



communal roost on the George Street foreshore.

Unlike the immature bird that would feed at Dunstaffnage Bay, this new bird mingled with a different group of Common Gulls and was seen further up Loch Etive, near Achnaba cemetery, during its brief visit.

Amazingly, a third separate Ring-billed Gull, this time, a small immature female, also in its second winter, showed up on the foreshore area during late February - early March, to the obvious delight of local birdwatchers.

Local birdwatcher, Stuart Gibson, said: 'Ring-billed Gulls are rare sightings in Scotland, with usually only a handful of records in the country in any given year, so to have three different birds, at the same location, during the same winter, is quite amazing.'

'Ring-billed Gulls can also be remarkably site

faithful so it is possible that these immature birds may return to the Oban area in years to come.'

Ring-billed Gulls are one of the most abundant species of gull that breed in southern Alaska, Canada and the USA, yet had never been recorded in Britain prior to 1973.

Since then, however, partly due to an increased awareness of this species among birdwatchers,

numbers found visiting this side of the Atlantic have dramatically increased.

To date, there have been over 20 accepted records of Ring-billed Gulls in Argyll since the first occurred on the Isle of Tiree in 1983.

Nearly half the recorded gull movements have been on the Isle of Islay and a large proportion have been adults, although this may be just because they are easier to identify!

