

CARMARTHENSHIRE’S STATE OF NATURE – SECTION 7 ‘PRIORITY’ BIRDS

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 – Section 7 - Biodiversity lists and duty to take steps to maintain and enhance biodiversity.




The species listed in this table have been identified by Welsh Government (WG) as part of a list of species and types of habitat found in Wales that they consider are of key significance to maintain and enhance biodiversity in this country. This list (Section7 list) is currently under review by WG and Natural Resources Wales (as of 2024) .






Public authorities (e.g. WG, councils) must take reasonable steps to maintain and enhance the species and types of habitat included in Section 7 and encourage others to take such steps. By safeguarding these species and habitats, improving their management and raising awareness about them it is hoped that a resilient natural environment in Wales will be sustained into the future.

It is the Section 7 species that the Carmarthenshire Nature Partnership consider for priority action, but other species have been identified for local action where there are few records or where Carmarthenshire has populations where specific action can help conserve enhance the species.






Associated habitats refers to the relevant Section 7 Priority habitats in Wales






\* Bird population trend statistics for Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) results 2022 – for complete information refer [here](#).

Species	Carmarthenshire Overview	Identified priority action in Carmarthenshire
<div><i>Alauda arvensis</i> - Skylark</div> <div></div> <div>© Derek Moore</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland/Lowland Grassland and Heathland/Coastal/Uplands</li><li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022): <b>AMBER</b></li><li>• In Carmarthenshire, a widespread resident breeding predominantly upland and coastal areas. Also a passage migrant and winter visitor. Population currently reasonably stable but on the heels of large declines.</li><li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> ↓</li><li>• <b>Threats:</b> likely loss of suitable nesting habitat due to agricultural intensification and limited food resources in the winter is a probable cause of decline</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify potential for habitat management at key sites.</li></ul>
<div><i>Anser albifrons</i> - Russian White-Fronted Goose</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland/Wetlands</li><li>• <b>Current status:</b> In Carmarthenshire, a rare winter visitor, recently returned to county. In 2021 a group of 16 remained for a short period at Dryslwyn - the highest count since March 1996, when there was a regular wintering flock at Dryslwyn.</li><li>• <b>Threats:</b> likely loss of limited food resources in the winter is a probable cause of decline.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continued annual monitoring of winter sites.</li></ul>
<div><i>Anthus trivialis</i> - Tree Pipit</div> <div></div> <div>© Derek Moore</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodlands/Uplands/Lowland Grassland and Heathland</li><li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022): <b>RED</b></li><li>• In Carmarthenshire, A breeding summer visitor to most parts of the county.</li><li>• <b>Trends 1995-2020*:</b> ↓</li><li>• <b>Threats:</b> Decline possibly linked to changes woodland structure and management and rainfall patterns in wintering grounds in W. Africa and issues on migration.</li></ul>	
<div><i>Botaurus stellaris</i> - Bittern</div> <div></div> <div>©Peter Short (rspb-images.com)</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal Reedbed and Marshes</li><li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li><li>• In Carmarthenshire, rare winter visitor to Carmarthenshire, including WWT Penclacwydd and Llanelli coastline.</li><li>• <b>Threats:</b> lack of good quality breeding habitat, e.g. reedbeds managed on a rotational basis and maintenance of water levels.</li></ul>	






