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Breeding Goldeneye Thrive Following Reduced Human Disturbance News

29/11/2023

Breeding goldeneye thrive following reduced human disturbance

Common Goldeneye enjoyed a bumper breeding season at a Highland reserve this summer, with the success attributed to measures taken to reduce disturbance from recreational activity.

More than 25 ducklings fledged at Muir of Dinnet NNR in the Cairngorms National Park, marking the best breeding return for the species there for more than a decade.

The news follows measures taken at the reserve since 2021 to reduce disturbance from recreational activity on the reserve's Loch Kinord, where visitors are asked to stay off the water during the breeding season.



Common Goldeneye enjoyed a successful breeding season at Muir of Dunnet (Walter Schulenburg).

The initiative has helped Common Goldeneye bounce back from only one brood and four ducklings in 2020, before the measures were put in place.

Simon Ritchie, NatureScot's reserve manager at Muir of Dinnet, said: "We are elated to have so many young fledge. These specialist ducks have been declining locally in recent years, so this is a real boost to the population.

"One of the main factors in recent breeding failings has been disturbance by people going out on the water in canoes, kayaks, inflatables and paddleboards. Because of this, we worked closely with stakeholders, including recreational users, ornithologists, the Cairngorms National Park, and Dinnet and Kinnord Estate to put in place access guidance on Loch Kinord to reduce impacts in the crucial summer months.

"This has had a massively positive impact on our breeding birds, especially our goldeneye population, and we would like to thank everyone for following the access guidance."

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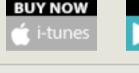
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