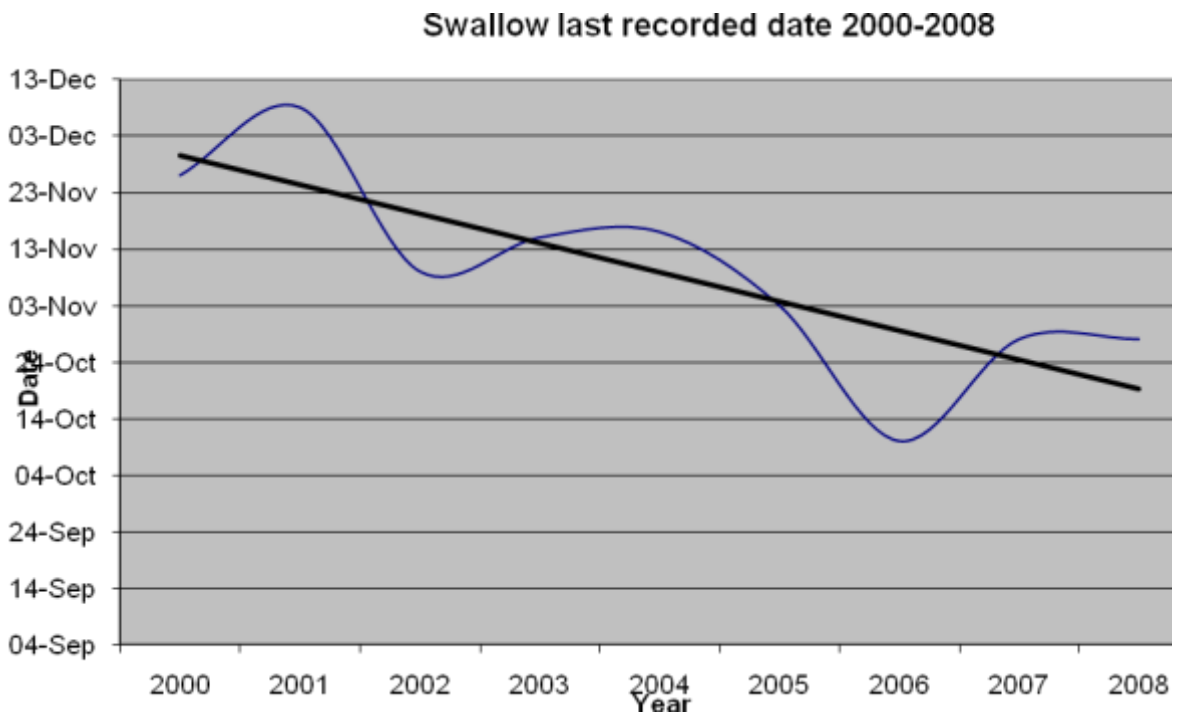
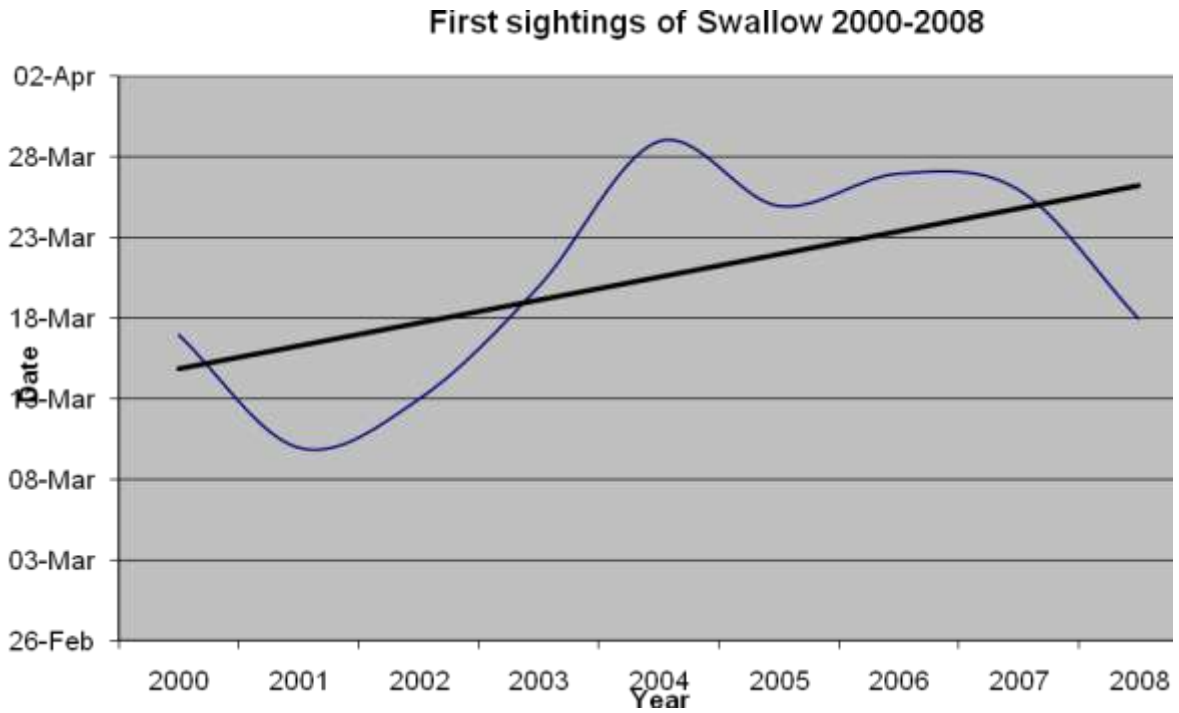