<p><b><i>Branta bernicla</i> - Dark-bellied Brent Goose</b></p>  <p>©Ben Andrew (rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal marshes and estuaries</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> <b>GREEN</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, still a regular winter visitor to the Burry Inlet and Gwendraeth Estuary but a recorded declined in 2019 by 36% over previous 25 years.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> as it is on the south-western fringe of it wintering range, this may be an early sign of climate-related impacts.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i> - European Nightjar</b></p>  <p>© Dai Rees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodland/ Lowland Grassland and Heathland/Upland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 3 (2016) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, scarce, though increasing, summer visitor to the county, breeding in upland conifer plantations. Recorded in seven locations in 2022.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> lack of suitable forest habitat (open and young tree age-classes) is a limiting factor for nesting. Large areas of continuous cover areas would be detrimental.</li> </ul> <p>Predation and inclement weather impact on breeding success.</p> <p>Declines in abundance of large moths may have an impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be a suitable species for local survey.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Acanthis cabaret</i> - Lesser Redpoll</b></p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodlands</li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a breeding resident. Mainly found in young conifer plantations in upland regions. Also willow and birch carr in boggy areas.</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, regularly seen in suitable habitat.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> Informal data suggests this species is declining. Loss/management of conifer plantations may have an adverse impact. There is a lack of data on this species – could be a target species for local survey.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Linaria cannabina</i> - Common Linnet</b></p>  <p>©</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland/ Lowland Grassland and heathland/Coastal/Uplands/Brownfield</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> ↓</li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, A widespread breeding resident. Large flocks occur along the coast in winter.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> possibly due to lack of supply of available food during the breeding season, scrub clearance and intensive agriculture.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i> - Hawfinch</b></p>  <p>©Ben Andrew (rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodlands/Farmland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a rarely recorded, presumed resident, and doubtless overlooked species, with a concentration of recent records from the mid-Tywi valley. Prefers mature broadleaved or mixed woodland, hornbeam a favourite food tree. Seen very occasionally in gardens. Status unconfirmed in Carmarthenshire.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> There is a lack of knowledge of the limiting factors or reason for decline. Woodland management is likely to be key in maintaining the population.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be a target species for local survey.</li> </ul>








<p><i>Cuculus canorus</i> - Common Cuckoo</p>  <p>©Ben Andrew (rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland/ Lowland Grassland and Heathland/Uplands/Wetlands</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, widespread but declining summer visitor.</li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> <b>↑</b></li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> A BTO tracking project suggests that the migration journey and African wintering grounds may be a cause for its decline. Also the declines in moth caterpillar prey and in its main host species in Wales – the meadow pipit are also likely factors.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Cygnus columbianus</i> - Bewick's Swan</p>  <p>© Mike Richards (rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal/Freshwater/Grassland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, very rare winter visitor. Last record sent to local biodiversity record centre was in 2017 from the Wildfowl and Wetlands, Penclacwydd.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> There may have been an eastward shift in breeding, which may then have influenced winter migration. Bewick swans, already scarce, will likely soon cease to be a regular winter visitor to Wales.</li> </ul>	
 <p><i>Dendrocopos minor</i> - Lesser Spotted Woodpecker</p> <p>© M.J. Clark</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, now a rapidly declining breeder in woods, copses and well-timbered areas. Only one record in 2022.</li> <li>• Detecting this species is always a problem.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> Standing dead wood in woodland is important for this species, both for food supply and nesting sites so inappropriate woodland management is a threat to this species</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Emberiza citrinella</i> - Yellowhammer</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland/ Lowland Grassland and Heathland/Coastal/Uplands</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a rapidly declining breeding resident with a patchy distribution, being absent from large tracts of countryside. Most frequently seen on dry bracken covered hillsides and a few pairs remain in suitable coastal habitat in the far west of the county.</li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> <b>↓</b></li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> Decline probably due intensification of agriculture, loss of scrub/ffridd habitat and their seed food source, especially in the winter. Unsuitable hedgerow management means a loss of suitable nesting habitat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be a target species for local survey.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i> - Reed Bunting</p>  <p>© M.J. Clark</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Wetlands</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>GREEN</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a breeding resident. It occurs throughout the county but is most common in the wetlands and low-lying, rushy pastures of the coast.</li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> <b>↑</b></li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> This species appears to have spread and now uses suboptimal-breeding habitats. Food sources in the winter are likely important.</li> </ul>	

