, with counts of seven on 7 October, six on 9 October, seven on 22 October and five on 24 and 25 October. Then up to three on many dates to the end of the year, with four birds present on 30 December.

Great Tit *Parus major*

For the second year running, Great Tits were present on the island throughout the year. Five (or possibly six) birds were present in January and February, frequenting the bird-feeders in Zuma, the Stapletons' garden and our garden. Only two pairs remained in March, one in Ballynacallagh and the other in Kilmichael. These two pairs bred successfully, both choosing similar sites in holes in the gable ends of ruined buildings. The Ballynacallagh pair produced at least five young which fledged on 20 May and were seen foraging with their parents on 26 May. The Kilmichael pair was watched carrying food to the nest site on 23 May, and at least one fledged young was seen in this area on 3 June. At least ten birds were present on 10 June, but some of these soon disappeared, and no more than five were recorded in a day in July and August. At least six were present on 2 September, including a party of four in our garden in Tilickafinna. Thereafter, four or five were recorded on many dates to the end of the month. Numbers increased briefly in early October, with counts on eight on 7th and six on 10th, but no more than three were recorded in a day during the second half of October. At least three birds were recorded on a number of occasions in November and December, and four were present 17 November.

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica*

Two pairs were resident on the island for much of the year, a pair in the Ballynacallagh and Kilmichael areas and a pair in Tilickafinna. If the Tilickafinna birds attempted to breed, they were unsuccessful, as no fledged young were observed. However, the other pair eventually nested successfully, probably in a large stand of gorse bushes in Kilmichael Valley, and produced three fledged young sometime in August. The young birds were last seen on 26 August, and thereafter no more than four birds were present on the island until 17 October, when eight were recorded including a visiting party of four that flew all the way out to Tilickafinna and back. Five birds were present on 25 October, but only two or three birds remained on the island in November and December.

Red-billed Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Present throughout the year, with about ten pairs breeding on the island. The maximum counts in each month were as follows: January 30; February 15; March 24; April 20; May 15; June 15; July 20; August 37; September 30; October 45; November 20; December 20.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

There were only two records: two birds flying east over Kilmichael with a flock of 10 Rooks on 17 October (AL), and one in our garden in Tilickafinna for five minutes in the morning of 24 October (DS).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

A party of ten flying east over Kilmichael in the morning of 17 October; one in our garden in Tilickafinna and probably this bird with another individual in Kilmichael on 18 October; and two juveniles in and around our garden on 24 and 25 October.

Hooded Crow *Corvus (corone) cornix*

Present throughout the year, with several pairs breeding on the island. Counts rarely exceeded 12 in a day, but there was a single flock of 10 in Tilickafinna on 8 April, and a total of 20 was recorded on 28 August.

Common Raven *Corvus corax*

Present throughout the year. A pair again bred in Tilickafinna and reared two young. Another pair may have bred near the east end of the island, but it is unlikely that they reared any young as no more than six birds were recorded on the island during the summer months. Influxes of birds from the mainland occurred on fine days in early spring and autumn, the highest counts being 15 on 17 February, 19 on 19 August, 12 on 10 October, and 18 on 12 October. No more than four were recorded in a day from late October to the end of the year.

Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

2007 was a very poor year for Starlings on Dursey Island, with the local breeding population showing a sudden drop from about 10-12 pairs in 2005 and 2006 to only three or four pairs in 2007. Very few birds were present on the island in the first three months of the year: after 10 on 1 January, numbers never exceeded nine in a day except on 2 February when a flock of 30 was recorded. It seems that only three or four pairs attempted to breed as no more than six birds were recorded in a day in April and early May. The first family of young appeared on 24 May (a pair with three young) and this was joined by a second family (a pair with four young) on 26 May. Twenty birds were present on 6 June – probably the entire island population of adults and young. Flocks of juveniles then began to arrive from the mainland, and numbers increased to 33 on 9 June,

100 on 10 June, 140 on 15 July and 400 on 30 July. Some 200-300 were present throughout the first two weeks of August, but numbers then decreased to 100 on 17th, 50 on 25th and 20 on 28th. Numbers remained very low throughout September and the first three weeks of October, the highest count being 22 on 16 September, but there was an influx of 120 on 24 October followed by 65 on 25th and 120 again on 30th. Numbers then decreased to 80 on 31 October, 60 on 3 November, 50 on 4 November, 20 on 16 November and 16 on 18 November. Very few birds remained by the end of November, and the highest counts in December were nine on 24th and seven on 30th.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Another rather poor year with only three records, all in autumn. Two juveniles (a male and a female) arrived in our garden in Tilickafinna on 26 August; the female was last seen on 3 September while the male lingered until 9 September. A male appeared in David Cooke's garden in Kilmichael on 17 October (KG, AL), and a party of four (two males and two females) frequented our garden for most of the afternoon of 25 October.

