

SEAWATCHING, SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 1988 (CvZ)

A lot of seawatching has been carried out in this period. At the Noord-Holland coast about 200 hours were counted, at the Zuid-Holland coast about 150 hours and at the Wadden Isles coast 80 hours. The hours were rather evenly distributed over the period.

Divers were commonly seen migrating southward in November. The largest numbers were seen on Terschelling 30 on November when 200 individuals flew to the west. In November Great Crested Grebes were common as well, except at the Wadden Isles, where numbers were quite low as usual. The Red-necked Grebe showed peak numbers in October, especially in Noord-Holland.

Stormy weather was witnessed frequently from 15 September till the second week of October. In the last days of October and November strong westerlies were noticed again. These storms brought many storm-petrels into the coastal regions. Leach's Petrels were seen very frequently, with a grand total exceeding 200 individuals. On 24 September an outstanding total of 66 of these birds was counted at the Hondsbossche Zeewering (Hbz). Fulmars were common as well, but large numbers were only seen in mid-September and exclusively at the Hbz. On 18 September 1150 ind. were seen at this place heading north. Shearwaters frequented the entire Dutch coast with the Sooty being the commonest of the two species. About 85 Sooties were counted on 12 and 13 September along the entire coast. Gannets were not as abundant as the last two years; the largest numbers being registered at the Noord-Holland coast. Daily totals exceeding a hundred were seen mid-September and at the beginning of October. On 7 September 120 Cormorants were seen heading south in Scheveningen (Zuid-Holland).

Along the Noord-Holland coast remarkable numbers of Long-tailed Ducks were recorded. In November this beautiful duck had a daily presence involving a total of about 200 individuals. Eiders were as well more commonly seen along the Noord- and Zuid-Holland coast than usually. More usual was the mass-migration along the Wadden Isles coast (e.g. Schiermonnikoog) in the second week of October. The Common Scoter was most numerous from the end of October onward, appearing in the second week of November by several thousands swimming and flying short distances off the Noord-Holland coast. Small numbers of Velvet Scoters were involved as well. On 27 October 116 ind. of Red-breasted Mergansers were counted at the Hbz.

In September far less Great and Arctic Skuas were seen than usual. In November some dozens of Pomarine Skuas appeared for the Dutch coast. The most exciting event of this autumn however was undoubtedly the unprecedented influx of Long-tailed Skuas. In October about 100 individuals were recorded, most of them adults of Scandinavian origin. Normally this species is very rare, not even turning up annually.

Great Black-backed Gulls were seen in good numbers in November along the Noord-Holland and Wadden Isles coast. Migration of Lesser Black-backed Gulls in September was less than normal. Two waves of Black-headed Gull migration were observed: one on 13 and 14 October (c. 4500 ind.) and one on 8 September (c. 3000 ind.), both at Hbz. during easterly winds. In October Little Gulls were present every day in small

numbers along the Noord-Holland and Wadden Isles coast. On 28 October migration was noted at Hbz. and Terschelling with 1000 at the first site and 800 at the latter. The only notable movement of Kittiwakes was noticed on 29 October at Terschelling when 1500 ind. flew west. Terns migrated in big numbers in the first half of September with lower numbers continuing until half October.

Auks (mainly Guillemots) were seen from the end of October and on. On 28 October about 1200 ind. moved northward at Hbz. Little Auks were represented in good numbers. In Noord-Holland 30 ind. were counted in November and on the Wadden Isles at least 40 ind. A total of fourteen Puffins was reported.

Information obtained from: L.Bruinzeel, C.J.Camphuysen, P.Derks, J.v. Dijk, K.J.Eigenhuis, D.v.Elswijk, S.Geelhoed, F.Geldermans, A.Gouw, H.Groot, N.F.v.d.Ham, D.Heg, F.Hieselaar, M.Hoekstein, R.v.Houwelingen, M.Kater, G.O.Keyl, A.A.Kraus, S.Lagerveld, F.J.Maas, F.Majoor, T.Mank, R.de Mooy, A.M.v.d.Niet, P.Nijhuis, E.Opperman, J.E.den Ouden, A.Ovaa, M.Platteeuw, W.Pompert, D.Schermer, R.Sluys, R.& W.v.Splunder, L.Stegeman, J.Stuart, H.Verkaide, F.v.Vliet, J.Walhout, C.J.N.Winter, B.Winters, M. Zijp.