

The Great Solent Birdwatch 2020

The Great Solent Birdwatch is a local citizen science project that was launched in 2019 by Bird Aware Solent.

This wildlife surveying event focuses on the coastal birds that can be found around Hampshire, the Isle of Wight and Chichester Harbour. The project aims to raise awareness of the overwintering migratory birds that visit

the Solent each year and hopes to inspire people to increase their knowledge and appreciation of the species found in their local area.



Participants spend up to an hour at their chosen location around the Solent coast counting the different species of birds seen, noting them down on a recording form. The data is then sent into the project and collated and reviewed by the Bird Aware Rangers.

Last years event took place from Saturday 7th– Sunday 15th November 2020, which as you may remember was during the second Lockdown. Whilst things couldn't be run in quite the same way as the previous year due to the Covid-19 restrictions that were in place, guidance was given to everyone on how to take part safely. Participants were encouraged to follow government advice and to take part with their own household or support bubble and to stay local.



During the 2020 event an impressive 9,615 birds of 59 different species were recorded over the course of the week. The most numerous species seen was the same as last year - the dark-bellied brent goose, with wigeon coming in second place followed by the black-headed gull.

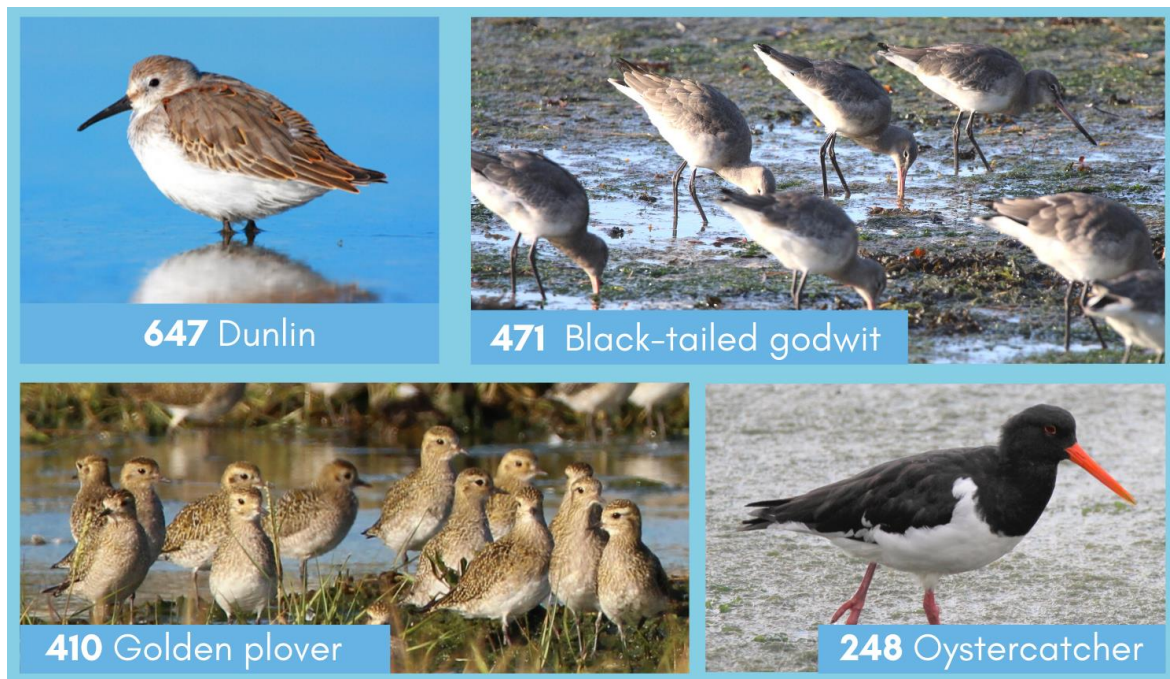





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9615 Birds 59 Species

	3650 Dark-bellied brent geese
	1001 Wigeon
	740 Black-headed gulls

For the wading birds, dunlin took the top spot, followed by the black-tailed godwit, golden plover and everyone's favourite – the oystercatcher.



	647 Dunlin		471 Black-tailed godwit
	410 Golden plover		248 Oystercatcher

Other interesting recordings included 58 avocet, 2 spoonbill and 22 snipe!



Given the circumstances of the lockdown and various restrictions that were in place, the results were impressive, and gave another interesting snapshot into the wide range of birds that can be seen around the Solent coast during the winter.

Never has there been a more important time to understand and appreciate the natural world around us, and it is hoped that this project offers an opportunity to help raise awareness of these wonderful species.

The Great Solent Birdwatch will be returning for 2021, so keep an eye on the Bird Aware Solent website for updates.