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Three (possibly four) birds were present on the island throughout January and early February, and two of these (both females) remained in our garden in Tilickafinna until 15 March. One bird then disappeared and the other remained until 25 March. Single females reappeared in our garden on 3 April, 2 and 3 May, and 25 and 26 May. The first of the autumn was a female in our garden on 7 September. Three in Kilmichael on 30 September were followed by one on 5 October and 11 on 6 October. Numbers remained low (maximum six) until 18 October, then increased to 14 on 19th and 20 on 20th. Substantial movements of Chaffinches occurred on 24 and 25 October, with birds passing west over Tilickafinna in the early morning then returning east again later in the day: at least 100 birds were involved on 24th and 150 on 25th. Virtually all had left the island by 26th, but there was another movement involving about 60 birds on 30 October. Most of these had disappeared by the next day, but there was another small influx of about 20 birds on 3 and 4 November. Only eight remained on 10 November, decreasing to five by 18 November. Thereafter only three or four birds remained on the island to the end of the year – a pair in our garden and one female (occasionally two females) in Kilmichael.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

One in our garden in Tilickafinna in the late afternoon of 20 October and presumably the same bird in our garden all next day. Two passed through our garden and flew off east at 0820 hrs on 24 October, and another two birds passed through our garden and flew off east at 0845 hrs on 26 October. One in our garden in the early morning of 30 October. One in David Cooke's garden in Kilmichael on 1 and 2 November was joined by a second bird on 3 November (DC).

European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

For the third year running, Greenfinches were present throughout the year and bred successfully. Ten were recorded on 1 January, but thereafter no more than five were recorded in a day until early March. Six were recorded on 12 March, and then up to six were recorded almost daily to late April, with higher counts of 10 on 27 March, eight on 1 April and seven on 7 April. Only three birds (a male and two females) remained on the island by the end of April, and only one pair bred. The nest was not located, but two

recently fledged juveniles appeared in our garden on 8 June and these were joined by a pair of adults on 9 and 10 June. Up to three birds were recorded on five dates to the end of June, but the only records in July were two on 13 July and two on 21 July. By the beginning of August, only one bird was left on the island – a lone male in our garden. However, a pair reappeared in Kilmichael on 26 August, and up to three birds were recorded on many occasions until the end of September. Numbers increased in early October to about 20 on 6th, and from then until 4 November, 20-30 were recorded almost daily, with higher counts of 35 on 7 October, 35 on 9 October and 45 on 24 October. After a total of 28 on 4 November, numbers dropped to only four on 10 November, but there was a small influx in the middle of the month, with 13 birds on 18th. Only four birds were found in late November, and after seven on 6 December, no more than five were recorded in a day to the end of the year.

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Once again, a small number of Goldfinches remained on Dursey for much of the winter, although this year they had all disappeared by mid-February. A maximum of 13 was recorded on 11 January; up to six birds were present on 12 other dates in January, and singletons were recorded on 1, 4 and 10 February. There was the usual scattering of spring records, with one in song in our garden on 26 March, another in song in our garden on 5, 6 and 8 April, and a late individual in our garden on 20 May. The first of the autumn were two in our garden on 30 September. There was an influx of 25 on 6 October, and between 25 and 30 were recorded almost daily to the end of the month, with higher counts of 70 on 11th, 100 on 12th, 50 on 13th and 14th, 40 on 17th and 18th, and 50 on 20th. There were still 15 on 3 November and six on 4 November, but then only small numbers were recorded on three dates in November (maximum three) and nine dates in December (maximum five). At least one bird was still present on the last day of the year.