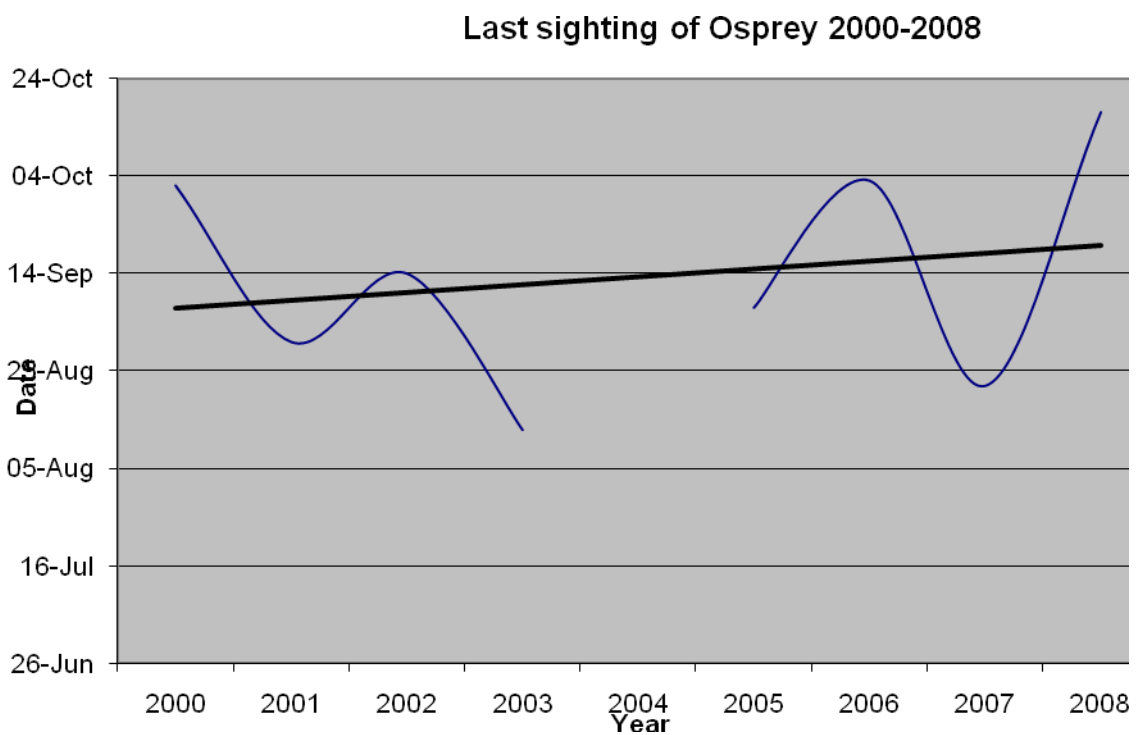
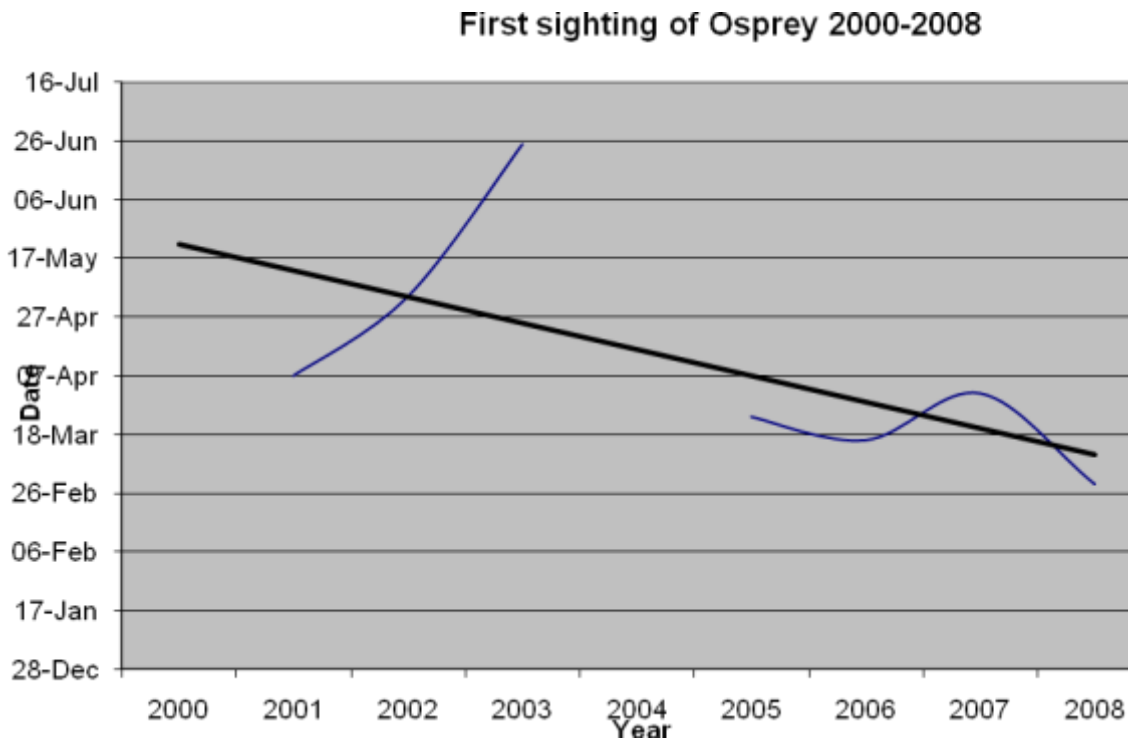
Early and late dates for some summer visitors to the Isle of Man

Swallow



Discussion: Swallows seem to be arriving later and leaving earlier.

