

## Great Skua *Stercorarius skua* SV

(Breeds Iceland, Norway, Faroe Islands, Scottish Islands and in small numbers in Ireland. Winters at sea in Atlantic Ocean).

### Unpublished records:

**1993**

#### **Antrim**

Two: Black Head, Whitehead, 22nd August (Paul McCullough).

#### **Down**

One: Briggs Rocks, Groomsport, 23rd August (George Gordon).

Two: Light House (Johns) Island, Copeland Islands 4th September (Dave Allen *et al.*).

Two: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn, 8th September (George Gordon).

**1994**

#### **Antrim**

19: Ramore Head, Portrush. Singles on 19th, 24th, 25th and 29th August, 9th and the 16th of September and 24th October. Two birds were recorded on the 27th August, 17th and 20th September, and also the 2nd October. Four birds seen on the 28th September (Anthony McGeehan *et al.*). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 1996.

Six: Black Head, Whitehead. Two 11th September and four on 2nd October (Paul McCullough).

#### **Down**

Eight: St John's Point, Killough. One 24th June and singles recorded on 6th, 16th, 23rd, 27th and 31st August, with two birds observed on the 20th August (Ian Jackson, Anthony McGeehan). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 1996.

Eight: Irish Sea South. Six 3rd September with two on 12th September (George Gordon, Anthony McGeehan).

Singles observed, Burr Point, Ballyhalbert, on 14th and 15th September (Stephen Foster).

Nine: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn. Four 14th September and five on 15th September (Anthony McGeehan, David Knight *et al.*).

#### **Londonderry**

One: Magilligan 10th September (David McCreedy).

**1995**

#### **Antrim**

25: Ramore Head, Portrush. One 22nd May, 21 26th September and two 28th September (Geoff Campbell, Stephen Foster, Anthony McGeehan). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 1997.

#### **Armagh**

Singles observed at Oxford Island NNR, Lurgan on, 25th and 27th August (Oscar Campbell *et al.*).

#### **Down**

14: St John's Point, Killough. Single birds recorded on the following dates, 29th April, 21st May, 29th July, 21st August, 30th September, 12th November with eight on 7th September (Ed O'Hara, Anthony McGeehan *et al.*).

One: Seapark, Belfast Lough, 20th August (Gerard McGeehan).

One: Light House (Johns) Island, Copeland Islands, 27th August (Jack Malins).

Five: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn. Three 29th August with singles observed on 9th and 19th September (David Farrar, Anthony McGeehan *et al.*).

Six: Ballymacormick Point, Groomsport, 24th September (Walter Veale).

#### **Londonderry**

One: Magilligan, Lough Foyle, 7th January (Davy Hunter).

**1998**

#### **Antrim**

31: Ramore Head, Portrush. Six birds observed on 13th July and 12th September, five birds recorded on 18th July and 14th September. Singles recorded on 30th and 31st July, 3rd August and 13th September, three 9th October and two on 17th October (David Steele, Dave Hadrick, Orcilla Hadrick, Dave Allen, Matthew Tickner *et al.*). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 2000.

## **Down**

14: St John's Point, Killough. Five 19th July, singles recorded on 26th July, 9th August and 4th September, four 6th September and two on 20th September (Dave Allen, Clive Mellon, Martin Garner, Eric Randall, Stephen Foster, Walter Veale, Ted Rolston *et al.*). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 2000.

Three: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn. One 26th August and two on 2nd September (Martin Garner, Anthony McGeehan *et al.*). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 2000.

## **Londonderry**

Singles observed at Magilligan, Lough Foyle on 5th September and 10th October (Jeff Larkin, Davy Hunter).

## **1999**

### **Antrim**

One: Ramore Head, Portrush, 5th November (David Steele). This bird is additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 2001.

## **Down**

One: St John's Point, Killough, 19th September (Ivor McDonald). This bird is additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 2001.

