

# Black-headed Gull

*Larus ridibundus*

Mouette rieuse – Lachmowe – Kokmeeuw - Skrattnas

**Common breeding resident and winter visitor**



Has bred in most years since at least 1947 when 11 pairs nested. Ternery Pool's islands have supported virtually the entire colony since 1974, but Long Pit, Narrow Pit and Castle Water have been colonized. The number of pairs reached a peak of 2000 in 2006, but has varied considerably and since 1970 has averaged 493. Fledging success is also variable. Some years have seen a total failure when predators, especially Fox and Badger, have caused severe losses of chicks and eggs. A few years have resulted in more than one fledged young raised per pair, the most successful being 2010 when 2441 pairs raised about 4200

young. Large numbers roost along the shore or on the sea overnight during the winter months, especially late in the winter when birds are presumably gathering prior to returning to the continent. The highest count was 40000 on 16 March 1986. Several ringed birds show that Russian and Eastern European bred birds winter at Rye Harbour. A bird was wing tagged in Madrid, Spain in December 1994, and it nested at Rye Harbour and raised young, staying until 9 August. It returned to Rye Harbour on 16th April 1996, but did not stay!



Adult in breeding plumage



Nest



Chicks



Juveniles

## Breeding Black-headed Gull at Rye Harbour

