



MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY
ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEILLANCE GROUP

GRŴP CADW GOLWG AMGYLCHEDDOL
AR DDYFRFFORDD ABERDAUGLEDDAU

WILDFOWL AND WADER COUNTS
in the
MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY
2020-21

Annie Haycock
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**Report to the Milford Haven Waterway Environmental Surveillance
Group**

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A note about the data

The data used in this report were collected by volunteers as part of the British Trust for Ornithology's Wetlands Bird Survey (WeBS). The data are summarised in this report to provide an overview of the status of wetland birds in the Milford Haven Waterway and Daugleddau Estuary. The data are not owned by the MHWESG. Anyone (including members of the MHWESG) wishing to refer to the data for official regulatory purposes e.g. Environmental Impact Assessment, public inquiries etc.) needs to submit a data request for official WeBS data - please visit www.bto.org/webs-data.

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WILDFOWL AND WADER COUNTS on the MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY 2020-21

Executive Summary

The Wetland Bird Survey was carried out on the Milford Haven Waterway and Cleddau Estuary system (here-in after referred to as the Cleddau Estuary complex) between September 2020 and March 2021 with additional counts for June and July 2020 made by Jane Hodges during the annual survey of summer shelduck populations. Due to Covid-19 movement restrictions, these summer counts were incomplete, as were the core winter counts in January and February.

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

A total peak count of 28,131 birds between November and February confirms that the estuary complex is of international importance for its winter waterbird populations. Including counts of migrating birds (notably curlew) in July takes this total to 30,292. This peak count is above average for the site, as often happens when there is a large influx of lapwing and golden plover.

The levels of “National Importance” for many water birds were revised in 2019, and only four species now qualify (based on a five-year mean): wigeon (max. 7485 in November), greenshank (max 63 in October), and Dunlin (3994 in January). Light-bellied Brent Geese (67 in November) of the Greenland/Canadian population are now considered separately and the increasing numbers on the Cleddau are of national importance.

Curlew (536 in September) were apparently at their lowest level since 1999-2000, a reflection of the decline recorded across their range, however this also reflects the covid-related difficulties of counting during July 2020 when numbers would normally have been higher.

Shelduck (379 in January) were still well below the qualifying level.

The monthly total numbers of birds recorded between September and January was higher than the average of the past twenty years.

Comparison of counts with the national report for 2019-20 (the most recent that is available) show that for most species, the local population trends are similar to those experienced nationally.

Comparisons with the all-Wales 5-year averages show that the Cleddau complex is still one of the top five sites for fifteen species, topping the table for wigeon, lapwing and golden plover.

The Cleddau Estuary complex is the most important site in Wales for wigeon, golden plover and lapwing, and one of the top five sites in Wales for twelve others.

CYFRIFON ADAR DŴR AC ADAR HIRGOES AR DDYFRFFORDD ABERDAUGLEDDAU 2020-21

Crynodeb Gweithredol

Gwnaethpwyd Arolwg Adar y Gwlyptir ar system Aber y Cleddau rhwng Medi 2020 a Mawrth 2021. Gwnaeth Jane Hodges gyfrifon ychwanegol ym mis Mehefin a mis Gorffennaf 2020 yn ystod yr arolwg blynyddol o boblogaethau haf hwyaden yr eithin. Gan fod cyfyngiadau ar deithio oherwydd Covid-19, roedd y cyfrifon haf yma yn anghyflawn, fel ag yr oedd cyfrifon craidd y gaeaf ym mis Ionawr a mis Chwefror.

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

Mae cyfanswm cyfrif uchaf o 28,131 o adar rhwng mis Tachwedd a mis Chwefror yn cadarnhau bod system yr aber o bwysigrwydd rhyngwladol yn achos ei phoblogaethau gaeaf o adar dŵr. Mae'r cyfanswm yn cyrraedd 30,292 ac mae hynny'n cynnwys cyfrifon yr adar sy'n mudo (y gylfinir yn arbennig) ym mis Gorffennaf. Mae'r cyfrif uchaf yma yn uwch na'r cyfartaledd ar gyfer y safle, ac mae hyn yn digwydd yn aml pan geir niferoedd mawr o gornchwiglod a chwtiaid aur.

Cafodd lefelau'r 'Pwysigrwydd Cenedlaethol' eu hadolygu yn 2019 yn achos nifer o adar dŵr a dim ond pedwar rhywogaeth sydd bellach yn gymwys (yn seiliedig ar gymedr pum mlynedd): chwiwell (uchafswm o 7485 ym mis Tachwedd), pibydd coeswyrdd (uchafswm o 63 ym mis Hydref), a phibydd y mawn (3994 ym mis Ionawr). Mae gwyddau duon bololau (67 ym mis Tachwedd) o boblogaeth Yr Ynys Las / Canada bellach yn cael eu hystyried ar wahân ac mae'r niferoedd cynyddol ar y Cleddau o bwysigrwydd cenedlaethol.

Roedd y cylfinirod (536 ym mis Medi), mae'n ymddangos, ar eu lefel isaf er 1999-2000, adlewyrchiad o'r lleihad a gofnodwyd ar draws eu dosbarthiad. Mae hyn hefyd, fodd bynnag, yn adlewyrchu'r anhawster i gyfrif yn ystod Gorffennaf 2020 pan fyddai'r niferoedd wedi bod yn uwch.

Roedd hwyaid yr eithin (379 ym mis Ionawr) yn parhau ymhell islaw'r lefel cymhwyso.

Roedd cyfanswm yr adar a gofnodwyd bob mis rhwng Medi a Ionawr yn uwch na chyfartaledd yr ugain mlynedd ddiwethaf.

Drwy gymharu'r cyfrifon gydag adroddiad blynyddol 2019 – 20 (y diweddara sydd ar gael) gwelir fod tueddiadau'r boblogaeth leol, yn achos y rhan fwyaf o'r rhywogaethau, yn debyg i'r rhai a geir yn genedlaethol.

Mae cymharu gyda chyfartaledd 5 mlynedd Cymru gyfan yn dangos fod cymhlyg y Cleddau yn parhau yn un o'r pum safle gorau ar gyfer pymtheg o rywogaethau, gan ddod i frig y tabl yn achos y chwiwell, y gornchwiglen a'r cwtiaid aur.

Cymhlyg Aber y Cleddau yw'r safle pwysicaf yng Nghymru yn achos y chwiwell, y cwtiaid aur a'r gornchwiglen ac mae'n un o'r pum brif safle yng Nghymru yn achos deuddeg rhywogaeth arall.