## **2003**

### **Antrim**

35: Ramore Head, Portrush. Singles recorded on 10th August, 8th, 20th, 26th of September and 3rd October, five 22nd August, three birds observed on 30th August and the 11th and 23rd September, four birds seen on 22nd September and 6th October with eight on 4th October (Anthony McGeehan, Gerard McGeehan, Walter Veale, Davy Hunter *et al.*). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 2006

Two: Whitehead, 12th August (Ian Enlander).

One: Maidens, Larne, County Antrim, 23rd August (David Galbraith).

## **Down**

23: St John's Point, Killough. Singles observed on 20th April, 4th May, 20th and 23rd July, 2nd and 10th August and 18th September. Doubles were recorded on 22nd June. 17th August and 5th September. Three birds were seen on two dates, the 19th July and 9th August with four on 13th September (Walter Veale, Dennis Weir *et al.*).

13: Light House (Johns) Island, Copeland Islands. Three 17th May, singles recorded on 25th and 31st August and the 11th and 21st September with two birds observed on 30th August and 22nd and 26th September (Willie McDowell, Neville McKee, Colin Guy *et al.*). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 2001

One: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn, 13th September (Jim Whitla).

One: Half way between Ardglass and Isle of Man, Irish Sea South, 17th September (D. Clark).

## **Londonderry**

One: Castlerock, 22nd August (Anthony McGeehan, Gerard McGeehan).

Two: Magilligan, Lough Foyle, 22nd September (David Steele).

Two birds recorded at Portstewart Point, Portstewart on 23rd September and 4th October (Flightline).

## **2005**

### **Antrim**

47: Ramore Head, Portrush. Single birds observed on 4th April and the 19th and 25th August, two birds recorded on 5th and 18th August and 16th and 28th September, eight 6th August, 10 13th August with 18 on 23rd September (Anthony McGeehan Laurence Morgan *et al.*). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA* 2008a

One: The Gobbins, 23rd July (Flightline).

## **Down**

19: St John's Point, Killough. Singles observed on 17th April and 17th July, three birds recorded on 1st May, 28th August and 4th September, four 24th July with two seen on 24th August and 3rd September (Flightline).

One: Ballyhalbert, 24th July (Flightline).

One: Burial Island, Portavogie, 3rd September (Flightline).

Four: Copeland Bird Observatory, Lighthouse Island, Copeland Islands. One 3rd September with three on 7th September (Flightline).

## **Londonderry**

15: Castlerock, 23rd September (Flightline).

### **2006**

#### **Antrim**

Five: Ramore Head, Portrush. Singles observed on 23rd April and 6th August with three on 6th October (Flightline).

One: The Gobbins, 4th June (Flightline).

One: Muck Island, Islandmagee, 4th August (Flightline).

#### **Down**

One: Carnalea, Belfast Lough, 5th July (Flightline).

Seven: St John's Point, Killough. Singles recored on 23rd July, 20th and 30th August and the 10th and 18th of September with two observed on 2nd September (Flightline).

One: Crawfordsburn Bay, Crawfordsburn County Park, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn, 30th July (Flightline).

Singles observed at Copeland Bird Observatory, Lighthouse Island, Copeland Islands on 31st July and 18th September (Flightline).

## **Londonderry**

Three: Magilligan, Lough Foyle. One: 26th August with two on 2nd October (Flightline).

### **2007**

#### **Antrim**

One: North foreshore Tip, Dargan Road, Belfast, 20th June (Flightline).

Nine: West Lighthouse, Rathlin Island. Three 28th June with singles observed on 29th June and 8th July and four on 2nd July (Flightline).

25: Ramore Head, Portrush. Five 12th August, ten 15th August, one 16th September, seven 17th September and two 16th October (Derek Charles *et al.*). These birds are additional to published records at this location in *NIBA 2008b*

11: Kenbane Head, Ballycastle, 17th September (Flightline).

#### **Down**

One: Ballyquintin, Outer Ards Peninsula, 21st July (Flightline).

Singles observed at St John's Point, Killough, on 12th August and 2nd and 16th September (Flightline).