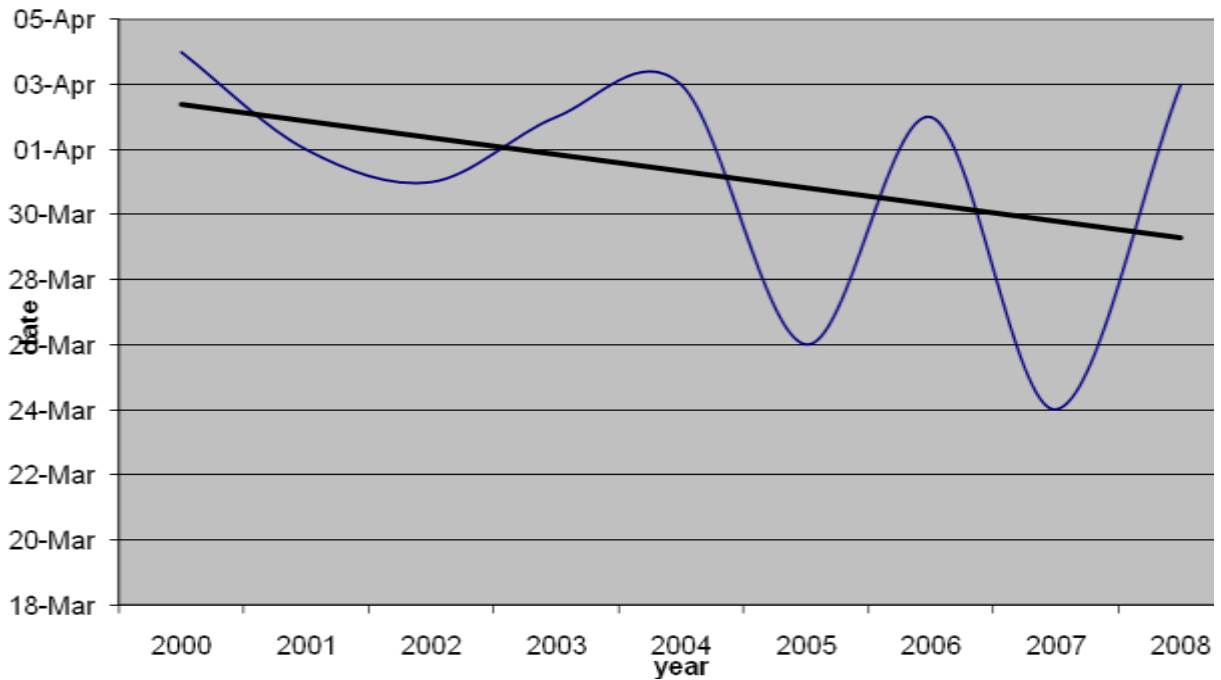
Osprey



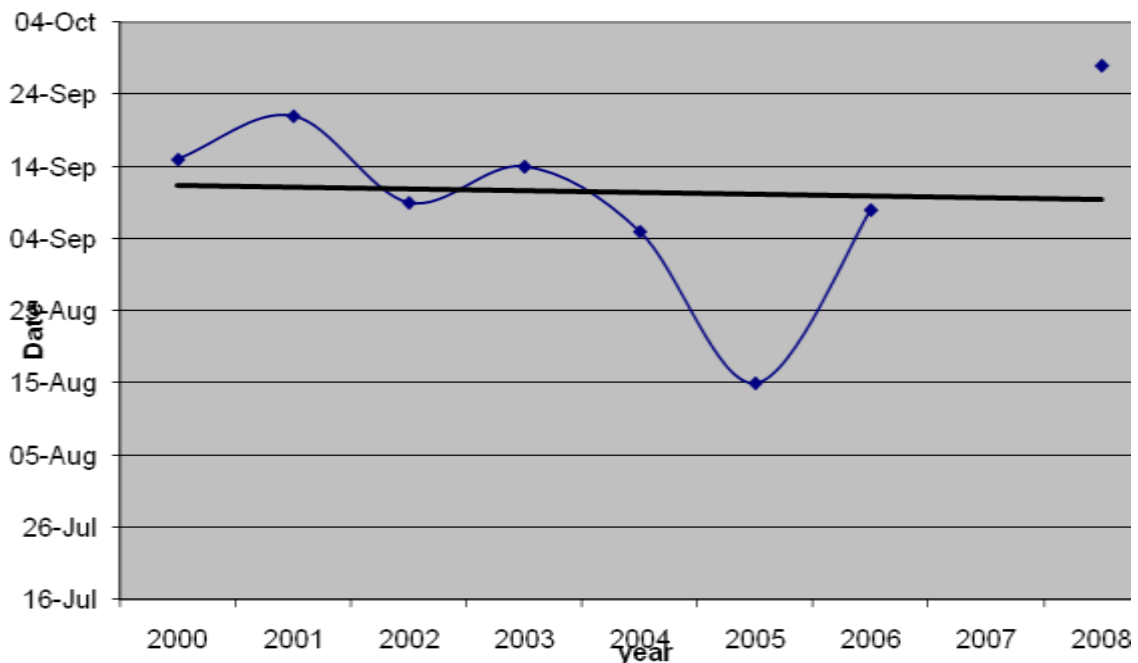
Discussion: With so few individuals seen, it is perhaps unwise to infer any significance from the apparent trend for Ospreys to be seen earlier in the year and also to be seen later in the year.

Willow Warbler

First sighting of Willow Warblers 2000-2008



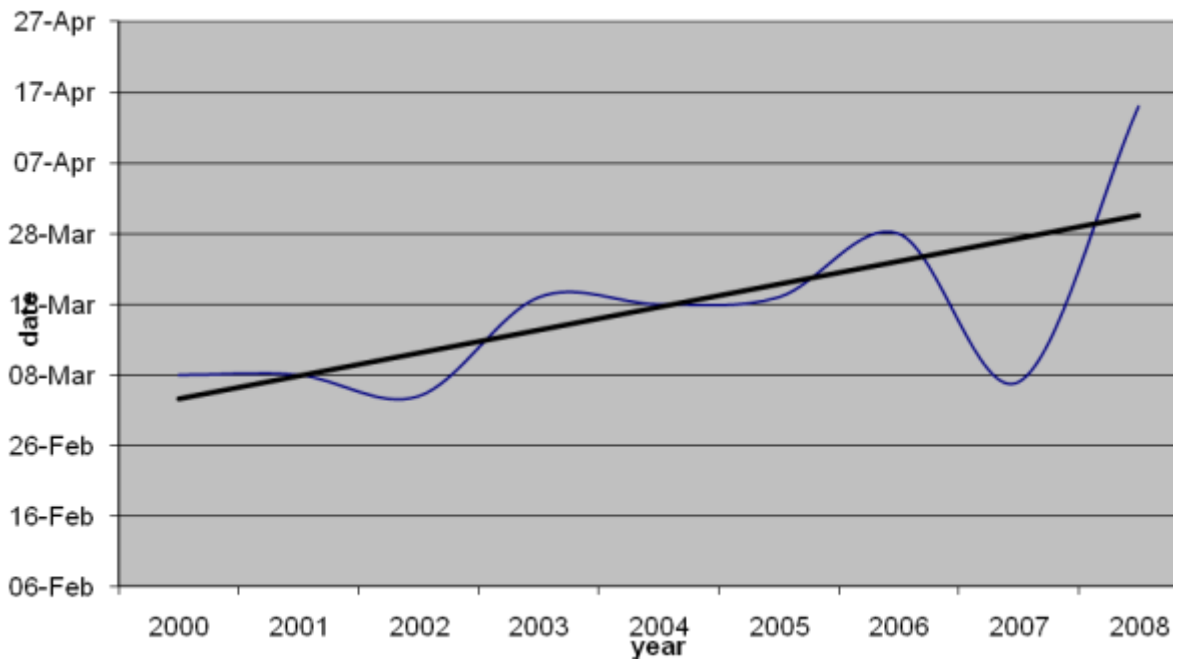
Last sighting of Willow Warblers 2000-2008



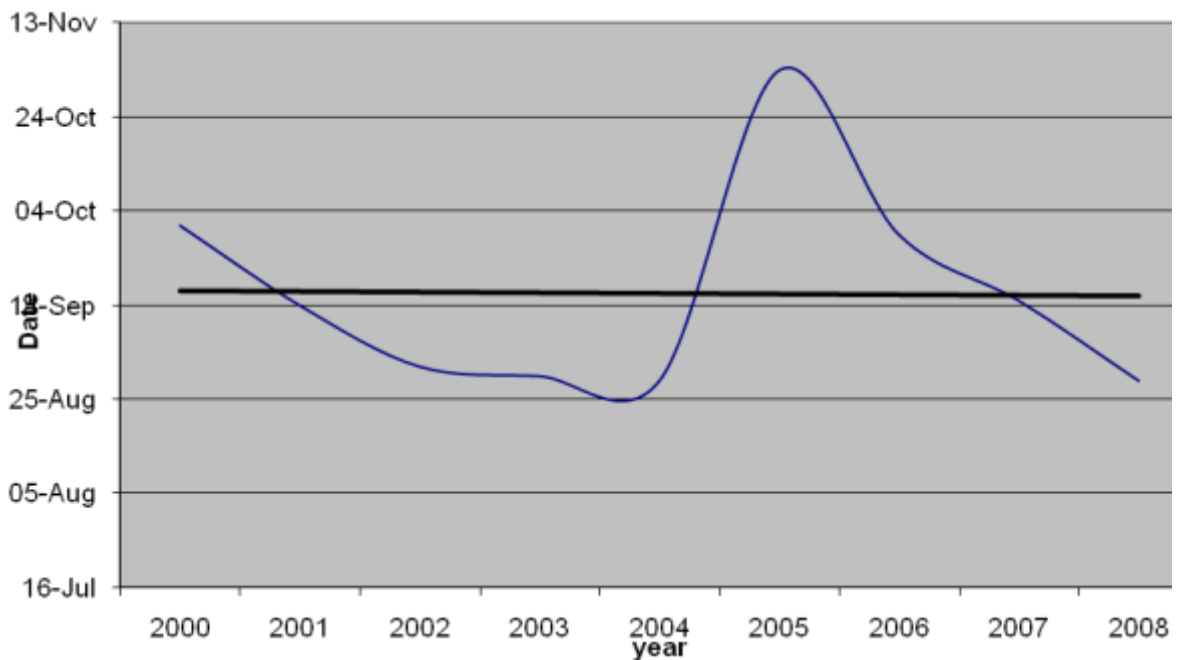
Discussion: Willow Warblers appear to be arriving earlier, but the average last date that birds are seen seems to be, on average, little changed over the 9 year period – though there are some significant variances such as 2005.

