

NOTES ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE LUNDY CABBAGE

Rhynchosinapis wrightii (Schulz) Dandy

By

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The Lundy Cabbage was first described by Elliston Wright in 1936 and originally named *Brassicella wrightii* by O. E. Schulz, but it was then later included in the genus *Rhynchosinapis*. In addition to a basic description of the plant given by Fraser and Martin (1939) mention is made that it is native to Lundy, to be found on cliffs and slopes of Devonian rock, 'a recent notable discovery'. Clapham et al (1962) give its distribution more precisely as being on cliffs and slopes of the east side of Lundy Island, and point out that it is known nowhere else.

During September 1983, I was asked by the Nature Conservancy Council to make a check on present numbers and distribution of Lundy Cabbages, as part of a programme to update records on various Red Data Book plant species. As the time I had available to spend on this project was limited, it was not possible to complete a thorough investigation of the plant's distribution. However, a careful search of the sidelands and clifftops from Tibbetts Point south to Quarry Bay, and from the Sugar Loaf sound to below the Castle was completed, and a large number of specimens was found as a result. The plants are in seed by September, so the task of distinguishing them from the surrounding vegetation was sometimes difficult, though the characteristic form of the seed pods was usually sufficient to pick out mature specimens growing out from cliff ledges.

As described by Cassidi (1980) specimens were only found on the east coast between Knight Templar Rock and the Castle. The sidelands and clifftops between Quarry Bay and the Sugar Loaf were not checked on foot because of the dense growth of rhododendron there. However, observations from a small inflatable dinghy close inshore showed no signs of cabbages in this area. The records of specimens at Quarry Bay appear to be new, there being no mention of them by Marren (1971) or Cassidi, although many of the plants appear well-established. It should be pointed out that these figures are very approximate, and young plants (dominant in the area around Halfway Wall Bay) have also been included.

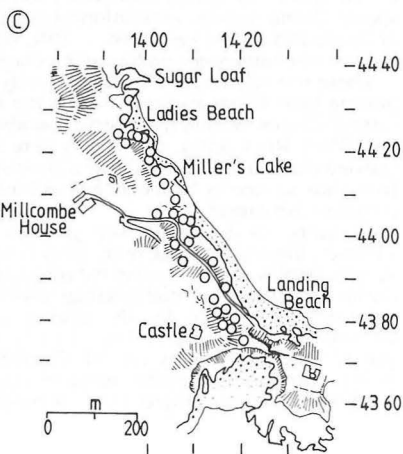
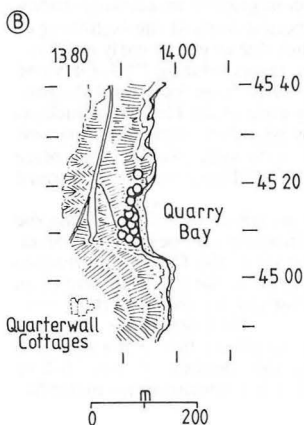
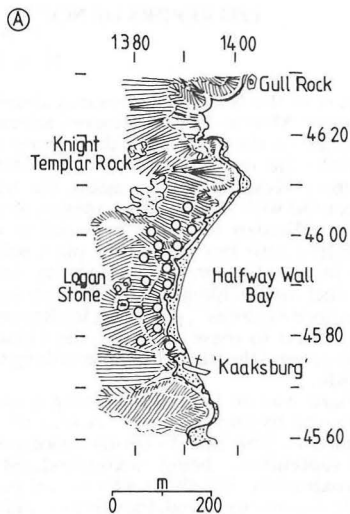
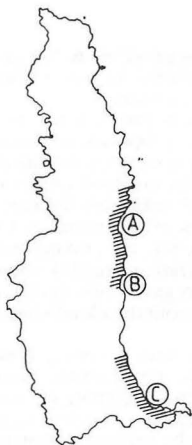
Grid Ref. (O.S.)	Approx. no. of specimens	Comments
21/13904600	30	100m SE of Knight Templar Rock
13854600	10	
13804590	10	Majority young plants
13804595	10	(1-2 yrs. old?) in
13854595	30	amongst bracken on
13854590	20	sidelands. Very few
13804585	10	in seed.
13804580	10	
13854585	10	
13854580	10	
13854575	10	50m NW of the 'Kaaksburg'
13904520	30	Well-established plants
13904515	20	amongst fallen boulders
13904510	40	close to high water
13904505	30	mark (Quarry Beach)
13954430	10	
13954425	10	
13954420	30	Ladies Beach
14004420	20	
14004415	30	
14054410	10	Miller's Cake

14004405	10	
14054405	20	
14104400	40	'Mouth' of St. John's Valley
14054395	20	
14104390	20	
14154385	10	Above and below Beach Road
14154380	30	
14154375	30	E & SE of Castle
14204375	10	
Total:	590	

These results would appear to confirm the findings of Cassidi, namely that the Lundy Cabbage is maintaining a viable population, with evidence of many young plants becoming established, particularly in the area around Halfway Wall Bay.

REFERENCES

- CASSIDI, M. D. (1980). Status of the Lundy Cabbage, *Rhynchosinapis wrightii*. Rep. Lundy Field Soc., 31, 64-67.
- CLAPHAM, A. R., TUTIN, T. G. and WARBURG, E. F. (1962). Flora of the British Isles, 2nd Edition.
- MARREN, P. R. (1971). The Lundy Cabbage. Rep. Lundy Field Soc., 22, 27-31.
- MARTIN, W. K. and FRASER, G. T. (1939). Flora of Devon.



Distribution of the Lundy Cabbage *Rhynchosinapis wrightii* September 1983