



Beach Nesting Birds

Biodiversity Action Plan



Little tern

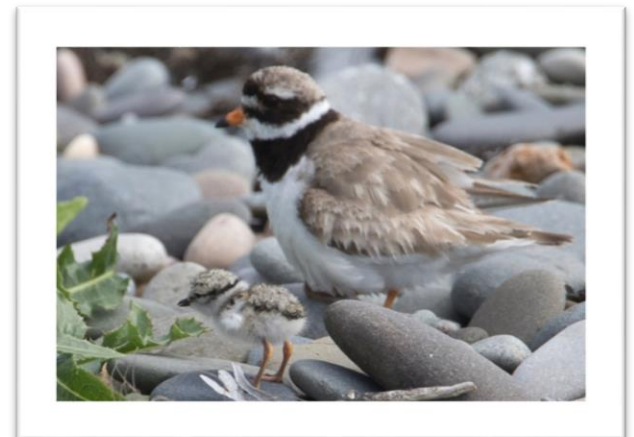


Arctic tern

All photos taken under licence



Oystercatcher



Ringed plover

Status

This BAP covers the four species nesting on our beaches:

Common Name	Scientific Name	BOCC IOM Status ¹		BOCC 5 UK ² Status		Schedule 1 WA 1990
Little tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	Red	BDr1	Amber	BDMr2, BL	Yes
Arctic tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Red	HD	Amber	BDMp1, BDMr1	Yes
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Red	SPEC 1	Amber	ERLOB, WL, WI, BI	No
Ringed plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Amber	BI/WI	Red	WDp1; BDMp1, WDMp2, WI	Yes

HD Historical breeding decline
BDr1 Red ≥50% decline 1999 to 2017-18
SPEC 1 European Conservation Status Red BirdLife International (2017)
BI/WI Breeding/Wintering importance within UK & IoM

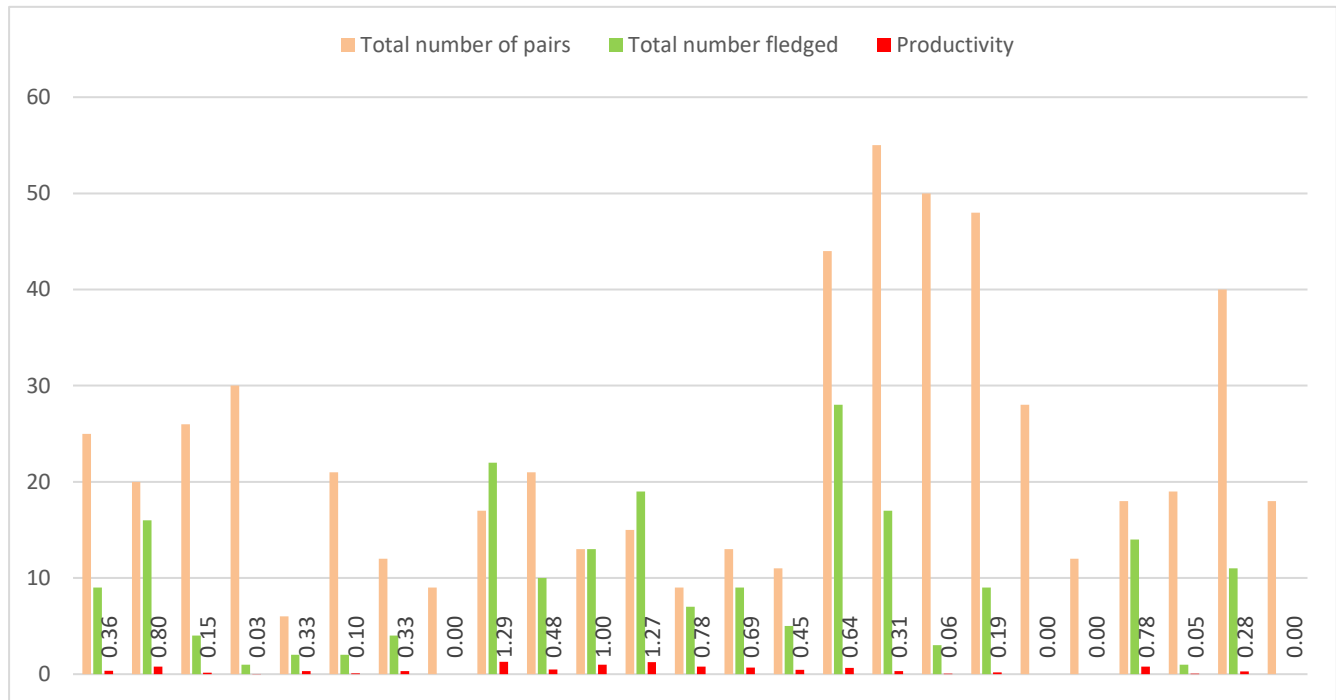
BDMp1/2 moderate breeding population decline over 25 years/longer term
BDMr1/2 moderate breeding range decline over 25 years/longer term
BL/WL breeding/non-breeding localisation
ERLOB threatened in Europe
BI/WI breeding/non-breeding international importance
WDMp1/2 moderate non-breeding population decline over 25 years/longer term