Sand Martin

First sighting of Sand Martins 2000-2008

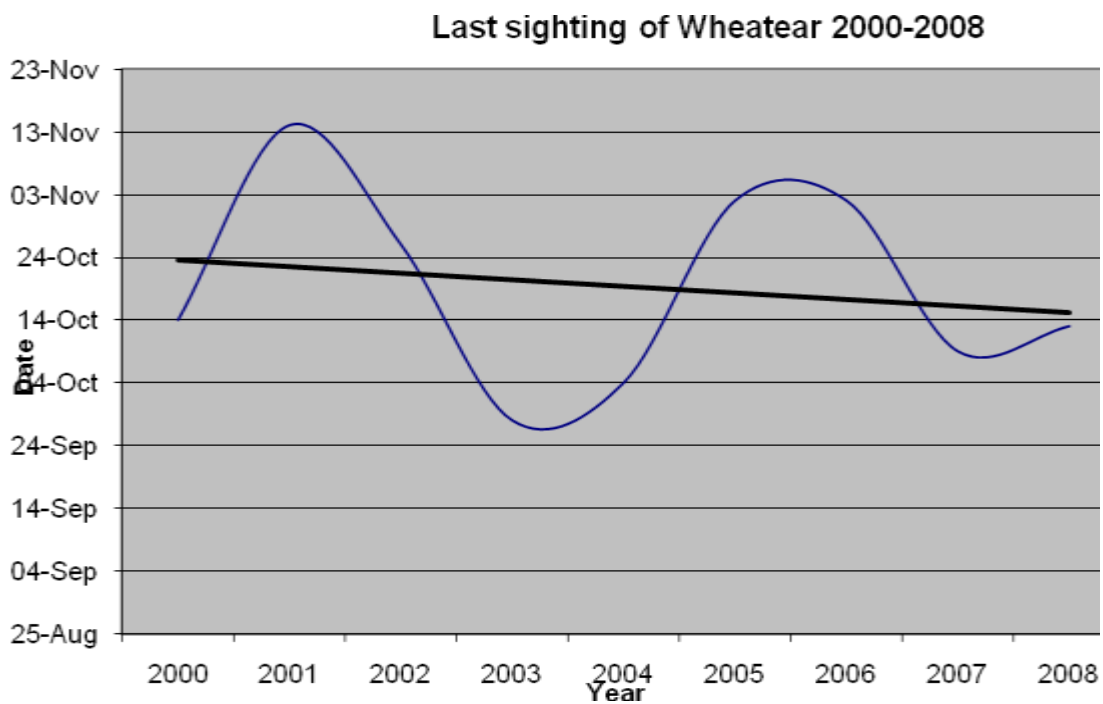
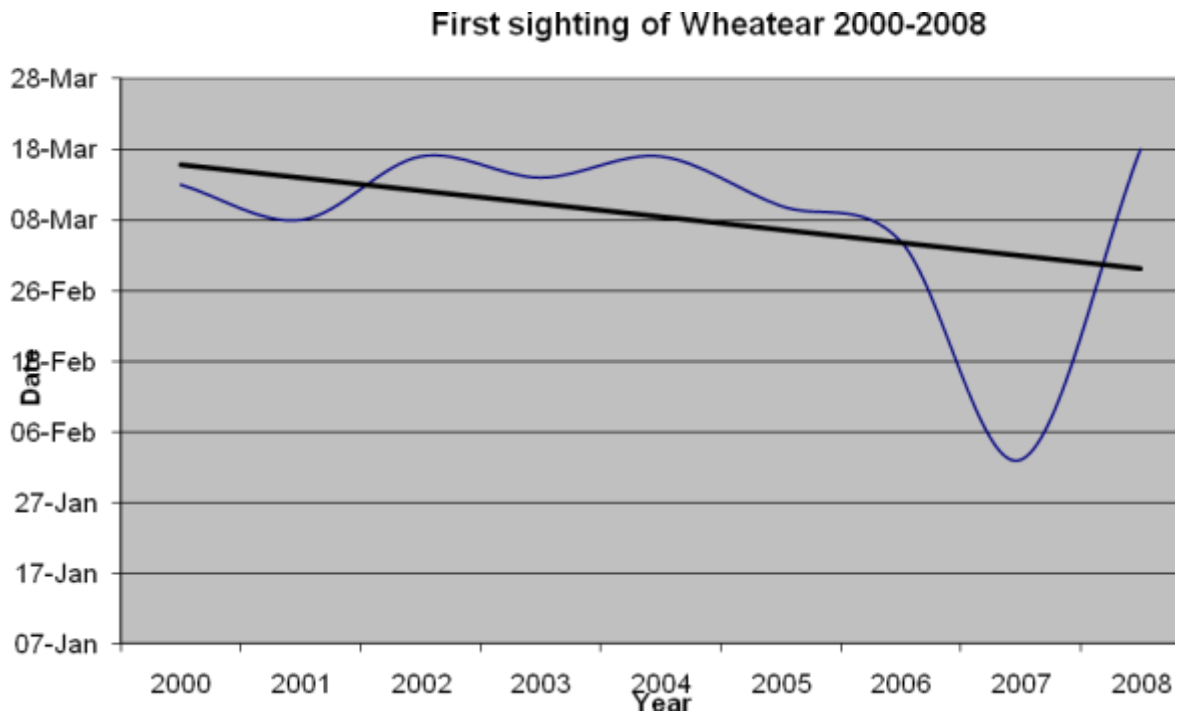


Last sighting of Sand Martins 2000-2008



Discussion: There is an apparent trend for Sand Martins to arrive later, but the average departure date of the last individuals is little changed.

