

BEACHED BIRD SURVEYS, SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 1988 (NSO)

Few birds washed ashore in early autumn, including Herring Gulls, Fulmars and few Gannets. Most gulls were unoiled. The traditional October crash of passerines was again witnessed this year, including many thrushes and Starlings as usual. Only very few auks washed ashore and none were registered (in counts so far received) in the Beached Bird Survey.

Things changed rapidly in November. Large scale strandings of Guillemots were reported at Schiermonnikoog and Ameland (KE), Texel (Texelse Courant, MFL, RVH), the mainland coast (JVD, FG, JR) and in the Delta area (CJC, SH). Large quantities of oil washed ashore at Schiermonnikoog together with the corpses which were very hard to recognize as birds. More precise counts are badly needed. Most of the Guillemots at the other Wadden Sea islands were also contaminated with oil. Many fresh corpses of juvenile Guillemots further south were unoiled, but these birds were severely emaciated and starvation may have been the proximate cause of death. Several immature and adult Guillemots in the more southerly provinces were oiled. One probable *Uria aalge hyperborea* was collected at Schouwen for further examinations.

Quite a few oiled *Larus*-gulls were seen at the beach at Schouwen, late November. Usually, few of these birds show up in Beached Bird Surveys; they obviously do not die at the beach or at sea, but on inland roosts.

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