

Patch Birding Ireland

Patchwork Challenge by Stephen McAvoy

The Patchbirding Challenge was started this year to encourage more birdwatchers to record birds in their local areas, preferably using the BirdTrack online bird recording website. It basically involves choosing an area of no more than 3km² that you birdwatch on a regular basis and then try and find as many species as possible within it in 2013.

It has proven to be quite popular with over 200 sites registered in Britain, as well as 15 'Patchbirders' in Ireland. The South Dublin Branch is represented in the shape of my own Patch which covers the coast from Bullock Harbour south along Killiney Hill to the Shanganagh Cliffs (see map right). It also covers a short stretch of the Loughlinstown River to Cherrywood, as well as my own garden. Though mainly coastal, it includes an extensive area of woodland on Killiney Hill and the hope is to record a minimum of 100 species.

After a slow start in January, the birds came thick and fast, with the total now at 61 species. The main highlight so far have been the three Brambling present in the garden since mid-January, while several Red-throated Divers and two Purple Sandpipers were good finds at Coliemore. Another good record was finding a single Greenshank roosting amongst gulls at Bullock Harbour last weekend. The species is easy to find at nearby Booterstown Marsh, but there are very few records from the coast between Dun Laoghaire and Bray. With summer visitors such as Swift and Swallow yet to arrive and some commoner birds (Mallard!) still missing from the Patch list, there is still a long way to go.



Local patch highlighted in green

Useful Links

Patchbirding Challenge:

<http://patchbirdingireland.blogspot.ie/>

South Dublin Patch:

<http://patchbirdingireland.blogspot.ie/p/south-dublin-coast.html>

Local Patch Blog:

<http://patchbirdingireland.blogspot.ie/search/label/South%20Dublin%20Coast>

BirdTrack:

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdtrack>



One of the 3 Brambling present in my garden