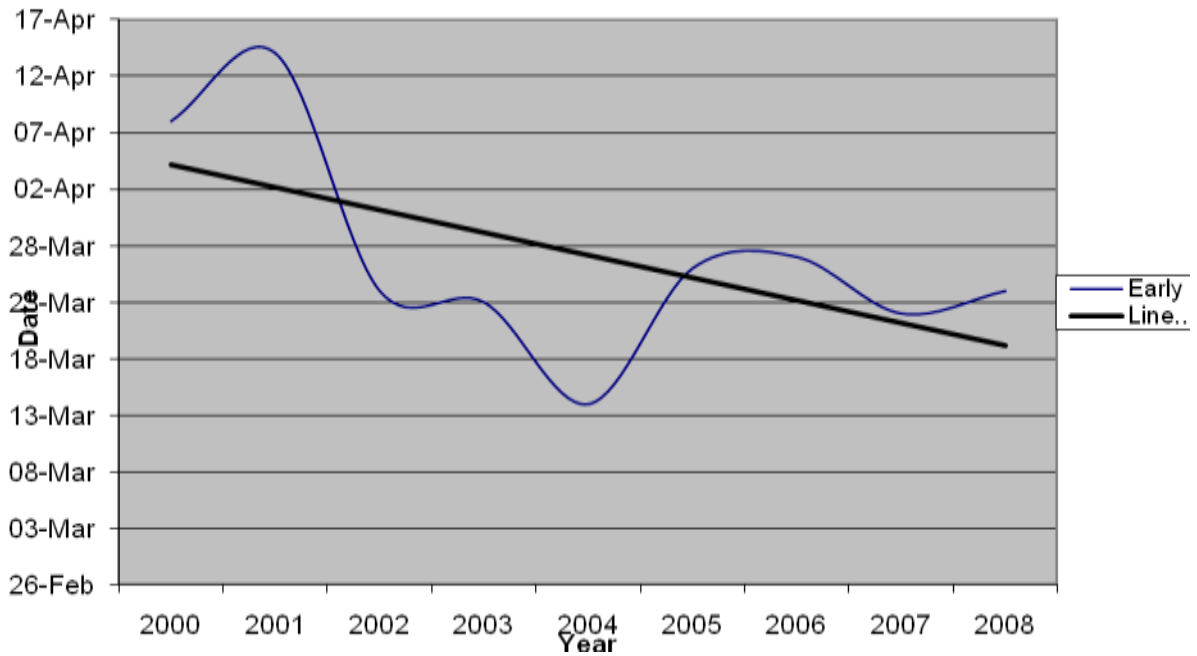
Wheatear



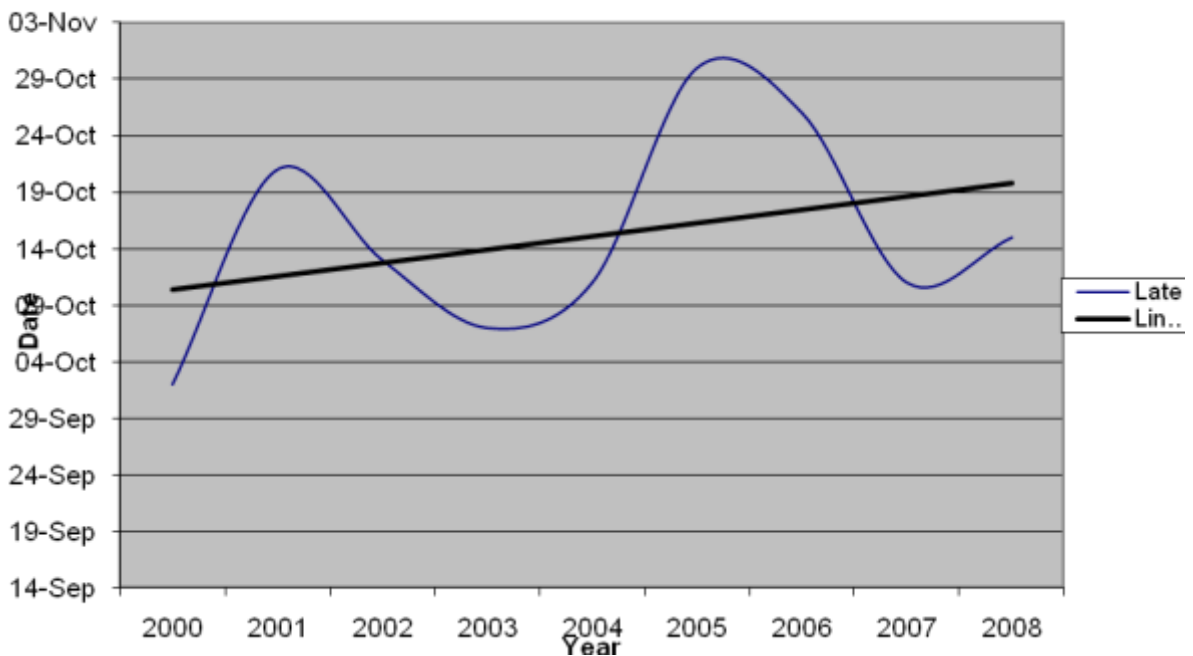
Discussion: There is a slight trend for Wheatears to arrive earlier, but is this due to distortion caused by the much earlier than normal report for 2007? A slight trend for the last Wheatears to be seen on an earlier dates during the 9 year period, but an interesting sine curve!