Eurasian Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

2007 was an exceptional year for this species, following a very poor year in 2006. There were two records in spring: a pair in our garden in Tilickafinna on 27 March, and a single female feeding on peanuts in the bird-feeders in our garden on 2 May. An exceptional influx in autumn began slowly with a very tame female in our garden on 5 October, followed by two on 6th, singletons on 7th and 8th, and three on 10th. Then at least 100 individuals arrived on the island on 12 October. The birds were scattered in small groups all over the island, and estimation of numbers was very difficult. At least 100 were still present the next day, but numbers then fell to 40 on 14th, 45 on 15th, 20 on 16th and 10 on 17th. Only two were recorded on 18th, but there was a new influx of at least 20 on 19th and 60 on 20th. There were still as many as 25 on the island on 24th, but numbers then decreased to five on 25th and only three or four to 30 October. None was recorded on 31 October or 1 November, but a single bird appeared on 2 November and there was a final influx of 26 on 3rd decreasing to five on 4th – the last of the year.

Common Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

There were no very early records this year, and a single bird flying west over Tilickafinna on 14 March was the first of the season. Two birds appeared in our garden on 17 March, but the next were not until 24 March when there six in Ballynacallagh and two in Tilickafinna. Numbers then built up rapidly to the end of March, after which the species

was common throughout the spring and summer. The first fledged juveniles were recorded on 20 May. Numbers increased considerably from the end of July, swelled by the young of the year and probably also some influx from the mainland. Notable post-breeding flocks included 120 on 13 and 26 August and 200 on 28 August. Numbers remained high throughout September, and exceeded 100 on many dates in the first half of October, with exceptionally high counts of 250 on 6th and 500 on 11th. Numbers then fell rapidly in the second half of October to 40 on 24th, seven on 25th and four on 30th. A single individual on 10 November was unusually late.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis (flammea) cabaret*

A better than average year for this species with three records in April and a good passage in October. Three individuals were recorded in spring, all in Tilickafinna: one flying east over our garden on 5 April; a male in our conifer hedge on 7 April; and a male in our garden and eventually flying off east on 11 April. Small numbers were recorded on 13 dates between 6 and 29 October as follows: 12 on 6th, one on 7th, three on 9th, 10 on 10th, two on 11th, six on 12th, two on 13th, seven on 16th, six on 17th, two on 18th, four on 24th, eight on 25th, and one on 29th. Most were seen flying west in the early morning and/or flying back east in the late morning, although a few came down to rest briefly in our garden in Tilickafinna.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

A well-marked and very vocal individual arrived in our garden at 0940 hrs on 11 October. It remained for about 15 minutes and then flew off high to the east at 0955 hrs (DS). Five minutes later, presumably the same individual was seen briefly by KG in Kilmichael Valley before it flew off east towards the mainland. This was the thirteenth record of Common Rosefinch on Dursey Island.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

A very poor year with only two records, possibly involving only a single individual. One was seen circling over the hillside above our garden in Tilickafinna on 6 October (DS), and possibly the same bird was seen near Bernie O'Leary's house in Tilickafinna on 10 October (KG).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Another very poor year with only two records, probably involving only a single individual: an adult male on the north slope west of Bernie's Gully on 15 October (KG), and probably the same adult male being chased out to sea by a Merlin at the Tip on 18 October (KG, AL).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Reed Buntings were present on Dursey almost throughout the year, and breeding was again confirmed. At least three individuals were present throughout January and five were seen on 22nd. A male was found in song in the fields below the Stapletons' house on 3 February, and there were two females in our garden on the same day. A male was seen in our garden on several occasions between 17 February and the end of March, and sang frequently during the period 14-19 March; there was a female in the Stapletons' garden on 3 March, and a female appeared regularly in our garden between 24 March and 8 April. On 1 April, the pair from our garden had moved to Mike's Bog, where a pair had nested in 2006. However, no Reed Buntings were seen in Tilickafinna after 8 April, and it seems very unlikely that there was any nesting attempt in this townland. On 26 May, a

pair was located in a rough field below the Stapletons' house. There was a male in song in this area on 3 June, and also a second male in song in a marshy field below Kilmichael. It seems likely that a pair nested in the rough fields below the Stapletons' house as a female and recently fledged juvenile were seen there on 9 June, along with a male in the fields below Kilmichael. A pair and a single juvenile were seen in the Kilmichael area on 23 June, and the male was seen again on 25 June, but the birds then either left the island or became very inconspicuous, as the only record between the end of June and beginning of October was a single bird in the Stapletons' garden on 26 August. Three birds appeared in the Stapletons' garden on 3 October, and one or two birds were recorded in Kilmichael and Tilickafinna on five dates to 17 October. However, there were no records in late October or November, and the only records in December were singletons in Stapletons' garden on 25th and 30th.