<p><i>Larus argentatus</i> - Herring Gull</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal/Brownfield</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a common resident with small numbers breeding on western cliffs and rooftops.</li> <li>• Five-year average peak counts during Wetland Bird surveys between 1995/5 and 2018/19 showed numbers of herring gull in Carmarthen Bay increased from 1472 to 2897.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> causes of decline are largely unknown; botulism did have an impact and loss of nest sites (natural and buildings) may have an impact. Chick productivity has also declined.</li> <li>• There was a significant roost in Llanelli nesting on the Pontrillas building but this building has been demolished with the population displaced.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Locustella naevia</i> Grasshopper Warbler</p>  <p>© Adam Dare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Lowland Grassland and Heathland/Wetland/Woodland/Uplands</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• A local, breeding summer visitor but seems to be currently faring well in the county.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> Loss/deterioration of breeding habitat and changes in wintering conditions in Africa may be factors in overall decline.</li> </ul> <p>Forestry policy, scrub and grazing management in the uplands may be important as the species favours diverse habitat structure.</p>	
<p><i>Melanitta nigra</i> - Common Scoter</p>  <p>© I. Macho</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Marine</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> <li>• Present all year round in Carmarthen Bay often in important numbers.</li> <li>• Instrumental species in the creation of Carmarthen Bay SPA and regularly monitored by NRW.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> oil pollution is threat to this localised population as well as marine traffic and offshore renewable energy projects.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Motacilla flava</i> - Yellow Wagtail</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Wetlands</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, formerly a scarce breeding summer visitor. Now an uncommon spring and autumn passage migrant</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> declines linked to drainage of lowland wet grassland and changes in farming (changes in cutting and grazing regimes) leading to a reduction the insects it eats.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Muscicapa striata</i> - Spotted Flycatcher</p>  <p>© Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodland/Farmland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• A rather unobtrusive declining breeding summer visitor to open woodland, parkland and bushy gardens</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> appears to be a decline in the county. It is possible that nest predation and poor survival of young birds are major factors in the decline. This might be due to deterioration of woodland quality for young birds post fledging or wintering conditions in Africa.</li> </ul>	












<p><b><i>Numenius arquata</i> - Curlew</b></p>  <p>© M Newton</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal/Lowland and Heathland/Grassland/Upland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire a very rare breeder on extensive areas of pasture (preferably damp, rough grazing). It is also a passage migrant and common winter visitor to estuarine sites, including the Burry Inlet Special Protection Area.</li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2020*:</b> ↓</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> There is likely too little habitat is in favourable condition for nesting and rearing chicks - changes in agricultural practice and patterns of grazing a factor as well as loss of wet grassland. Egg predation is also a factor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and protect current breeding sites in Carmarthenshire.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Poecile montanus</i> - Willow Tit</b></p>  <p>© Adam Dare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodland/Wetlands</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• Wales is particularly important for resident UK willow tits.</li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, an uncommon resident breeder at low densities. It can occur in similar habitats to the marsh tit, but also on damper ground where rotten timber provides nesting sites.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> one of our fastest declining birds in the UK. Reasons for decline are uncertain but decline in wet woodland habitat and a decrease quality may make it more suitable for competing tit species.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Poecile palustris</i> - Marsh Tit</b></p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a widespread but local resident breeder. Thinly distributed in open woods and copses, they prefer a multi-layered woodland structure.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> although suitable woodland habitat is available it <i>may</i> be that the farmed landscape in between woodlands is not suitable for this sedentary species, so local poor breeding can result in no recruitment from elsewhere.</li> </ul>	
<p><b><i>Passer domesticus</i> - House Sparrow</b></p>  <p>© Barry Stewart</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland/Brownfield/Urban</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, an abundant, sedentary, resident breeder in urban situations, villages, farmyards, etc.</li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2020*:</b> ↑</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> appears to be not threatened currently but there is no detailed study of the house sparrow in Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently seems to be doing reasonably well.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Passer montanus</i> - Tree Sparrow</b></p>  <p>© M.J. Clark</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, probably now extinct as a breeding species. No records in last two years. Was confined to the mid Tywi valley This site was thought to be a Welsh stronghold for this species - possibly 50% or more of the whole Welsh population (2005). However no double-figure counts have been recorded since 2013.</li> <li>• In the Tywi Valley they were virtually confined to the floodplain and were very rarely observed beyond sight of the river.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> the availability of winter and spring seed sources are limiting factors. Their reliance on tree holes for nesting might mean that ash die-back could have a further impact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit support for positive action in the Tywi Valley if any breeding population re-found.</li> </ul>