Sandwich Tern

First sighting of Sandwich Tern 2000-2008

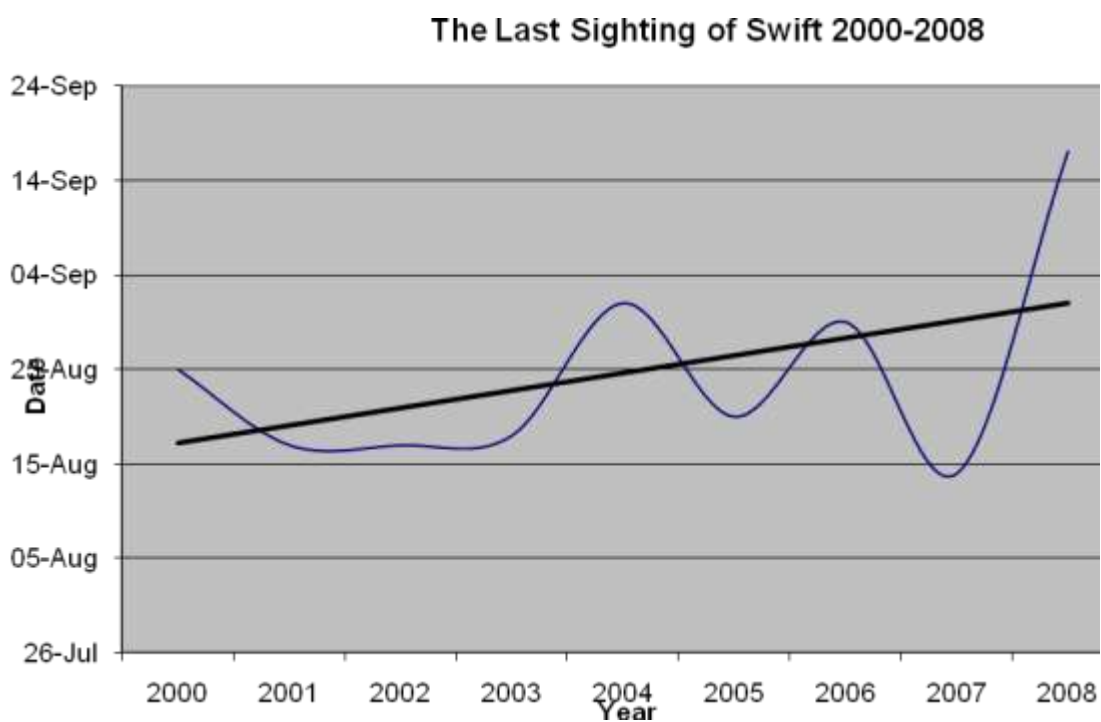
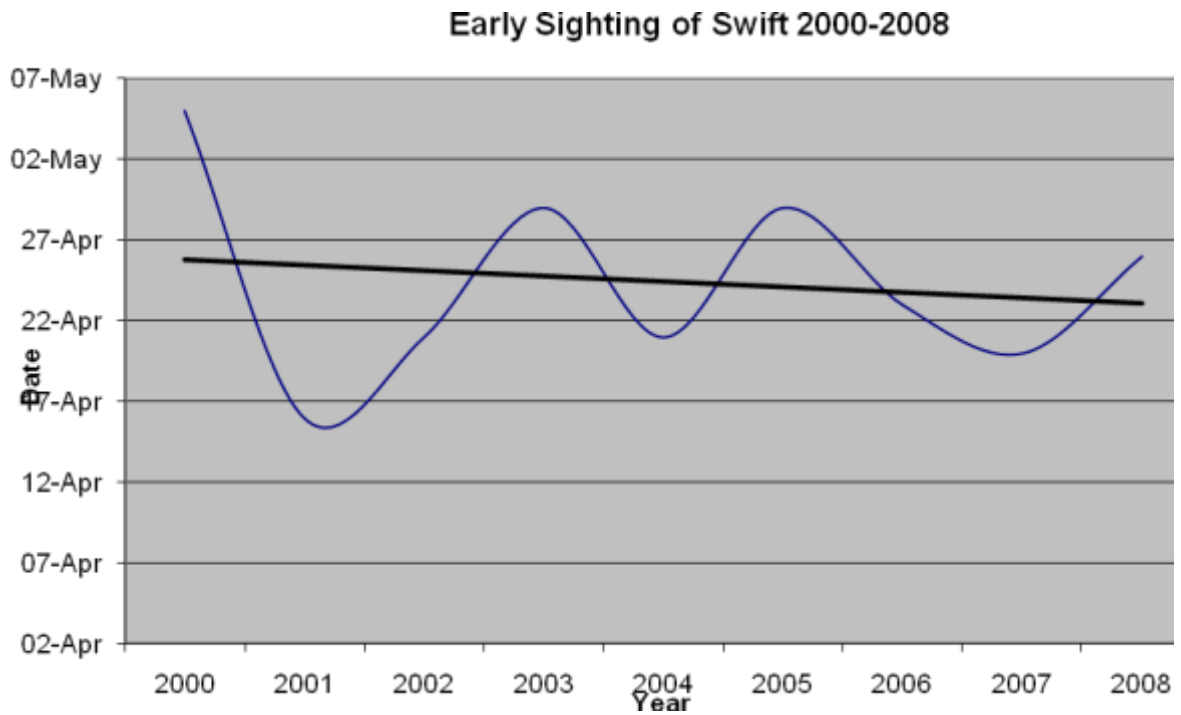


Last sighting of Sandwich Tern 2000-2008



Discussion: Sandwich Terns appear to be arriving earlier and the last birds are seen later.

