



MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY
ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEILLANCE GROUP

GRŴP CADW GOLWG AMGYLCHEDDOL
AR DDYFRFFORDD ABERDAUGLEDDAU

WILDFOWL AND WADER COUNTS
in the
MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY
2019-20

Annie Haycock
2020

**Report to the the Milford Haven Waterway Environmental Surveillance
Group**

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A note about the data

The data used in this report were collected by volunteers as part of the British Trust for Ornithology's Wetlands Bird Survey (WeBS). The data are summarised in this report to provide an overview of the status of wetland birds in the Milford Haven Waterway and Daugleddau Estuary. The data are not owned by the MHWESG. Anyone (including members of the MHWESG) wishing to refer to the data for official regulatory purposes e.g. Environmental Impact Assessment, public inquiries etc.) needs to submit a data request for official WeBS data - please visit www.bto.org/webs-data.

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WILDFOWL AND WADER COUNTS on the MILFORD HAVEN WATERWAY 2019-20

Executive Summary

The Wetland Bird Survey was carried out on the Milford Haven Waterway and Cleddau Estuary system (here-in after referred to as the Cleddau complex) between September 2019 and March 2020 with additional counts for June and July 2019 made by Jane Hodges during the annual survey of summer shelduck populations.

The methodology used followed that set out in the BTO WeBS Counters Handbook.

A total peak count of 23,420 birds between November and February confirms that the estuary system is still of international importance for its winter waterbird populations. Counts of migrating birds (notably curlew) in July takes this total to 25,244. This peak count is about average for the site, in winters considering a reasonable influx of lapwing and golden plover, but low numbers of wigeon and curlew.

The levels of “National Importance” for many water birds were revised in 2019, and only three species now qualify (based on a five-year mean): wigeon (max. 4755 in December), greenshank (max 55 in January), and Dunlin (4012 in January)

Curlew (1186 in July) were at their lowest level since 1999-2000, a reflection of the decline recorded across their range.

Shelduck (449 in March) were still well below the qualifying level.

Wigeon numbers seemed to have recovered from the low counts in 2013-15, but have now declined again. This is reflected in counts across the UK. The peak count was in December, perhaps the food supply lasted longer with fewer birds at the table.

The changes in the national importance threshold levels mean that teal no longer qualify, however, the Cleddau complex is still the most important site for teal in Wales, as it is for wigeon.

The total number of birds recorded in September and October was lower than the average of the past twenty years. From November to February, numbers were higher than average, boosted by good counts of lapwing and golden plover, and by the wigeon staying on into December (often many of them have left the estuary before the December count).

Comparison of counts with the national report for 2018-19 (the most recent that is available on the BTO website) show that for most species, the local population trends are similar to those experienced nationally.

CYFRIFON ADAR DŴR AC ADAR HIRGOES AR DDYFRFFORDD ABERDAUGLEDDAU 2019-20

Crynodeb Gweithredol

Rhwng Medi 2019 a Mawrth 2020, gwnaethpwyd Arolwg Adar y Gwlyptir ar Ddyfrffordd Aberdaugleddau ac ar system Aber y Cleddau (y cyfeirir ati o hyn allan fel cymhlyg y Cleddau). Gwnaeth Jane Hodges gyfrifon ychwanegol ym mis Mehefin a mis Gorffennaf 2019 yn ystod yr arolwg blynyddol o boblogaethau haf hwyaden yr eithin.

Defnyddiwyd yr un fethodoleg â'r un a amlinellir yn Llawlyfr Cyfrifwyr AAYG y BTO.

Mae cyfanswm cyfrif uchaf o 23,420 o adar rhwng mis Tachwedd a mis Chwefror yn cadarnhau bod system yr aber yn parhau i fod o bwysigrwydd rhyngwladol yn achos ei phoblogaethau gaeaf o adar dŵr. Mae cyfrifon yr adar sy'n mudo (y gylfinir yn arbennig) ym mis Gorffennaf yn dod â'r cyfanswm i 25,244. Mae'r cyfrif uchaf yma tua'r cyfartaledd ar gyfer y safle mewn gaeafau lle y ceir dylifiad rhesymol o gornchwiglod a chwtiaid aur ond niferoedd isel o chwiwellod a chylfinirod.

Cafodd lefelau'r 'Pwysigrwydd Cenedlaethol' eu hadolygu yn 2019 yn achos nifer o adar dŵr a dim ond tri rhywogaeth sydd bellach yn gymwys (yn seiliedig ar gymedr pum mlynedd): chwiwell (uchafswm o 4755 ym mis Rhagfyr), pibyddion coeswyrdd (uchafswm o 55 ym mis Ionawr), a phibyddion y mawn (4012 ym mis Ionawr).

Roedd y cylfinirod (1186 ym mis Gorffennaf) ar eu lefel isaf er 1999-2000, adlewyrchiad o'r lleihad gofnodwyd ar draws eu dosbarthiad.

Roedd hwyaid yr eithin (499 ym mis Mawrth) yn parhau ymhell islaw'r lefel cymhwys.

Mae niferoedd y chwiwellod i'w gweld wedi gwella ar ôl cyfrifon isel yn ystod y cyfnod 2013 – 2015 ond maent yn isel eto erbyn hyn. Mae'r lefel isel yma yn cael ei adlewyrchu mewn cyfrifon ledled y DU. Ym mis Rhagfyr y cafwyd y cyfrif uchaf, efallai fod y cyflenwad bwyd wedi parhau'n hwy gyda llai o adar wrth y bwrdd.

Mae'r newid yn lefelau trothwy'r pwysigrwydd cenedlaethol yn golygu nad ydy'r corhwyaid bellach yn gymwys. Er hynny, mae cymhlyg y Cleddau yn parhau i fod y safle pwysicaf ar gyfer corhwyaid yng Nghymru, fel ag y mae i'r chwiwellod.

Roedd cyfanswm yr adar a gofnodwyd ym mis Medi ac ym mis Hydref yn is na chyfartaledd yr ugain mlynedd ddiwethaf. Rhwng Tachwedd a Chwefror, roedd y niferoedd yn uwch na'r cyfartaledd, wedi codi oherwydd cyfrifon da o gornchwiglod a chwtiaid aur ac oherwydd i'r chwiwellod aros hyd fis Rhagfyr (mae nifer ohonynt yn aml wedi gadael yr aber cyn cyfrif mis Rhagfyr).

Trwy gymharu'r cyfrifon gydag adroddiad cenedlaethol 2018-19 (yr adroddiad diweddar sydd ar gael ar wefan y BTO) gwelir bod y tueddiadau lleol o safbwynt poblogaethau yn debyg i'r rhai a geir yn genedlaethol yn achos y rhan fwyaf o rywogethau.