¹ Morris, N.G. & Sharpe, C.M. (September 2021) Birds of Conservation Concern in the Isle of Man. British Birds

² Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown, A., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D. and Win, I. (December 2021) The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. British Birds.

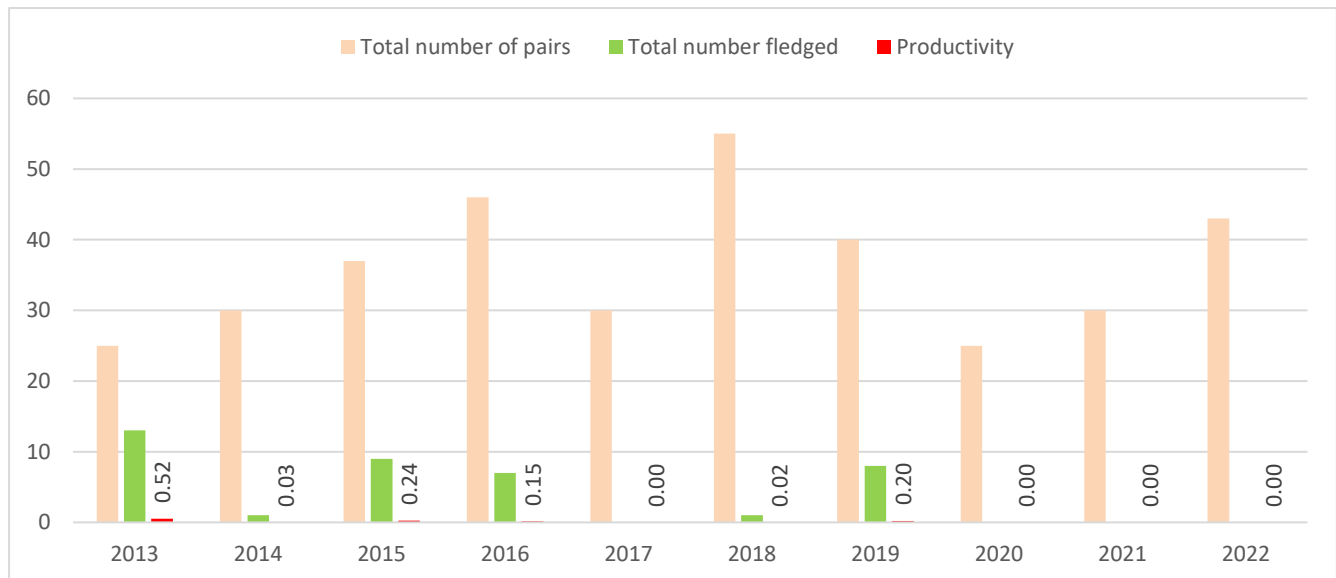
It is acknowledged through BOCC IoM and BOCC 5 that all four species are experiencing worrying population declines. The four species have been combined in to one BAP because they utilise the same habitat in the breeding season and the challenges they face are the same.