MAMMALS

Pygmy Shrew *Sorex minutus*

Only two records: two in Kilmichael on 24 June (DC), and one heard in the Stapleton's garden in Kilmichael on 6 August (BF).

Unidentified bats

A very poor year with only three records. The first of these was a very early individual over our garden in Tilickafinna at 1810 hrs on 2 February (DC). One was hawking over our garden at dusk (2220 hrs) on 30 May (DS), and one was seen in Kilmichael village on 30 October (DC). In all three cases, the bats were thought to be one of the pipistrelles.

Brown Rat *Rattus norvegicus*

2007 was another good year for Brown Rats on Dursey Island, with records from all three townlands. The earliest sighting was on 4 April, and thereafter there were sightings in every month except September to the end of the year. Single rats were observed in our garden in Tilickafinna on 21 dates between 4 April and 20 December. One near the west end of the island on 21 July was a little unusual (BF). Once again, some control measures were taken.

Common Otter *Lutra lutra*

A good year, with five sightings. Two were seen near the jetty of 1 January (DC, BF), and there was one again near the jetty on 7 January (BF). One was seen at Gull-bathing Area on the north coast on 17 February (BF). There was a group of three on the shore near Illanebeg on 10 March (BF). A young individual was watched for about 20 minutes foraging just off the rocks between the jetty and Illanebeg on 25 December (DS, JS).

Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus*

Recorded in every month from January to August, but in smaller numbers than usual, with 21 of the 23 records relating to only one or two individuals. Up to four were recorded on five dates in January, and there was one on 17 February. One or two were recorded on five dates in March; there were up to three of three dates in April, one or two on four dates in May, two on 4 June, and singles on 14 July, 21 July, 4 August and 25

August. The bulk of these records were of individuals near the jetty or off the Tip, but there were also several records from Gull-bathing Area on the north coast and from the rocks below Ivy Gully in Tilickafinna. Three Grey Seals at Ivy Gully on 1 April included a small pup (BF). The only record in the last four months of the year was a single individual off the Tip on 20 October (KG, AL).

Common Dolphin *Delphinus delphis*

None until 26 August, when a large school of about 60 appeared off Tilickafinna and a small group of six was seen off the north coast. Then schools of 20 were seen off Tilickafinna on 27, 28 and 30 August, followed by ten on 31 August, 60 again on 6 and 7 September, and 20 on 8 September. There was then a gap until 9 October, when about 30 appeared off Tilickafinna. A group of ten off Tilickafinna on 24 October were the last of the year. Most sightings were in the morning and involved feeding groups moving south-west off Tilickafinna towards the Tip.

Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*

As in 2006, there were only two sightings of this species all year. A school of 12 including several small individuals moved west then east off Tilickafinna between 0800 and 0830 hrs on 7 June (DS, JS), and probably the same school of 12 appeared in the Sound on 17 June (BF).

Risso's Dolphin *Grampus griseus*

The poorest year ever for this species off Dursey, with only two sightings, both in October. A school of at least 12 moved west close inshore off Tilickafinna at 1745 hrs on 9 October (DS, JS). Two large individuals moved west close inshore off Tilickafinna at 0950 hrs on 17 October (DS), and then a party of at least seven, possibly including these two individuals, appeared off Tilickafinna at 1430 that afternoon and eventually moved off east into the Sound (KG, AL, DS).

Killer Whale (Orca) *Orcinus orca*

A pod of four, including a large male, a medium-sized male and two females or young males, was watched travelling ESE off Tilickafinna at 0945-1015 hrs on 11 April on a direct line between the south-west tip of Dursey and the Mizen Head (DS).

