

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

**Daugleddau Estuary and
Milford Haven Waterway**

**Annual Surveillance of
Summer Shelduck Populations**



Report for 2008



**Parc Cenedlaethol
Arfordir Penfro**
**Pembrokeshire Coast
National Park**

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

REPORT FOR 2008

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PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL

PARK AUTHORITY

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Fig1: area included in the 2008 survey and the distribution of shelduck broods recorded during the survey

Fig 2: total numbers of broods recorded 1992 -2008

Fig3: average size of broods recorded 1992 - 2008

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 summer boat surveys carried out between 1991 and 2007. The summer boat survey was repeated in June and July 2008, as part of a co-ordinated programme of environmental surveillance in the estuary system. The aims, objectives and methods used, together with the data obtained from the survey, are described and presented in this report.

The results indicate that, in terms of the numbers of broods recorded, 2008 (in common with 2007) was a very poor year for shelducks in the estuary system. The persistent cold, very wet weather in June and July 2008 is thought to have played a significant part in limiting breeding success. Disturbance and predation may also have contributed to the second poorest season for shelducks in the estuary system since 1994. 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 Milford Haven Waterway Environmental Surveillance Group's annual work programme.