Five: Copeland Bird Observatory, Lighthouse Island, Copeland Islands. Singles recorded on 25th August and 4th September with three on 25th September (Flightline).

One: Portavogie, 27th August (Flightline).

Two: Ballymacormick Point, Groomspoint, 1st September

Three: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn, 17th September (Flightline).

## **Londonderry**

Three: Portstewart Point, Portstewart. Two 25th August with a single on 17th September (Flightline).

One: Lough Foyle, 16th September (Flightline).

### **2008**

#### **Antrim**

Nine: Ramore Head, Portrush. Three 18th July with singles observed on 8th August, 29th September, 2nd and 4th October with two on 1st October (Flightline).

One: Whitehead, 12th September (Flightline).

#### **Down**

Six: St John's Point, Killough. Singles recorded on 13th April, 22nd June, 25th July and 16th August with two on 3rd September (Flightline).

Singles observed at Kearney, Outer Ards Peninsula on 10th, 12th August and 6th, 7th and 12th September (Flightline).

Three: Burial Island. Portavogie. One 22nd August and two on 7th September (Flightline).

One: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn, 6th September (Flightline).

## **Londonderry**

Three: Magilligan, Lough Foyle, 28th August (Flightline).

### **2009**

#### **Antrim**

One: Dunseverick, 21st June (Flightline).

48: Ramore Head, Portrush. Singles observed on 17th July, 26th August, 1st and 25th October and 5th November, with 12 28th August, 25 4th September, two 3rd October with four on 11th October (David Steele *et al.*).

#### **Down**

Seven: St John's Point, Killough. One 17th May with six observed on 23rd August (Derek Charles *et al.*).

Singles recorded at, Kearney, Outer Ards Peninsula, on 21st July, 15th August, 13th September and 24th October (Keith Bennett).

Singles observed at Burial Island, Portavogie, Outer Ards Peninsula, on 22nd August and 20th September (Flightline).

#### **Londonderry**

One: Lough Beg NNR, 4th October (Flightline).

#### **2010**

##### **Antrim**

Breeding.

A pair bred on Rathlin Island, Antrim. The first breeding record for Northern Ireland.

156: Ramore Head, Portrush. One 11th May, two 7th August, 17 14th September 117 15th September and 19 on 16th September (Ian Enlander, Colin Guy, Matthew Tickner, Geoff Campbell *et al.*).

One: Whitehead, 31st July (Paul McCullough).

One: Macedon Point, Belfast Lough, 30th October to 16th November (Gerard McGeehan *et al.*).

One: Whitehouse Lagoon, Belfast 16th November (Paul McCullough).

##### **Down**

11: St John's Point, Killough. Singles observed on 11th and 17th April and 21st September with three 19th August and five on 20th August (Derek Charles, Oscar Campbell, Anthony McGeehan, Jimmy Whitla, Fulton Summerville *et al.*).

Three: Burial Island, Outer Ards Peninsula. One 28th August with two on 11th September (Richard Weyl).

Singles recorded, Kearney, Outer Ards Peninsula on 4th, 6th and 7th September (Keith Bennett).

Three: Copeland Bird Observatory, Lighthouse Island, Copeland Islands. Two 14th September with a single on 15th September (Neville McKee).

Two: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn, 16th September (Richard Weyl).

##### **Londonderry**

One: Myroe Levels, Lough Foyle, 2nd September (Andrew Crory).

#### **2011**

##### **Antrim**

One: Runkerry Point, Giants Causeway, 29th May (Colin Guy).

181: Ramore Head, Portrush. Singles observed on 18th and 27th July and 26th September. Four birds recorded on 8th and 29th August, 15 6th September, three 14th September, 14 17th September, 13 18th September, three 26th September, 64 6th October, 49 7th October and nine on 18th October (Ronald Surgenor, Paul McCullough, Matthew Tickner, Dermot Hughes, Dee Rainey, Richard Hoy, *et al.*).