Little tern



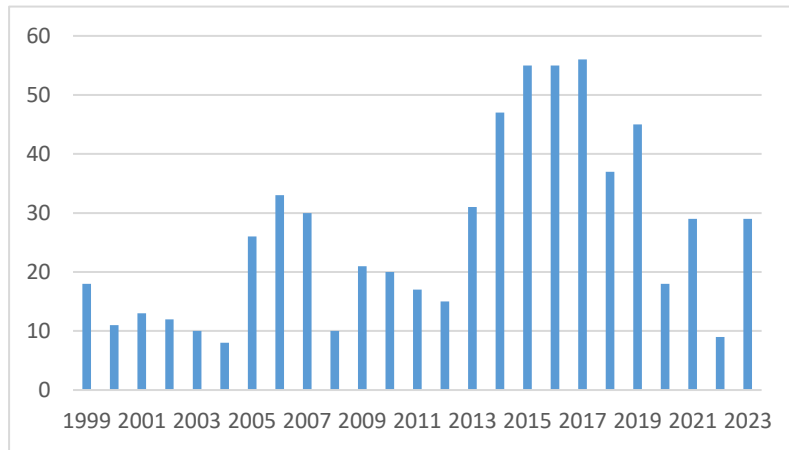
1,927 breeding pairs across the UK. Colour ringing has shown that the Manx colony is closely linked to the Gronant colony on the north coast of Wales and this likely explains the fluctuation in breeding pairs from year to year with little terns switching between colonies depending on suitability of conditions (predators, disturbance, beach profile, prey availability). Little terns require a productivity 0.75 to maintain the population density. The average productivity for Manx little terns over 25 years is 0.41 and the colony is being sustained by recruitment from other little tern colonies around the Irish sea.

Arctic tern



Arctic terns can be long lived, BTO reports the maximum age from ringing records as 31 years, with a typical life span of 13 years. With an average productivity of 0.12 for the past 10 years, this is clearly a species in serious trouble on the Isle of Man. Colour ringing has shown that the same birds are attempting to nest year after year.

Oystercatcher



The graph shows pairs breeding on the north-west coast only and is only a guide as monitoring effort has not been consistent across all years. 2013 to 2018 shows consistent monitoring of nests from Blue Point to the Point of Ayre. No consistent data exists for pairs nesting across the Isle of Man. Sharpe *et al.* (2007)³ estimated the breeding population for the Isle of Man to be 337 to 372 pairs for the period 1998 to 2002 (including pairs breeding inland). On the north-west coast oystercatchers have gone from having very little egg predation to being heavily predated in the past three years. BTO reports the maximum age from ringing records as 41 years with the average lifespan of 12 years.

Ringed plover

Getting an accurate figure of breeding pairs of ringed plover is challenging because they lay up to three clutches per breeding season. In 2016, on the north-west coast, 75 nests were monitored over the entire breeding season but this only equated to 20 active nests (20 breeding pairs) at any one time. Sharpe *et al.* (2007) estimated the breeding population for the Isle of Man to be 89 to 95 pairs for the period 1998 to 2002. In recent years, less than 10 recently fledged young have been observed on the north-west coast per year.

Breeding/Feeding

Little tern

Arrive from 21st April onwards and start to nest from early May onwards. They lay one to three eggs and will lay a second clutch if the first fails. Incubation 21 days. Chick fledge 21 days. Feed on sand eels and young herring.

