

## CORNCRAKE UPDATE – 12 May 2008

After the good start, a slight slow down in new arrivals and reports. The current count in the West is a probable minimum of 25 (although only a handful of these have been confirmed). There are no figures for Donegal yet, where numbers take longer to establish, there being so many more there (104 last year), while in the Callows the second arrival has just been confirmed.

In Erris, there are at least 3 calling around Carn Hill, 3 or more at Termoncarragh (with sightings from the roadside, as last year, in and around the umbellifer patch at the field corner next to the road junction for The Glebe and the graveyard), and ones reported at Fallmore in the south and, as last year, at Curlew Hill in the Belmullet suburbs. There are at least 4 around Aghany, near Roonagh. Elsewhere in Mayo, one reported at Cloonacool was probably a Mistle Thrush, and as yet there's no confirmation of reports from from Kincon, Kilasser or Killahoor, Westport.

So far, very encouraging signs of an increase around Oyster Island, Sligo Bay, with 3 calling simultaneously from five locations, with two on the island, one on Tommy's Island, a spit adjacent the grounded boat at the start of Rosses Point promenade, and two either side of the road beyond the County Golf Club, towards the point. One on nearby Coney early in the week appeared to move away and then return, and is now calling close to last year's location. Anyone equipped with a telescope has a chance of seeing one perched and calling on the walls of the ruin on Oyster Island, as spotted last week by visitor Micheal Mullen.

In Connemara, the first to arrive back on Omey Island was heard sounding rather jaded on Saturday morning (10<sup>th</sup>), and another is calling at Aughrus on the mainland adjacent, with 2 at East End plus at least 2 others on Inishbofin and 5 or 6 on Inishturbot.

Generally, new birds begin calling anytime up until early June. Thereafter, apparent new arrivals are more likely relocating from first nest sites (the earliest nests hatch at the beginning of June), although its possible that some new arrivals from earlier nesting as far distant as France may arrive at Irish breeding grounds for the first time as late as the second week of July.

Press releases are going out this week. All new reports and observations are very welcome, on 095 44941, 086 341 4699, or via the website or newsletter.

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