<p><i>Perdix perdix</i> - Grey Partridge</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• Rare in Carmarthenshire. Most recent records probably relate to captive reared and released birds.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> a decline in insect and seed resources in late summer and winter probably a factor but it is unlikely that the grey partridge will be widespread in Wales again.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i> - Wood Warbler</p>  <p>© Adam Dare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a breeding summer visitor. It is most common in upland woodlands.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> there has been a Europe-wide unexplained decline possibly linked to African overwintering areas and migration route related to climate change and land use. Climate modelling suggests that large parts of Wales may become climatically unsuitable for wood warblers by the end of the century so the continued provision of good-quality woodland habitat in order to increase their resilience to change.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Prunella modularis</i> - Dunnock</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland/Woodland/Brownfield</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a common and widespread resident breeder. Displays polyandrous behaviour. It doesn't form pairs (like most birds) but breeds in groups of two males and a female, two females and a male, two of each sex and other combinations in a 'variable mating system'.</li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> ↑</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> no apparent threat now.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Pyrhcorax pyrrhcorax</i> - Chough</p>  <p>© C. Michael</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, birds are moving east from Pembrokeshire and there are now breeding records from the coastal area in the far west of the county.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> heavily dependent on appropriate land management to provide suitable foraging habitat – short sward and an abundance of soil invertebrates.</li> </ul> <p>Also cold winters, prolonged dry spells could have local short-term impacts but threats from climate change could affect nesting.</p>	Appropriate management of land near nesting sites in the county.
<p><i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i> - Bullfinch</p>  <p>© D. Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland (hedgerows/orchards)/Woodland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a widespread, if shy and retiring, breeding resident of scrub, orchards and thick hedgerows.</li> <li>• Locally, seemingly a stable species.</li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> ↓</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> the moderate decline in the Welsh population needs more research.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Sterna dougallii</i> - Roseate Tern</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, rare – although 2020 was a good year in the county with up to six different birds recorded. Five</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision and protection of suitable nesting at known/potential sites along the coast.</li> </ul>








 <p>© Brian Burke (rspb-images.com)</p>	<p>individuals at Burry Port/Pembrey Harbours and one at Cefn Sidan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> High mortality on wintering grounds in Africa appear to be a cause in the decline of breeding birds. Furthermore, ringing studies appear to show that the decline in roseate terns is also due to birds deserting colonies in Wales (and Northern Ireland) and emigrating to those in the Republic of Ireland.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> - Starling</p>  <p>© D. Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Wetlands/Woodlands/Farmland/Brownfield</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, although still reasonably common this is a declining resident bird, but numerous winter visitor.</li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> ↓</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> breeding decline possibly due to grassland management regimes (including use of insecticides) leading to a reduction in invertebrates, poor survival of young birds may be adding to the decline but the cause of decline yet to be identified.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Streptopelia turtur</i> - Turtle Dove</p>  <p>© R. Davies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, very rare passage migrant with only three records in 2022. It is not thought to have bred here since the 1960s.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> habitat destruction (inc. hedgerow removal) herbicide use which has reduced food sources and impacts in its wintering ground – hunting and habitat loss. Wales has always been on the edge of its breeding range.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Turdus philomelos</i> - Song Thrush</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodland/Farmland/Brownfield</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>GREEN</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a widespread resident breeder with small winter influxes.</li> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> ↑</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> any decline may be linked to droughts where and availability of winter molluscs and insect resources, which are associated with moist soil conditions.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Turdus torquatus</i> - Ring Ouzel</p>  <p>© Les Bunyan (rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Upland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• Rare breeding summer visitor on upland crags in the north east. No recent breeding records and it is likely only a possibility in Carmarthenshire. Occasional coastal passage records.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> reasons for decline are likely complex and not fully understood but breeding range seems to be contracting to higher altitudes with increasing summer temperatures especially those with denser heather growth. Upland afforestation and agricultural intensification cause loss of favoured habitat. Hunting pressure during migration may also be a factor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued monitoring of birds at key sites in the county.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Vanellus vanellus</i> - Lapwing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal/Brownfield/Wetlands/Farmland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire now a very rare breeder mostly confined to the coast. A regular passage/winter visitor occurring in large flocks during cold spells.</li> </ul>	

