

**WILDFOWL AND WADER COUNTS**  
**in the**  
**MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY**  
**2014-15**

Report prepared for the Milford Haven Waterway Environmental Surveillance Group  
by Annie Haycock  
Pembrokeshire WeBS coordinator

## **COPYRIGHT**

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, unless the permission of the Milford Haven Waterway Environmental Surveillance Group has been given beforehand.

Contact with the Milford Haven Waterway Environmental Surveillance Group can be made through:

Corporate Affairs Director  
Milford Haven Port Authority  
Gorsewood Drive  
Hakin  
Milford Haven  
Pembrokeshire SA73 3ER  
Telephone (general enquiries) 01646 696100

Use of this document to inform environmental decision- making in the Milford Haven Waterway is welcomed by the MHWESG; however all use should be appropriately acknowledged and referenced.

Recommended citation:

Haycock A (2015). Wildfowl and wader counts on the Milford Haven Waterway, 2014-15. A report to the Milford Haven Waterway Environmental Surveillance Group.

## **WILDFOWL AND WADER COUNTS on the MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY 2014-15**

### **Executive Summary**

The Wetland Bird Survey was carried out on the Cleddau Estuary system between September 2014 and March 2015 with additional counts for June and July 2014 made by Jane Hodges during the annual survey of summer shelduck populations.

The methodology used followed that set out in the BTO WeBS Counters Handbook.

A total peak count of 22,806 birds between November and February confirms that the estuary system is still of international importance for its waterbird populations. This peak count was slightly higher than the previous two seasons, but these three years are still the lowest since 1996-97 when gulls were first included in the counts.

The levels of “National Importance” for many water birds have been revised, and only four species now qualify (based on a five-year mean): wigeon (max. 5720 in November), teal (max 2359 in January), greenshank (max 30 in November), and curlew (1731 in July).

Shelduck (422 in February), Dunlin (1555 in February) and Little Egret (25 in October) were well below the qualifying level in 2014-15 but only just short based on the 5-year average.

**Following two years of low counts, wigeon numbers seem to have recovered somewhat in 2014-15. However, the numbers are still well below the previous eight seasons.** Many birds also arrived later, and some stayed later. The reason for these changes is not yet known, however the Milford Haven Waterway is not the only site to have experienced temporary reductions in numbers in recent years.

The total number of birds recorded each month was similar to the average of the past five years, but lower than those recorded during the 2000s. However, there were considerable differences from month to month, and from species to species. For example, dunlin numbers were higher than in 2013-14, but it was still the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest count since 1987-88.

Comparison of counts with the national report for 2012-13 (the most recent that is available) show that for most species, the local population trends are similar to those experienced nationally.

## CYFRIFON ADAR DŴR AC ADAR HIRGOES AR DDYFRFFORDD ABERDAUGLEDDAU 2014 – 15

### Crynodeb Gweithredol

Gwnaethpwyd Arolwg Adar y Gwlyptir ar system aber y Cleddau rhwng Medi 2014 a Mawrth 2015. Gwnaeth Jane Hodges gyfrifon ychwanegol ar gyfer mis Mehefin a mis Gorffennaf 2014 yn ystod yr arolwg blynyddol o boblogaethau haf hwyaden yr eithin.

Defnyddiwyd yr un fethodoleg â'r un amlinellir yn Llawlyfr Cyfrifwyr AAyG y BTO.

Mae cyfanswm cyfrif uchaf o 22,806 o adar rhwng mis Tachwedd a mis Chwefror yn cadarnhau bod system yr aber yn parhau i fod o bwysigrwydd rhyngwladol yn achos ei phoblogaethau o adar dŵr. Roedd y cyfrif uchaf yma ychydig yn uwch nag ydoedd yn ystod y ddau dymor blaenorol, ond mae'r tair blynedd yma yn parhau y rhai isaf er

1996 –97 pan gafodd gwylanod eu cynnwys yn y cyfrifon.

Yn achos nifer o adar dŵr mae lefelau'r 'Pwysigrwydd Cenedlaethol' wedi cael eu hadolygu a dim ond pedwar rhywogaeth sydd bellach yn gymwys (yn seiliedig ar gymedr pum mlynedd): chwiwell (uchafswm o 5720 ym mis Tachwedd), corhwyad (uchafswm o 2359 ym mis Ionawr), pibydd coeswyrdd (uchafswm o 30 ym mis Tachwedd), a'r gylfinir (1731 ym mis Gorffennaf). Roedd hwyaden yr eithin (422 ym mis Chwefror), pibydd y mawn (1555 ym mis Chwefror) a'r crëyr bach copog (25 ym mis Hydref) yn llawer is na'r lefel gymhwyso yn 2014-15 ond dim ond ychydig islaw ar sail y cyfartaledd pum mlynedd.

**Yn dilyn dwy flynedd o gyfrifon isel, mae'n ymddangos bod niferoedd y chwiwell wedi gwella rhyw ychydig yn ystod 2014 15. Mae'r niferoedd yn llawer is, fodd bynnag, na'r wyth tymor blaenorol.** Yn ogystal, cyrhaeddodd nifer o adar yn hwyrach ac arhosodd rhai yn hwyrach. Ni wyddir hyd yma beth yw'r rheswm dros y newidiadau hyn ond nid dyfrffordd Aberdaugleddau yw'r unig safle yn ystod y blynyddoedd diwethaf i brofi lleihad dros dro mewn niferoedd

Roedd cyfanswm yr adar a gofnodwyd bob mis yn debyg i'r cyfartaledd a gofnodwyd dros y pum mlynedd diwethaf ond roedd yn is na'r rhai a gofnodwyd yn ystod blynyddoedd y 2000. Roedd cynrywahanïaethau, fodd bynnag, o fis i fis a rhwng rhywogaethau a'i gilydd. Roedd niferoedd pibydd y mawn er enghraifft yn well nag oeddent yn ystod 2013 – 14 ond mae'n parhau fel yr 2<sup>ail</sup> gyfrif isaf er 1987 – 88.

Trwy gymharu'r cyfrifon gydag adroddiad cenedlaethol 2012-13 (yr adroddiad diweddara sydd ar gael) gwelir fod y tueddiadau lleol o safbwynt poblogaethau yn debyg i'r rhai a geir yn genedlaethol yn achos y rhan fwyaf o rywogethau.