Seven: Rathlin Island. Four 28th August with single birds observed on 28th September, 9th and 18th October (Dermot Hughes, Matthew Tickner *et al.*).

Two: Whitehead, 14th October (Paul McCullough).

One: Portandoo, 20th December (Matthew Tickner).

##### **Down**

Five: Kearney Point, Kearney, Outer Ards Peninsula. Singles recorded on 28th May and 12th June with three on 5th June (Keith Bennett).

Two: Sheepland, Ardglass, 3rd June (Chris Murphy).

One: Donaghadee, 17th July (Richard Weyl).

Ten: Burial Island, Portavogie. Singles observed on 6th, 12th, 21st August and 3rd, 17th September with five on 4th September (Richard Weyl).

24: Copeland Bird Observatory, Lighthouse Island, Copeland Islands. Two 7th September, single birds recorded on 12th September and 6th and 10th October, seven 13th September with 12 on 14th September (Adam McClure, Neville McKee, Larry Toal *et al.*).

Five: St. John's Point, Killough. Three 10th September and in October single birds were observed on 23rd and 31st (Gerard McGeehan, Allen Gillespie *et al.*).

One: Kinnegar, Belfast Lough, Holywood, 22nd September (Derek Charles).

One: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, 3rd October (John Edwards).

### **Londonderry**

Three: Magilligan, Lough Foyle, 10th September (Nigel Moore).

One: Barr Mouth, Bann Estuary, Coleraine 13th September (Tim Murphy).

One: Portstewart, 18th October (Colin Guy).

### **2012**

#### **Antrim**

Six: Rathlin Island. One 4th May, two one pair, 15th May to July and three on 15th September (Ronald Surgenor *et al.*).

300: Ramore Head, Portrush. Seven 29th July, eight 25th August, nine 10th September, 24 11th September, 32 12th September, 36 13th September, 158 14th September, five 17th September, four 18th September, two 20th September and 15 on 29th September (Garry Armstrong, Ed O'Hara, Neal Warnock, Ken Perry, Peter Robinson, Colin Guy, Hill Dick, Geoff Campbell, Ronald Surgenor *et al.*).

One: Whitehead, 17th July (Cameron Moore).

One: Garron Point, 15th August (Neal Warnock).

One: Torr Head, 24th August (John McKillop).

One: Ballycastle, 17th September (Colin Guy).

One: Waterfoot, 30th September (John Loughlin).

One: Carnlough, 4th November (Jeff Larkin).

#### **Down**

Single birds observed, Burial Island, Portavogie, 7th April and 7th May (Richard Weyl).

Single birds recorded St. John's Point, Killough, 11th July, 11th and 15th August (Keith Bennett *et al.*).

Two: Helly Hunter Buoy, Carlingford Lough, 14th August (NIBirds).

One: Wilsons Point, Bangor, 23rd August (Ronald Surgenor).

One: Ballyhalbert, 1st September (James Robinson).

One: Murlough, 8th September (Brian Nelson)

Five: Copeland Bird Observatory, Lighthouse Island, Copeland Islands. Three 17th September with singles seen on 18th and 22nd September (Kerry Leonard).

Two: Briggs Rocks, Groomsport, 18th September (Colin Guy).

One: Donaghadee, 21st September (Francis Duffin).

One: Dundrum Bay, 16th October (Chris Murphy).

#### **Fermanagh**

One: Lower Lough Islands, RSPB Reserve, 16th May (Brad Robson).

### **Londonderry**

56: Portstewart: Three 25th August, two 11th September, 13 12th September and 38 14th September (Matthew Tickner *et al.*).

### **2013**

#### **Antrim**

One: Rathlin Ferry, 5th May (Neal Warnock).

Eight: Rathlin Island. Singles observed on 10th June and 24th July with three birds recorded on two dates, 19th June and 8th October (Mark Killops, Chris Henry, Brian Murphy, Colin Guy).