Harbour Porpoise *Phocaena phocaena*

Present around the island throughout the year, but recorded infrequently and only in small numbers except between mid-June and late October. The monthly distribution of records was as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Days with sightings	5	0	3	4	5	3	5	12	14	14	4	4
Maximum count	2	0	12	2	5	30	35	35	25	25	12	3

Minke Whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*

Another very poor year, with sightings on only 10 dates, all in September and October. The first was a single individual feeding off Tilickafinna on 6 and 7 September (DS), and possibly this individual off the north coast on 9 September (BF). Then none until two off the Tip on 18 September (DC), no less than four off the Tip on 23 September (BF), and one off the Tip on 29 September (BF). After another gap, there was one off the Tip and north coast on 13 October (KF, KG, AL), one off the Tip on 15 October (DS), at least two

off the Tip and Tilickafinna on 17 October (many observers), and one off the north coast on 20 October (KG, AL).

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Common Lizard *Lacerta vivipara*

Another average year with a total of seven sightings: singletons in our garden in Tilickafinna on 5 April, 12 April and 4 June; one near the west wall (Tip) on 21 July (BF); one by the track west of Kilmichael on 23 July (KF); two together in our garden on 1 September, and one in our garden on 3 September.

Common Frog *Rana temporaria*

Frog spawn was found in the small pond below Kilmichael village on 2 February and full-grown frogs were observed on one or two occasions during the summer (DC). This species was introduced onto the island in 2005.

FISHES OF NOTE

Basking Shark *Cetorhinus maximus*

An exceptional year for this species, with five sightings in June. The first was a single individual below the south side of the Tip on 4 June (BF). One was seen by BF and two others were reported by tourists in the Sound on 10 June. No less than 17 were counted off the south coast between the Sound and the High Cliffs on 17 June (BF), and there was one in the Sound on 23 June (BF). The last were two at the Tip and one in the Sound on 24 June (DC, BF).

Ocean Sunfish *Mola mola*

One seen off Gull-bathing Area on the north coast on 21 July and again on 22 July (BF). One moving south through the Sound on 5 October (DS).

BUTTERFLIES

Large White *Pieris brassicae*

A chrysalis that was discovered on the inside of our front door in the autumn of 2006 emerged as a female Large White on 24 May. The butterfly was released in our garden in Tilickafinna the next day. There were seven other records: singletons in our garden on 4 May, 31 July, 6 September and 20 September; singletons in Ballynacallagh on 20 May and 14 July; and one in Kilmichael Valley on 9 September.

Green-veined White *Pieris napi*

First recorded on 28 April (two), then fairly common until 3 June, with the highest count being 13 on 2 May. Common from 7 July (five) to 15 September (four), with peak counts of 20 on 21 July and 15 on 23 July. A late individual was found in our garden in Tilickafinna on 23 September. As usual, the great majority were in the Kilmichael and Ballynacallagh areas, especially Kilmichael Valley, although there were also a few individuals in Tilickafinna.

Clouded Yellow *Colius croceus*

One seen by BF near the west end of the island on 9 September.

Green Hairstreak *Callophrys rubi*

A poor year for this species, after two good years. The first were two in our garden in Tilickafinna on 2 May. Up to four were then recorded on 11 dates to 17 June, all in the Tilickafinna area. In previous years, the main area for this species has been a small patch of moorland west of Kilmichael, but this area was completely burned out by one of the local farmers in early spring.

Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas*

A poor year for this species, with only eight records, although there was evidence of three broods. The only spring record was one in Kilmichael Valley on 19 May. One in our garden in Tilickafinna on 21 July, two there on 23 July, and one in Kilmichael Valley on 6 August. One on Illanebeg on 15 September; one in our garden on 9 October, one in Kilmichael village on 14 October; and one in Ivy Gully, Tilickafinna, on 15 October.

Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus*

A rather poor year, with no more than four recorded in a day. The first of the season was an early individual in Tilickafinna on 4 May. Then none until three on 9 May followed by up to four on six dates to 10 June. Singletons on 31 July and 6 August, and up to four almost daily from 24 August to 9 September. Recorded widely on south-facing slopes from the west end of the island to the Cable Car and Illanebeg.