Arctic tern

Arrive mid May and start to nest almost immediately. They lay one to three eggs and will lay second clutch if the first fails. Incubation 21 days. Chick fledge 21 days. Feed on sand eels and young herring.

Oystercatcher

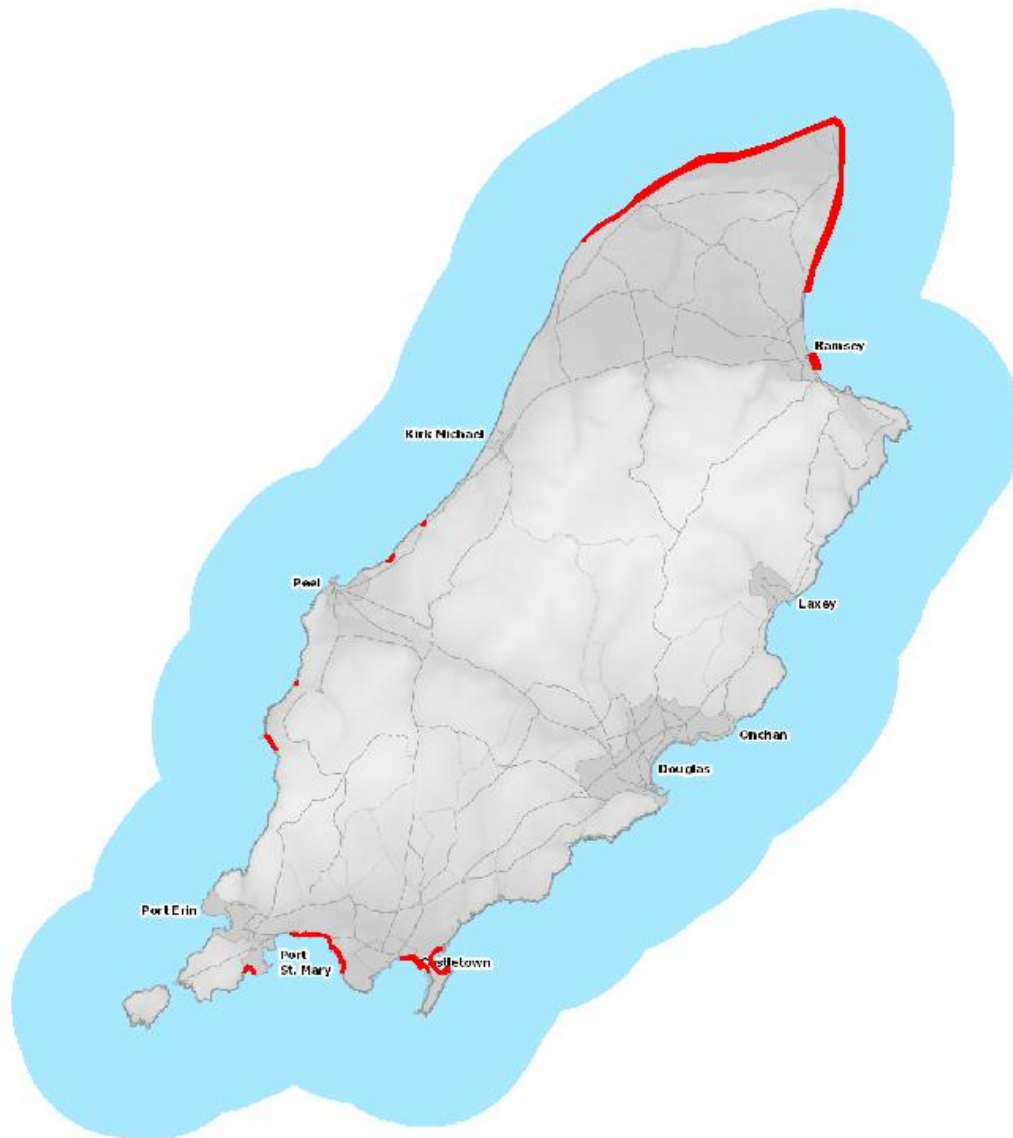
Lay one to three eggs from April to late May. One clutch only. 24 days incubation. Chick fledge at 34 days. Feed on invertebrates, chicks are fed by adults initially.

