

SEAWATCHING, SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 1989

Again, sites in Noord-Holland took the greatest share in seawatching hours. However, a reasonable number of hours were received from sites in Zuid-Holland (mainly Sep-Oct) and at the Waddensea islands (Terschelling, Ameland, Schiermonnikoog).

Migrating divers were seen commonly in November. As usual, the most substantial movements were recorded from the Waddensea islands (notably Terschelling), including 440 individuals on 24 November. Hundreds of Great Crested Grebes per day were seen in

the second half of November, while Red-necked Grebes 'peaked' in the second half of October and early November.

Stormy weather was almost absent in September, but strong westerlies occurred frequently in October. Various 'storm-guests' were brought within range to the coast in these storms. The largest number of Leach's Petrels seen was 40 on 14 September (Honds-bossche (Hbz)), and ten per day were observed on another three occasions. Fulmars were not particularly abundant, but 2800 seen on Ameland on 15 October was quite outstanding. Shearwaters were seen regularly, but never in substantial numbers; 58 Manx Shearwaters on 24 October was the highest figure reported this autumn. Noteworthy are 9 'greater shearwaters' (either Cory's or Great Shearwaters).

Gannets were abundant this autumn, just as in 1986 and 1987. A thousand birds in one morning was nothing exceptional in October. Some huge fishing flocks were seen on the Waddensea islands in both September and October and feeding Gannets were seen frequently, very close inshore, along the mainland coast of Noord- and Zuid-Holland.

In the third week of September, thousands of (swimming) Eiders and Common Scoters were spotted from Ameland. Migration of both species was hardly seen this autumn. The peak of Brent Goose migration took place in late September and early October. Most birds were seen from the Frysian mainland coast.

The larger gulls did not show any notable movements. Black-headed Gulls were seen migrating exclusively in easterly winds, but never in large numbers. Little Gulls frequented the coast in fair numbers in October. Kittiwakes were seen in numbers on few days, particularly in October. Some 1400 on 15 October are noteworthy (Ameland).

Terns remained common till the end of September. Especially Sandwich Terns were seen in good numbers. On 9 September over 400 were seen (Hbz).

Auks were spotted in numbers from the second half of October. Most birds were seen during the last week of that month and early November along the mainland coast of Noord-Holland. A very good day was 7 November, when 2200 Razorbills/Guillemots were counted, with proportionally, many birds swimming at sea. Some tens of Little Auks were seen, but on 31 October 84 were spotted from Schiermonnikoog in three hours; the largest number ever recorded on one day in the Netherlands.

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