

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Daugleddau Estuary and Milford Haven Waterway

Annual Surveillance of Summer Shelduck Populations



Report for 2010



Parc Cenedlaethol
Arfordir Penfro
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Summary

The Daugleddau Estuary and Milford Haven Waterway hold nationally important numbers of shelducks during the winter months. In addition there is a small summer population which had been the subject of annual summer boat surveys carried out between 1991 and 2009. The summer boat surveys were repeated in 2010 as part of a co-ordinated programme of environmental surveillance in the estuary system. The aims, objectives and methods used, together with the data obtained are described in this report.

The results indicate that in terms of the numbers of broods recorded, 2010 was the poorest year for breeding shelducks in the estuary system since 1994. Predation is thought to have been a major factor in determining the numbers and sizes of broods that made it onto the water in 2010. Disturbance may also have been a contributory factor. In contrast to 2007, 2008 and 2009, however weather is not thought to have had a major influence on the results of the surveys. Data collected for other wetland birds once again underlined the importance of the estuary system during the autumn migration period, especially for curlew, numbers of which have exceeded the threshold of “national importance”.

The report concludes with a recommendation for the continuation of the annual surveillance of summer shelduck populations in the estuary system, as part of the Milford Haven Waterway Environmental Surveillance Group’s annual work programme.