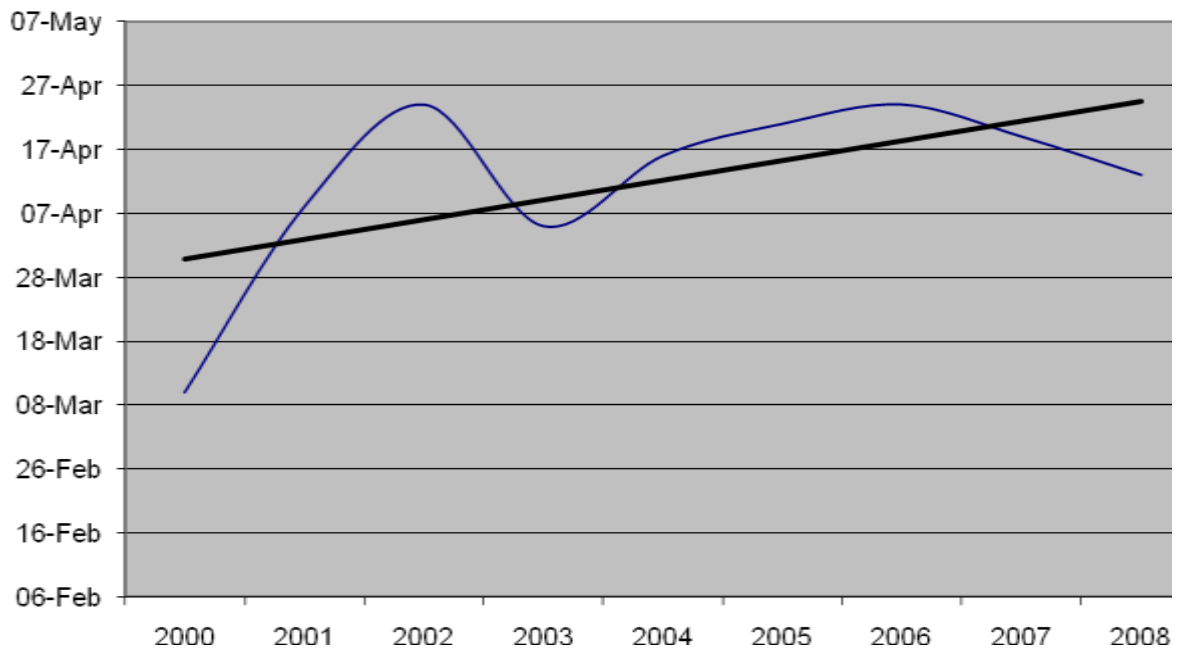
Swift



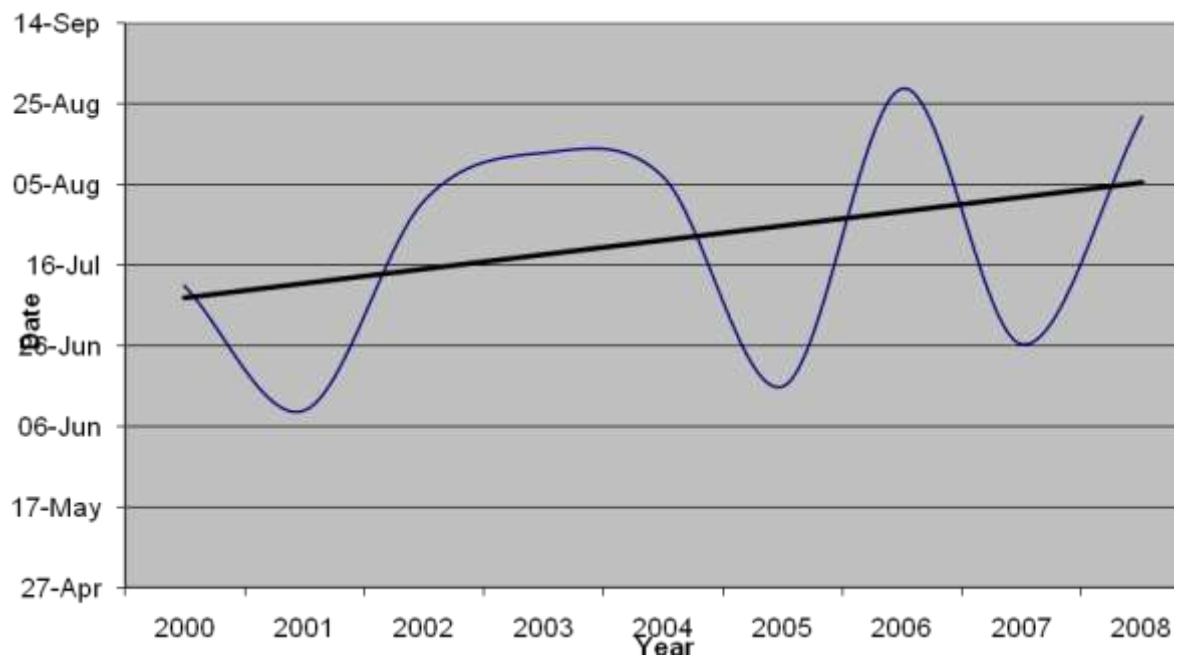
Discussion: A slight trend for the first Swifts to be seen earlier and the last to be seen later.

Cuckoo

First sighting of cuckoo 2000-2008



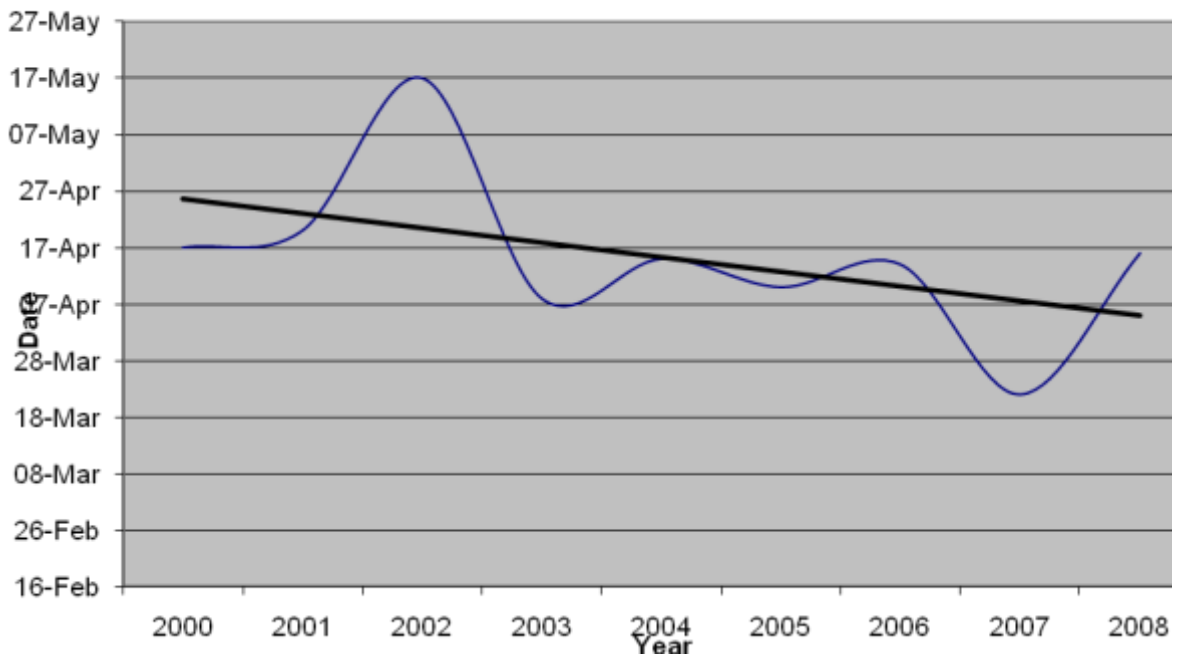
Last Sighting of Cuckoo 2000-2008



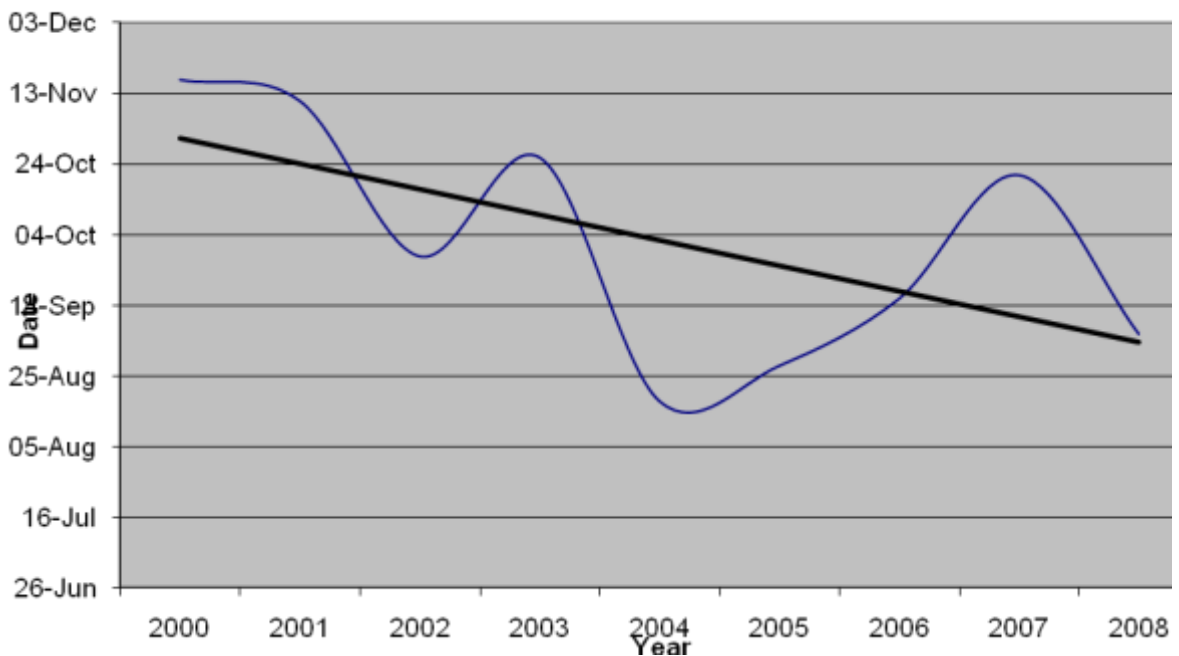
Discussion: The first Cuckoos seem to be seen later in spring and then seen later at the end of the summer.