79: Ramore, Head, Portrush. One 15th June, one 23rd June, one 3rd August, three 18th August, one 6th September, nine 7th September, four 15th September, five 16th September, 38 9th October, three 10th October, 12 16th October and one 29th October (Ian Dickey, Ronald Surgenor, Keith Bennett, Colin Guy, Matthew Tickner *et al.*).

Three: Black Head, Larne. Single birds recorded 1st and 15th July and 5th September (Ian Enlander).

One: Maidens, Larne, 13th August (David Galbraith).

One: At sea, five miles NE Portrush, 15th August (Ronald Surgenor).

One: Whiteabbey, 13th October (Paul McCullough).

#### **Down**

Two: Briggs Rocks, Groomsport, 11th May (Colin Guy).

Five: Burial Island, Portavogie. Two 17th August with three on 24th September (Richard Weyl).

One: Copeland Bird Observatory, Lighthouse Island, Copeland Islands, 7th September (David Galbraith)

13: St. John's Point, Killough. Two 26th September, five 27th September, two 30th September and four on 1st October (Chris Murphy, Tim Murphy).

Two: Ballyquintin, Outer Ards Peninsula. Singles on 1st October and 2nd November (Keith Bennett, Richard Weyl).

#### **Londonderry**

One: Magilligan, Lough Foyle 7th September (Neal Warnock).

#### **2014**

##### **Antrim**

Four: Two adults and two juveniles, Rathlin Island, 6th July.

56: Ramore Head, Portrush. One 30th July, 38 17th August, three 21st August, one 24th September, nine 21st October, two 25th October with two on 11th December (Neal Warnock, Ian Dickey, Ronald Surgenor, Colin Guy *et al.*).

One: Ballintoy, 21st August (Colin Guy).

One: Belfast Lough (from a boat), 30th August (Brian Mehag).

One: Portmuck, Larne, 31st August (Ian Enlander).

Five: At sea, between Ballycastle and Portpatrick, 28th September (Billy Miskelly).

##### **Down**

Two: Ballyquintin, Outer Ards Peninsula, 25th January (Richard Weyl),

One: Kearney, Outer Ards Peninsula, 25th August (Keith Bennett),

One: St. John's Point, Killough, 14th September (Chris Murphy).

#### **2015**

##### **Antrim**

Eight: Rathlin Island. Two 14th June, two 16th July with four on 6th August (Gerard McGeehan, Margaret Adamson, Derek Polley).

One: Marconi's Cottage, Ballycastle, 22nd July (Garry Wilkinson).

33: Ramore Head, Portrush. One 28th July, three 3rd September, 12 4th September, three 24th September, two 25th September and 12 22nd October (Matthew Tickner, Derek Charles, Colin Guy, Ian Dickey).

One: Red Bay, Carnlough, 6th September (Ronald Surgenor).

##### **Down**

15: St. John's Point, Killough. Four 17th July, two 20th July, one 26th July, six 5th August, one 29th August with a single on 8th November (Derek Charles, Warren Fowles *et al.*).

One: Burial Island, Portavogie, Outer Ards Peninsula, 4th August (Billy Miskelly).

One: Ballyquintin, Outer Ards Peninsula, 5th August (Keith Bennett).

Six: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn. Three 24th August, two 30th August and one on 11th September (Wilton Farrelly, Richard Woods, Ronald Surgenor).

#### **2016**

##### **Antrim**

14: Rathlin Island. Two 20th April, two 16th May, one, West Light 29th May, one, West Light 26th June,

one 2nd July, one 6th August and six on 11th August (Stephen Maxwell, Ronald Surgenor *et al.*). The pair on Rathlin raised one juvenile.

27: Ramore Head, Portrush. Three 8th August, two 14th August, three 21st August, one 29th September with 18 on 18th October (Colin Guy, Derek Charles, Dean Woodford-Jones, Neal Warnock).

One: Islandmagee, 12th April (Kerry Leonard).

13: Bengore Head, Dunseverick, 29th September (Stephen Foster)

##### **Down**

One: Ballymacormick Point, Groomsport, 27th January (Lesley Crawshaw).

