

## The Ayres National Nature Reserve

## Kemmyrk Nadoor Ashoonagh ny h-Ayrey



## **UPDATE 30th April 2024**

Male curlew standing guard



**Curlews** have set up their territories and the females are incubating their eggs while the males stand guard looking out for danger. If a threat is detected he gives a warning call before trying to chase off any predators.

Our first **common lizards** for the year were recorded on the wooden stobs at the roadside. These cold blooded reptiles bask on the warm stobs in the sun to warm themselves up before they search for their invertebrate prey. These obliging creatures are great for showing children and for taking photographs of, but watch your shadow doesn't fall across them or they will take cover in

the safety of the grasses.



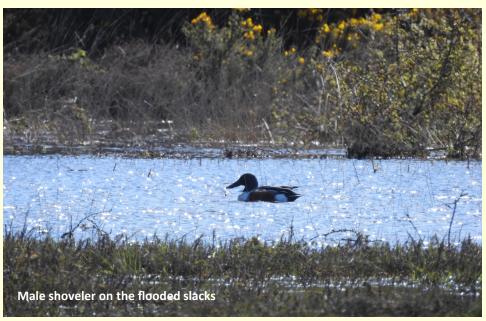
Our first little tern arrived from its wintering grounds on the north-west coast of Africa on the 21st April. The flock of roosting sandwich tern at Rue Point has grown over the past couple of weeks and the maximum count so far is 45. Passage whimbrel and bar-tailed godwit have also been seen at Rue Point. The main passage of ringed plover and sanderling appears to have passed through. There are still red-throated divers around hunting for fish off-shore.







**Early purple orchids** are currently flowering by the lime kiln and approximately 400m east of the MWT Ayres Nature Discovery Centre (at a location marked by a concrete post). The Ayres NNR is the main location for this orchid on the Isle of Man.



The slacks (low lying areas on the NNR) are still very flooded and are attracting **shoveler**, **teal**, **coot** and **moorhen**. There are also plenty of **mallard** ducklings bobbing about on the water.

**Raven** chicks have already fledged from their large stick nest in the plantation.



Linnets feeding on seed in the former sand pits. This red listed species on the Birds of Conservation Concern nests in small colonies in the gorse. They are also the favourite food of our visiting merlin.

Green-tiger beetles have emerged in good numbers and can be seen on the paths across the reserve. These voracious predators have huge jaws to catch their insect prey.

The tern fencing is up at the <u>Point of Ayre</u> (privately owned) and <u>ringed plover</u>, <u>common gull</u> and <u>oystercatcher</u> are already taking advantage of the quiet space. No Arctic tern have been reported yet and they should start to arrive over the next couple of weeks. <u>Grey seals</u> are present and signs are in place providing advice on how to view these amazing animals without disturbing them.

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