Whimbrel

First Sighting of Whimbrel 2000-2008

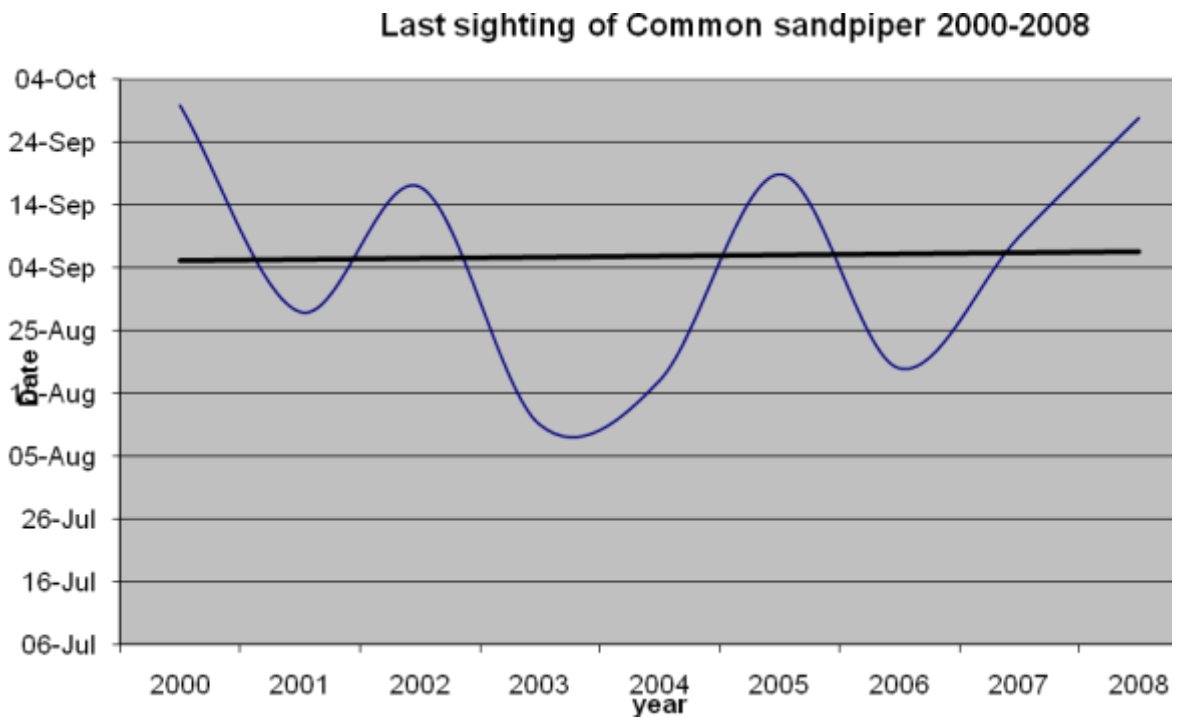
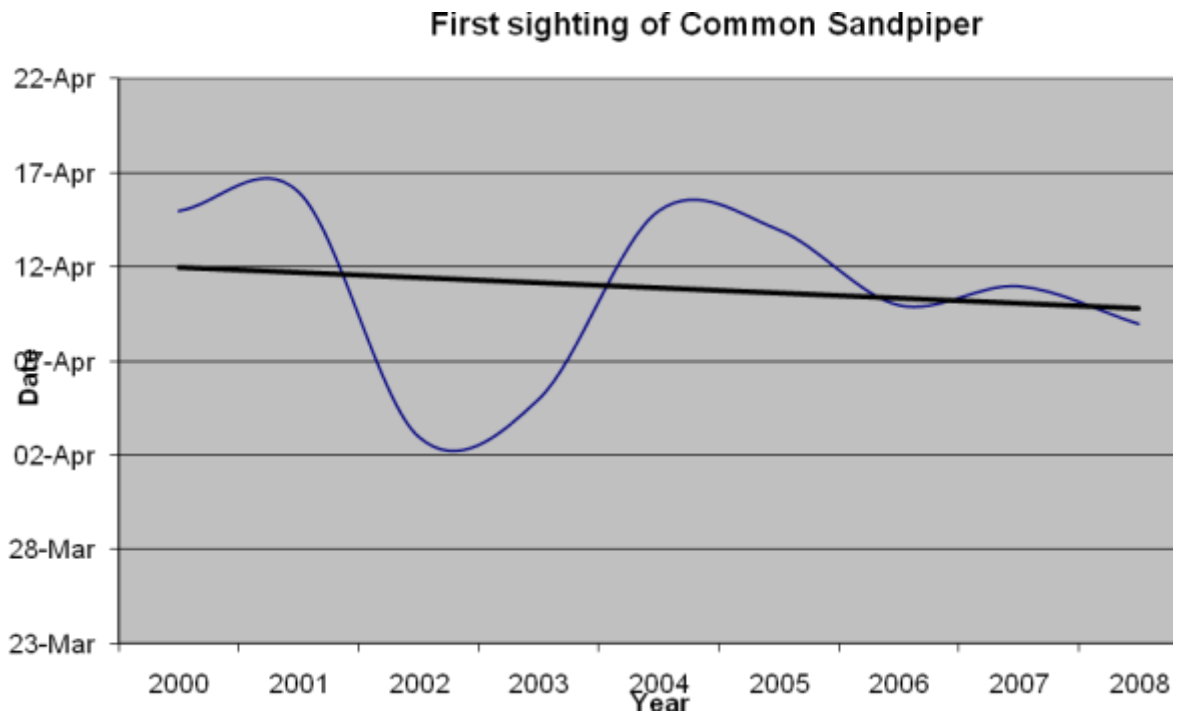


Last Sighting of Whimbrel 2000-2008



Discussion: The first Whimbrels are been seen earlier but then the last ones are also been seen earlier.

Common Sandpiper



Discussion: Not much of a trend apparent in the early and last dates for Common Sandpipers.

Conclusions and suggestions for further work

When looking at the first and last dates for any migrant birds, there are various factors that affect the availability and quality of the data. Is the data affected by the number of observers? How assiduous are they at recording common migrants towards the end of the summer? Is the date a migrant arrives on the Isle of Man affected by the weather or by general climate conditions en route (this seems very likely to be the case).

We can't draw too much by way of inference from only 9 years data, especially given the small sample sizes. It would be interesting to see if any further trends are apparent if data is plotted for preceding and subsequent years. Is there any correlation between the trends for different species?

From an overall perspective of species viability, though the earliest and last dates that species are seen in any year is interesting, perhaps a more significant statistic would be to measure the peak dates for arrival and departure. For those species that breed on the Isle of Man, these could be linked to the process followed by individuals when they seek to establish breeding territories (for those species that do so) or find breeding partners. However this research would be considerably harder to carry out, so for the time being please continue to record your observations throughout the year as so many Manx birdwatchers are now doing.

Acknowledgements

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The charts were produced by Dan Taggart, a Year 10 student of St Ninian's High School, Douglas, during a work experience placement with Manx BirdLife in March/April 2011.

14/4/11