One: Donaghadee Lighthouse / Marina, 31st January (Terry Patton)

Two: Groomsport, 15th May (Brian Murphy).

11: Copeland Bird Observatory, Lighthouse Island, Copeland Islands. Three 13th August, four 14th August, three 4th September with one on 30th October (Ian Enlander, David Galbraith, Richard Donaghey, David Stirling *et al.*)

Two: St Johns Point, Killough. Singles on 19th August 16th October (Chris Murphy, Doris Murphy *et al.*).

Eight: Burial Island, Portavogie. Three 4th September with five on 23rd October (Richard Weyl, Billy Miskelly).

## 2017

### Antrim

One: Isle of Muck, 21st May (Ian Enlander).

35: Rathlin Island. Observed between 1st April and 9th October (Ric Else Hazel Watson *et al.*). No breeding occurred on Rathlin Island in 2017.

91: Ramore Head, Portrush. Two 8th July, five 18th August, five 19th August, one 8th September, eight 9th September, 12 11th September, 22 2nd October, 11 3rd October, 11 5th October, one 8th October and 13 on 22nd October (Richard Donaghey, Derek Charles, Colin Guy, Gerard McGeehan, Shirley Dunlop, Ian Dickey, Matthew Tickner, Daniel Newtown *et al.*).

One: Sandy Bay, 17th October (Neal Warnock).

Five: Ballycastle, 21st October (Neal Warnock).

### Down

Two: Grey Point, Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn. Singles on 26th August and 21st September (Wilton Farrelly, Anthony McGeehan).

One: Mouth of Belfast Lough, 8th September (Stephen Dunstan).

12: St Johns Point, Killough. One 12th September with 11 on 16th October (Ronald Surgenor *et al.*).

One: Ballymacormick Point, 30th September (Wilton Farrelly).

### Londonderry

Three: Castlerock. Two 19th August with a single on 14th September (Richard Donaghey).

One: Magilligan, Lough Foyle, 10th September (Raymond Fulton).

Four: Portstewart, 2nd October (Sean Hickey).

## 2018

### Antrim

Rathlin Island:

Breeding

Up to five: 29th March to 10th September. One pair bred raising once chick which is presumed to have died around the 4th July (Ric Else, Hazel Watson).

Autumn passage was light and spanned the period, 14th August to 19th October. (Ric Else, Hazel Watson).

Two: Rathlin Sound, 9th July (Martin Murphy).

One: Mini Pelagic off Ramore Head, Portrush, 15th September (Richard Donaghey *et al.*).

143: Ramore Head, Portrush. Four 16th September, 66 21st September, seven 23rd September, 29 30th September, 33 2nd October, four 26th October (Derek Charles, Matthew Tickner, Ian Dickey *et al.*).

One: Ballygally, 27th October (Paul Tout).

### Down

Two: Burial Island, Portavogie. Singles on 25th August and 8th September (Richard Weyl).

Four: St Johns Point, Killough. Singles on 2nd September, 9th September, 6th November and 18th November (Daniel Newtown, Brian Murphy, Brian Sutton, Michael Rutledge).

One: Groomsport, 22nd September (Richard Weyl).

Two: Ballyquintin Point, Outer Ards Peninsula. Singles on 14th October and 15th November (Richard Weyl).

### Londonderry

Seven: Portstewart. Singles on 17th May, 1st September, 5th September with four on 16th September (Sean Hickey Derek Charles *et al.*).

19: Castlerock. One 5th August, one 12th August, three 24th August, two 1st September, one 2nd September, four 9th September, four 16th September, one 23rd September and two on 24th September (Derek Charles, Richard Donaghey).

Four: Barmouth, Bann Estuary, Coleraine. One 19th August, one 12th September with two on 20th September (Garry Armstrong, Richard Donaghey *et al.*).



Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*,  
Ramore Head, Antrim, October 2011. Photo courtesy of Ian Dickey.