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*

A relatively good year for this immigrant, with a notable influx in the second week of June. The first of the season were one in our garden in Tilickafinna and one in Kilmichael Valley on 28 April, and two in our garden on 2 and 3 May. Then none until one appeared in our garden during south-easterly winds on 8 June. This was followed by eight the next day and at least 150 on 10 June, mostly near the west end of the island and in our garden. These moved off quickly, and only five were recorded on 11th. The only other records in June were one on 23rd and two on 24th. Up to three were recorded on six dates from 14 to 30 July, and there was a small influx during a period of light south-easterly winds on 31 July, when 10 appeared in our garden. Up to four were recorded on 20 dates in August and one or two on four dates in early September. At least 12 were present on 9 September, during a period of light variable winds, but these soon disappeared and only one or two were recorded on four dates in the second half of September. There was another small influx of about 20 during south-easterly winds on 6 October. Thereafter, numbers decreased gradually until 15 October when at least 50 arrived during a light south-westerly breeze. Most of these had gone by 20 October, and then one or two were recorded almost daily until the last individual on 28 October. The species was recorded from all over the island, but was commonest in

Tilickafinna and at the west end of the island.

Painted Lady *Cynthia cardui*

Another rather poor year for this species, although there was one sizeable influx during a period of south-easterly winds in the second week of June. None was recorded until three arrived in Tilickafinna and a fourth appeared in Kilmichael on 9 June. At least 150 were present on the island the next day, including at least 100 in our garden and 40 at the west end of the island. Only five remained on 11 June, and the only other records in June were one at the west end on 17th and one in our garden on 24th. None was recorded in July or August, and the only observations in September were during a period of light variable winds on 9th, when there were three near the west end of the island and two in Kilmichael Valley. A single individual was present in our garden on 3, 6 and 7 October and again on 14 October. At least eight arrived with an influx of Red Admirals during a light south-westerly breeze on 15 October. Most of these were in Tilickafinna. Numbers then dwindled gradually to two on 18th. After a gap of several days, three appeared in Tilickafinna on 22 October, and these were last seen on 25 October. The great majority of records were from our garden in Tilickafinna and near the west end of the island, but a few were recorded in Kilmichael and Ballynacallagh.

Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae*

After an exceptional year for this species in 2006, 2007 was rather quiet. The first of the year was one in our garden in Tilickafinna on 29 March, followed by two on 1 April increasing to three on 5th. Then up to three were recorded on five dates to 12 April, with records from Tilickafinna, the High Cliffs and Ballynacallagh. Then none until one in Kilmichael on 23 June and one in Ballynacallagh on 14 July. Thereafter, singletons were recorded on 6, 22 and 26 August, 8, 9, 15 and 20 September, and 6, 11 and 15 October.

Peacock *Inachis io*

One in our garden in Tilickafinna on 27 March was the first butterfly of the year. There were at least five individuals on the island in the first week of April: one in Ivy Gully on 1st; one or two in our garden from 3rd to 7th; one in Ballynacallagh on 4th and 7th; and one in Kilmichael on 6th. Then none until two in Kilmichael Valley on 14 July, one in Kilmichael and two in our garden on 21 July, and three in our garden on 23 July. Thereafter, one or two in our garden on 13 dates to 15 August and singletons on 21 August, 26 August and 3 September. Four appeared along with an influx of Red Admirals on 6 October (three in Tilickafinna and one in Kilmichael), and there were singletons in Kilmichael on 10 and 14 October, and in our garden on 17 October.

Dark Green Fritillary *Argynnis aglaja*

Another good year for this species. The first was one on the High Cliffs on 24 June. Then recorded on nine dates to 7 August, with high counts of 18 on 21 July and 17 on 23 July. A very worn individual in our garden in Tilickafinna on 30 August was exceptionally late. Most were recorded in the rough fields in Tilickafinna, but smaller numbers were recorded on the main hill and in the Kilmichael area.

Wall Brown *Lasiomata megera*

Five on 2 May, and then up to five on ten dates to 3 June. The first of the second brood was one on 23 July. Thereafter, recorded on 13 dates to 8 September, with high counts of 22 on 6 August and 10 on 8 August. There was no evidence of a third brood. Recorded in

all village areas on the south-facing slopes.

Grayling *Hipparchia semele*

Another good year for this species. Five near the west end of the island on 7 July, one in Kilmichael on 14 July and one on the High Cliffs on 15 July were the first. Then recorded on 14 dates to 26 August, with high counts of 16 on 21 July, 33 on 23 July and 20 on 6 August. Singletons on 8, 9 and 15 September were unusually late. Recorded widely over the island from the West Hill to the Cable Car and jetty.

Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina*

The first of the season were two in Ballynacallagh and one in Kilmichael on 24 June. Then none until five on 7 July. Thereafter, fairly common until 15 September, with high counts of 37 on 23 July and 50 on 6 August. Singletons on 10 October and 14 October were exceptionally late. The species was widely distributed over the whole island.

MOTHS

The following day-flying moths were recorded.

Six-spot Burnet *Zygaena filipendulae*

2007 was a poor year for this species on Dursey. Two near the west end of the island on 21 July (BF) and three in Ivy Gully, Tilickafinna, on 23 July (KF) were the first of the season. Then five at the west end on 5 August, eight below Kilmichael on 6 August, and up to three on six dates to the last, a singleton, on the North Slope on 3 September.

Northern Eggar *Lasiocampa quercus callunae*

Two males flying through our garden on 7 August, followed by one on 8th and one on 10th; also one in Ballynacallagh and one in Kilmichael Valley on 12 August. Single females were caught in the light-trap in our garden on the nights of 25/26 and 27/28 August.

Fox Moth *Macrothylacia rubi*

At least ten males flying through our garden in the evening of 2 May, and five in our garden at dusk on 3 May. A total of seven Fox Moths were trapped in our garden between 30 April and 10 June.

Hummingbird Hawk-moth *Macroglossum stellatarum*

A very poor year for this immigrant, with possibly only two individuals recorded. One on the North Cliffs in Tilickafinna on 10 June (BF). One in our garden in Tilickafinna on 14 October, and probably the same individual again on 21 October and 25 October.

Striped Hawk-moth *Hyles livornica*

Close views of one feeding in our garden in Tilickafinna for about five minutes from 2150 hrs on 11 June. This constitutes the first record of this rare immigrant on Dursey Island.

Bedstraw/Striped Hawk-moth *Hyles gallii/livornica*

A hawk-moth feeding in our garden at 2145-2215 hrs on 9 June appeared to be one of

these two rather similar species, but would not stay still long enough for us to identify it. Another *Hyles* hawk-moth found foraging in flowering *Hebe* hedges at Zuma in Ballynacallagh at 1650-1655 hrs on 10 June was thought to be a Bedstraw Hawk-moth but unfortunately insufficient detail was seen for us to be certain of the identification.

Cinnabar *Tyria jacobaeae*

Another good year for this species. The first of the season were two very early individuals in Ballynacallagh on 28 April (BF), followed by singles on 19 May and 23 May. Fairly common throughout June, with high counts of 15 on 3rd and 14 on 24th. A total of seven were trapped in our garden in Tilickafinna in early June. Four worn individuals in Zuma on 7 July were the last.

Small Yellow Underwing *Panemeria tenebrata*

Close views of one feeding on flowers on our veranda in Tilickafinna at about mid-day on 4 May – the first record of this species on Dursey Island.

Silver Y *Autographa gamma*

Another good year for this common migrant, with a total of 725 recorded between 30 April and 28 October. The first influx occurred on 30 April, when at least 50 arrived in our garden in Tilickafinna between 1800 and 2115 hrs. Only ten remained by the next day, and all had disappeared by 4 May. The next influx was in the late evening of 9 June, when there was a spectacular movement of at least 400 through our garden between 2130 and 2230 hrs. There were still about 150 in our garden the next day along with about 50 individuals elsewhere on the island, but only 30 remained on 11th. There was then a long gap until the next record, a singleton on the High Cliffs on 9 September (BF). This was followed by one in our garden in Tilickafinna on 6 October. There was a small arrival in Tilickafinna and at the west end of the island in mid-October, with at least 13 individuals on 14th and eight on 15th. There were still two in Tilickafinna on 22 October, and one of these lingered in our garden until 27th. The last of the year was one in Kilmichael village on 28 October (DC).

The monthly totals of moths caught in the light trap are given in Table 1. Other nocturnal moths of interest included a Garden Tiger *Arctia caja* found under a vehicle at the Cable Car on 4 August (BF), and a Least Yellow Underwing *Noctua interjecta* in a *Hebe* hedge in our garden on 13 August.