 <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> decline almost certainly linked to grassland improvement, leading to food deprivation and increased predation.</li> </ul> <p>Also development of brownfield sites has meant nesting habitat has been lost.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Current action:</b> WWT have undertaken management to help lapwings and breeding increased, but predation impacted on the initial increase in nesting birds.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> - Ringed Plover</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal/Freshwater/Brownfield</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire it breeds on beaches and disturbed ground along the coast. Passage birds build up in spring and autumn at Burry Port, Cefn Sidan, Salmon Scar and Machynys, where smaller numbers winter.</li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire there seems to be a small breeding population.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> predation and human disturbance may be factors in low breeding success on coastal sites.</li> </ul> <p>Wintering ringed plovers have declined because milder winters encourage more to spend winter farther north and east of Wales.</p>	
<p><i>Circus cyaneus</i> - Hen Harrier</p>  <p>©Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Wetlands/Coastal/Uplands</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a regular passage and winter visitor, most often recorded along the coast, but also occurring at other areas where rough semi-natural vegetation dominates.</li> <li>• Numbers have increased in Wales since 1998 - probably due to cessation in persecution.</li> <li>• As breeding increases in neighbouring counties it is hoped that hen harriers will hopefully breed in Carmarthenshire; young forest seems to be favourable.</li> <li>• Helped in winter by open farmland good bird and mammal populations in grassland, ditches and margins.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> burning/overgrazing of upland areas, predation</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Falco tinnunculus</i> - Kestrel</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland/Lowland grassland and Heathland/Brownfield</li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, now a scarce resident breeder occurring extremely locally throughout the county. It is most frequent where areas of rough pasture or heath afford cover to its principal prey species.</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> reductions in small mammal populations and lack of suitable habitat hunting could be a limiting factor. Large insect prey for newly independent birds may also be important</li> <li>• Predation by Goshawks may also be a factor in their decline.</li> <li>• Poisoning from rodenticides may also be an issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erection of kestrel boxes at key sites.</li> </ul>



