

Puffin Slope : At North End, between Constable Rock and North-East Point. In past years eggs have been found here by the light-keepers and shown to Mr. Gade. One chick was found here in 1942 by Mr. W. B. Alexander and party. Observations made in 1948 at night during April, May and June. Varying numbers of birds were seen in the beam from the lighthouse, which crosses the seaward edge of the slope. On clear nights these fluctuated greatly in number, but on June 11th and 13th, when fog considerably reduced visibility there were at a rough estimate thirty-fifty birds over the slope between 11 p.m. and 1 a.m.

Birds were sometimes heard in burrows, but of six opened the contents were nil. On June 14th two birds were found in a burrow, which also contained the sternum of an immature bird, probably a last year's nestling. Rats were active, to judge from numerous broken puffin eggs.

Four Shearwaters ringed here.

These observations throw little light on the problem of Lundy's Shearwaters ; but the evidence accumulated suggests that the presence of rats is a serious obstacle, and that while their numbers remain unchecked the Shearwaters will have the greatest difficulty in establishing colonies. There is the possibility that the majority of the visiting birds are immature, but in this case the situation as we found it in 1948 has prevailed for many years.

(On the other hand, the bird, AT 3707, was ringed as an adult on Skokholm in 1946, and this indicates that some birds at least are mature. Further work seems to be necessary before any firm conclusions may be drawn on this, and on the possibly related problem of either visiting or exchange between the populations of Skokholm and Lundy.—EDS.)

Among the many members who assisted in the work, particular acknowledgement is made to Daphne French Blake, A. D. G. Smart and M. L. Smith.

R. E. STUDDY.

THE FULMAR PETREL ON LUNDY IN 1948

As a result of observations by many members a good deal of information on the status of the Fulmar was obtained this year. Breeding activity was again restricted to two areas, the south end of Jenny's Cove, and Gannets' Rock, though individuals were seen around the cliffs in several other places on various occasions.

Birds were present at both breeding stations when observations began at the end of March. At Jenny's Cove four were sitting, on sites used last year, on April 5th. On April 17th, 20th, and 22nd six sitting birds were noted. On the 25th fourteen were seen about this area, and eighteen on the 29th, this being the largest number recorded. No eggs were seen until May 21st, when one was seen

and a second was probably present. On June 7th five eggs were seen, but on the 8th one of these was missing and by the 17th three pairs had lost their eggs. The next close search was not made until the 26th. No eggs could be found, nor were any seen subsequently. Some of the adults remained in the area for a little time, but the last record from Jenny's Cove was of five flying about on July 15th. The causes of the egg-losses were not determined.

The Gannets' Rock colony was more successful. On April 3rd six prospective sites were visited and some display was seen. During that month the number of birds seen reached sixteen on several occasions. Five sites were in use on April 25th. Subsequent reports on the progress of nesting were few because of the difficulty of examining that face of the Rock used by the Fulmars, but five sitting birds were noted on June 6th, and six on 28th. A visit to the Rock on July 13th brought some good news. Six nest sites were found, three with nestlings and one with an egg. Two of the nestlings were ringed but the third was considered to be too small. An adult was caught on one of the sites and it too was ringed. The fate of the youngest nestling and the egg is not known because they could not be seen from the island, nor reached on a second visit to the Rock on August 19th, but the two ringed nestlings were then found to be thriving. One of these nestlings was reported still present on August 22nd. This was the latest report of a Fulmar on the island, though two adults were seen flying off the north-west coast on the same day. While the fate of no one of the nestlings is known with certainty it seems very likely that at least two were fledged successfully.

A most interesting find was that of a "blue" Fulmar nesting on Gannets' Rock. It was first noted on April 4th and was remarked by nearly all subsequent visitors till the middle of July. The colour phases of the Fulmar were grouped by Roberts (1934) into four classes: double dark (DD), dark (D), light (L), and double Light (LL). The LL phase predominates in the British breeding population and dark phases are rarely reported. None of the early observers has recorded a detailed description of this bird, but R. H. Poulding and H. J. Boyd classed it as D. On July 13th these observers found the bird sitting by a nestling. They failed to secure the adult, but ringed the young. The mate of the dark bird was a typical LL, but unfortunately no detailed description of the young was made so that it is not known whether it was of the usual appearance of British nestlings.

It may also be noted that on July 15th one of five Fulmars flying around the Jenny's Cove Station conformed to the L class, all the others noted there being LL.