DRAGONFLIES

The only dragonflies recorded on Dursey Island in 2007 were two or three unidentified hawkers as follows:

Unidentified hawker *Aeshna* sp.

A single individual in our garden in Tilickafinna in the afternoon of 15 August. A single individual at the Tip at around mid-day on 6 October (KG, AL), and possibly the same individual in our garden later that afternoon.

Table 1. Monthly totals of moths caught at light-trap on Dursey Island in 2007.

Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
Number of trap nights	6	14	9	3	17	6	55
Map-winged Swift <i>Hepialus fusconebulosa</i>			2				2
Northern Eggar <i>Lasiocampa quercus callunae</i>					2		2
Fox Moth <i>Macrothylacia rubi</i>	3	1	3				7
*Emperor <i>Pavonia pavonia</i>	1						1
Small Fan-footed Wave <i>Idea biselata</i>				1	3		4
Single-dotted Wave <i>Idea dimidiata</i>					2	1	3
Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet <i>Xanthoroe ferrugata</i>	2	1	1		3		7
Garden Carpet <i>Xanthorhoe fluctuata</i>	1		2				3
Chevron <i>Eulithis testata</i>						1	1
Foxglove Pug <i>Eupithecia pulchellata</i>			11		3		14
Narrow-winged Pug <i>Eupithecia nanata</i>	1	2				2	5
*Grey Scalloped Bar <i>Dyscia fagaria</i>	1	1					2
Garden Tiger <i>Arctia caja</i>					2		2
White Ermine <i>Spilosoma lubricipeda</i>		2	12				14
Buff Ermine <i>Spilosoma luteum</i>		2	3		2		7
Cinnabar <i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>			7				7
Square-spot Dart <i>Euxoa obelisca</i>					1	2	3
Heart and Dart <i>Agrotis exclamationis</i>		1	1				2
Flame <i>Axylia putris</i>		1					1
Flame Shoulder <i>Ochropleura plecta</i>		2	2				4
Northern Rustic <i>Standfussiana lucerneae</i>			5				5
Large Yellow Underwing <i>Noctua pronuba</i>			6				6
True Lover's Knot <i>Lycophotia porphyrea</i>		1	8		7		16
Ingrailed Clay <i>Diarsia mendica</i>					3		3
Small Square-spot <i>Diarsia rubi</i>		2				1	3
Square-spot Rustic <i>Xestia xanthographa</i>					6	26	32
Shears <i>Hada nana</i>		32	94				126
Bright-line Brown-eye <i>Lacanobia oleracea</i>		2			1		3
*Glaucous Shears <i>Papestra biren</i>	1	1					2
Campion <i>Hadena rivularis</i>			3		1	2	6
Pod Lover <i>Hadena perplexa capsophila</i>	3	5	5		1		14

Grey <i>Hadena caesia</i>		2	1		2		5
Antler Moth <i>Cerapteryx graminis</i>					6		6
Brown-line Bright-eye <i>Mythimna conigera</i>				5	1		6
*Pink-barred Sallow <i>Xanthia togata</i>						1	1
*Sweet Gale Moth <i>Acronicta euphorbiae</i>			1				1
Knot Grass <i>Aronicta rumicis</i>		1	1				2
Straw Underwing <i>Thalpophila matura</i>					1	2	3
Angle Shades <i>Phlogophora meticulosa</i>		2					2
Dark Arches <i>Apamea monoglypha</i>			5		3		8
Cloaked Minor <i>Mesoligia furuncula</i>				1	1		2
Common Rustic <i>Mesapamea secalis</i>						1	1
Flounced Rustic <i>Luperina testacea</i>					47	26	73
Ear Moth sp. <i>Amphipoea</i> sp.					2	1	3
Rosy Rustic <i>Hydraecia micacea</i>					4	2	6
Rustic <i>Hoplodrena blanda</i>					8		8
Silver Y <i>Autographa gamma</i>	4	1	3	1			9
Spectacle <i>Abrostola tripartita</i>			1				1
Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
Unidentified (macro)			1		4	1	6
Bee Moth (micro)						1	1
Total moths (excluding micros)	17	62	178	8	116	69	450
Total species (excluding micros)	9	19	22	4	24	13	48

*: a new species for Dursey Island.