<p><i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i> - Pied Flycatcher</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a breeding summer visitor, most common in upland woods; but which has recently colonised nearly all woodland down to the coast.</li> <li>• Wales hosts a significant proportion of UK breeding population of pied flycatchers.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> complex and not understood but could include competition with great tits for nesting sites, impacts of climate change (impacting on food for chicks).</li> <li>• <b>Current action:</b> boxes erected in the county, most recently in the Amman Valley by the Initiative for Nature Conservation Cymru.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Larus ridibundus</i> - Black-headed Gull</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, formerly an abundant non-breeding visitor July to March with smaller numbers in other months. It is more common on the coast.</li> <li>• However, there is a now healthy breeding population at WWT, Penclacwydd with 399 pairs in 2019.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> decline in quality of suitable breeding habitat (e.g. scrubbing over), predation, disturbance, competition for nesting sites from Canada geese. More research needed.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Limosa lapponica</i> - Bar-tailed Godwit</p>  <p>© Derek Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal</li> <li>• Regular passage and winter visitor to coasts in smaller numbers than formerly.</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• Has been recorded all year round albeit small numbers in summer in Carmarthenshire.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> Declines may be dues to wintering redistribution as a response to climate change, meaning birds do not some so far west. However there do not appear to be any immediate concern for the species in Wales</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> - Golden Plover</p>  <p>© B. Stewart</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Upland/Coastal</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• In Carmarthenshire, a very rare breeder in upland areas, with good numbers passing through on spring passage. Large numbers winter around Carmarthen Bay.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> breeding undoubtedly linked to suitable moorland management – over/undergrazing of bogs and loss of habitat to afforestation or grazing.</li> </ul>	
<b>Section 7 species previously recorded in the county but now considered extinct here</b>		
Black Grouse <i>Tetrao tetrix</i>		
Corn Bunting <i>Emberiza calandra</i>		
Corncrake <i>Crex crex</i>		
Twite <i>Linaria flavirostris</i>		
<b>Locally Important Species in Carmarthenshire – not included on the Section 7 list of priority species</b>		
<p><i>Tyto alba</i> Barn Owl†</p>  <p>© M. Newton</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Farmland/Lowland Grassland and Heathland</li> <li>• A local resident breeding species which has declined due to habitat loss and pesticides.</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 3 (2016) status: <b>GREEN</b></li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> decline almost certainly linked to improved grasslands and intensification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postcard campaign for records has been in place for some time.</li> <li>• A local project used NRW grant funding to put up boxes in the county.</li> </ul>

<p><i>Charadrius dubius</i> - Little Ringed Plover†</p>  <p>© D. Moore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b></li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Breeding summer visitor to riverside shingle on the Tywi, Cothi and Bran. Still increasing in numbers and range. Occasional coastal records on passage.</li> <li>• Breeding birds were recorded on the shingle islands on the newly created scrapes at WWT in 2019.</li> <li>• c.8% of UK population bred in Carms in 2010. <i>British Birds</i> 106, 2013.</li> <li>• Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 3 (2016) status: <b>GREEN</b></li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> Heavy rain during breeding season can wash nests away and trampling by anglers/cows could be a problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Casual annual reporting along the Tywi takes place.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Apus apus</i> - Swift†</p>  <p>© Ben Andrew (rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> urban areas</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• A widespread, but decreasing, breeding summer visitor.</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> loss of breeding sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erection of swift boxes at suitable sites.</li> <li>• Ensure existing breeding sites are not lost.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Chloris chloris</i> - Greenfinch†</p>  <p>© Ben Andrew(rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Woodland, Urban, Farmland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> </ul> <p>A resident breeder in shrubby or bushy situations – e.g. suburban gardens, farmland and wood edge. Post-breeding flocks build up along the coast from June onwards and occur throughout the winter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> ↓</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> A recent decline in numbers has been linked to an outbreak of trichomonosis, a parasite-induced disease that prevents the birds from feeding properly.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Delichon urbicum</i> - House Martin†</p>  <p>©rspb-images.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Urban, Farmland, Wetland</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>AMBER</b></li> </ul> <p>A widespread but localised summer visitor, usually breeding in small colonies. Declining in some areas of the county</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Trends 1995-2021*:</b> ↓</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> loss of breeding sites</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Calidris alpina</i> - Dunlin†</p>  <p>© Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Associated habitat:</b> Coastal</li> <li>• The Burry Inlet SPA is of British importance for overwintering birds. Numbers vary considerable from year to year.</li> <li>• <b>Current status:</b> Birds of Conservation Concern in Wales 4 (2022) status: <b>RED</b></li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> Loss of overwintering habitat – including from sea level rise would have a serious effect.</li> </ul>	

†Local priority species