

**SEABIRDS AT SEA, MARCH - MAY 1989 (SHIP-BASED OBSERVATIONS  
Cvz/DGW, NIOZ)**

Data from vessels sailing for the NIOZ project were not received so far, apart from a survey on board MV Tridens late February/early March. The southern North Sea was visited during this trip, with most observations in the northern tip of the Dutch sector of the Continental Shelf and north of the Bruine Bank.

Fulmars were rather common in the southern North Sea, with hundreds of birds on most days. 'Coloured' specimens (D or DD) were seen frequently, but >98% was LL. Gannets were increasing in numbers, compared with earlier in February, but were still not very common.

The odd flocks of wildfowl were observed at considerable distances from the coast (including Mute Swans and Goldeneye), but the record of a plastic male Wigeon in transect, 50 miles west of Camperduin, was quite unexpected and unprecedented.

Larus-gulls were not particularly abundant, or it must have been near fishing fleets. A count of gulls, attracted by the fishing MV Tridens on 2 March in the Bruine Bank area (52°46'N, 03°23'E), included:

	adult	immature	oiled	
Lesser Bl.b.Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	2	2		0
Herring Gull <i>L. argentatus</i>	22	15		2
Great Bl.b.Gull <i>L. marinus</i>	4	28		0
Kittiwake <i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	144	36		5

Lesser Black-backed Gulls were still quite scarce in all visited areas (English east coast to German Bight). Skuas were still rare at sea. Two Great Skuas were observed.

Auks were seen in small numbers in most areas. In three areas, off the English east coast, in the German Bight and north of the Bruine Bank, Razorbills and Guillemots were seen in ratios 1:7, 1:2, and 1:6. A mixture of winter- and summer plumage birds was seen, with winter birds still predominating. A few Puffins and Little Auks were seen.

Important information from: C.J.Camphuysen, L.Stegeman.