

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

**REPORT FOR 2007**

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Fig 3: average size of broods recorded 1992 - 2007

## 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 surveys carried out between 1991 and 2006. The summer boat survey was repeated in June and July 2007, as part of a co-ordinated programme of environmental surveillance in the estuary system. The aims, objectives and methods used, together with the results obtained from the survey, are described in this report.

The results indicate that, in terms of number of broods recorded, 2007 was the poorest year for shelducks in the estuary system since 1994, although the average brood size was similar to that recorded in 2006. The cold, very wet weather in June and July in 2007 is thought to have played a major part in limiting the number of broods seen. Disturbance and predation may also account for the poor results. Data collected for other wetland birds once again underlined the importance of the estuary system during the autumn migration period, especially for species such as curlew. The report concludes with a recommendation for the continuation of the annual surveillance of summer shelduck populations in the estuary system, as part of the MHWESG annual work programme.