



Pembrokeshire Coast
National Park Authority

Daugleddau Estuary
and
Milford Haven Waterway
SURVEILLANCE OF SUMMER
SHELDUCK POPULATIONS

Report for 2002

**DAUGLEDDAU ESTUARY AND
MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY:
ANNUAL SURVEILLANCE OF
SUMMER SHELDUCK
POPULATIONS**

REPORT FOR 2002

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Summary

The Daugleddau Estuary and Milford Haven Waterway hold nationally important numbers of shelducks during the winter months. In addition, there is a small summer population which has been the subject of annual boat-based surveys between 1991 and 2001. The summer boat based survey was repeated in 2002, in June and early August, as part of a co-ordinated programme of environmental surveillance in the estuary system.

The methods used and results obtained during the survey are described in this report. The results indicate that 2002 was a relatively poor year for shelducks in the estuary system, in terms of numbers of broods and the average size of broods. Predation by ground and avian predators, poor weather in May and June and possible localised disturbance are thought to be contributory factors. Data collected for other wetland birds in August once again confirmed the importance of the estuary system, especially for species such as curlew. The report concludes with a recommendation for the continuation of the annual surveillance of summer shelduck populations, as part of the MHWESG annual work programme.