Ringed plover

Lay three to four eggs from April to August, will lay up to three clutches if clutches fail. Incubation 23 days. Chick fledge 23 days. Chicks self-feed on invertebrates.

³ Sharpe, C.M., Bishop, J.P., Cullen, J.P., Giovannini, P.G., Thorpe, J.P. & Weaver, P. (2007) Manx Bird Atlas – An Atlas on breeding and wintering birds on the Isle of Man April 1998 to March 2003. Liverpool University Press.

Manx Distribution



■ Main locations of beach nesting birds

Legal protection

- Little tern, Arctic tern and ringed plover are listed on Appendix II of the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, under which signatories are encouraged to draw up agreements to restore/maintain species' conservation status through management and other appropriate measures.
- Little tern, Arctic tern, ringed plover and oystercatcher are listed on the Afro-Eurasian Waterbirds Agreement.
- Birds, their nests, eggs and dependant young are legally protected under the Wildlife Act 1990. In addition, species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act are protected from disturbance while nesting and while they have dependant young.
- Ayres NNR Byelaws 2005 protects all birds from disturbance at all times.

Threats

- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
- Predation of eggs by crows, gulls, hedgehogs and rats
- Predation of chicks by crows, gulls, sparrowhawk, kestrel, hedgehogs, rats and cats
- Prolonged or repeated disturbance by man (photography, walkers, sightseers, beach cleaning etc.)
- Dogs disturbing nesting birds and eating eggs and chicks
- Trampling of eggs and chicks by man and horses
- Vehicles on beaches
- Plastic ingestion
- Intermittent prey availability
- Recreation
- Climate change- sea level rise causing more frequent nest flooding
- Climate change – extreme weather events with more frequent storms changing the beach profile, narrowing the beach above the high tide mark and restricting available nesting areas

Reason for BAP

Low productivity making populations unsustainable.

Additional BAPs are required to address disturbance of roosting and feeding wintering waders either as a collective BAP or individual BAPs for each species.

Aims

- Maintain current population and range
- Increase productivity
- Expand current range

Linked BAPS

Habitats

- Shingle beach

Delivery Options

Active

Challenges

○ Monitor pairs and fledging success to determine productivity	Partially – NNR only	Resources
○ Monitor range to determine any further retraction	No	Resources
○ Monitor food availability	No	Resources
○ Add oystercatcher to Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Act 1990	No	Resources Requires political agreement
○ Predator management programme – exclusion fences	No	Resources Landowner agreement
○ Predator management programme – discourage predators	No	Resources
○ Predator management programme – removal	Partially	Resources
○ Enhanced wardening schemes	No	Resources

Delivery Options	Active	Challenges
○ Zonation of areas to prevent disturbance from people and dogs	Partially – NNR only	Resources
○ Include Cronk y Bing ASSI within the Ayres NNR	No	Resources Requires political and landowner agreement
○ Designate Rue Point to Cronk y Bing an ASSI/NNR and Point of Ayre an ASSI/NNR	No	Resources Requires political and landowner agreement
○ Ramsar designation of beach nesting bird locations	No	Resources
○ Designate Langness, Derbyhaven and Sandwick ASSI an NNR	No	Resources Requires political and landowner agreement
○ Gate vehicle access points to beach at Cronk y Bing and Blue Point	No	Requires agreement from Harbours and Coast Guard
○ Education	Yes	Resources
○ BAP's to address wintering wader requirements	No	Resources
○ Nest monitoring training	Partially	Resources
○ Adhere to current guidance for HPAI	Yes	
○ Liaise with UK Steering Group for beach nesting birds	Yes	
○ Annual review and update of this document	By 1/4/25	