

Seawatching, December 1989 - February 1990

Most of the seawatching was carried out in Noord-Holland (Hondsbossche Zee-wering (Hbz) and Egmond aan Zee (EZ)). Some tens of hours were received from Zuid-Holland, Ameland and the Frisian mainland coast. Like winter 1988/89, also this winter was exceptionally mild. In January and February several extremely severe storms occurred.

Diver migration dominated late December, but only in Noord-Holland. On 26th December 1100 individuals flew south at Hbz. As usual in mild winters, the numbers of Great Crested Grebes were quite low. Most grebes were counted in December. The severe gales in January and February (regularly to force 10) led to frequent sightings of Fulmars, shearwaters and Gannets, but numbers were small. Numbers of Anatidae were not remarkable this winter, or it must have been an unusual high figure for Pintails (300 on 10th February, Hbz). Geese

(*Anser* spp.) were observed regularly in December. Easterly winds in the beginning of December produced 62 Curlews heading south on the 1st (EZ) and another 414 in two hours on 2nd (Noordwijk). Considerable numbers of Lapwings were observed on the same days. Kittiwakes frequented the coast during the Jan/Feb-gales. Especially the January storms produced hundreds of these birds and many of them appeared to be in poor condition. Little Gulls were seen in small numbers. Great Skuas were observed in rather large numbers for this time of the year and it should be noted that several corpses were reported on the tideline this winter (NSO files). Auks were not exceptional this winter. However, Puffins were seen more frequently than usually in January and also this species was found dead in larger numbers than usual (NSO files).