

WARDEN'S REPORT FOR 1994

I started work as Warden on Lundy at the beginning of December 1994, so rather than a report of last years' activities, this is a look forward to the future.

The Management Plan for Lundy's terrestrial and marine wildlife is complete. This document takes a thorough look at nature conservation on the island and provides a register of projects for the coming years. The other document now in circulation is the Marine Nature Reserve zoning scheme; using brighter colours than the draft form, it is eye catching and easy to understand. It is being widely circulated to local sea users and will hopefully promote protection of the reserve, whilst allowing people to enjoy the sea around Lundy.

The winter weather has been windy and wet, with rain on all but two days during January and February, and persistent south westerly gales. There has been a considerable amount of litter washing up into the Landing Bay. On calmer days the tide can bring in an excess of four black bags of predominantly plastic litter. Although not of Lundy origin this is a worrying indication of the amount of plastic floating at sea. The winter has also brought several oiled birds, and a small oil spill of unknown origin just off the East Coast.

MONITORING

A herd of twelve Galloway cattle are now in residence at the north end. They will hopefully trample and help control the spread of bracken on the sidelands. Fixed point photography and quadrats are being used to monitor heather/grass boundaries at the north end and hence to record any change in heather/grass cover as well as any grazing of heather.

With the help of John Heath from Appledore Sub-Aqua Club I hope to carry out an accurate seal survey and set up some regular monitoring sites. This is done using photography of seals which allows repeated recognition of individuals. We then hope to build up a picture of haul-out sites, pupping areas, and moulting caves used by particular individuals and groups.

Monitoring in the Marine Nature Reserve is in future to be mainly carried out by volunteer groups; local diving clubs have expressed an interest in helping out. They are regular visitors to Lundy's waters and, with training, their local knowledge will help in monitoring tasks. I hope to get all visiting divers more involved in the reserve by producing a simple diver recording card. They will be asked to record any litter or disturbance seen during a dive as well as making particular wildlife observations.

PRACTICAL CONSERVATION WORK

The value of volunteers on Lundy has already been demonstrated to me. Several small groups have been working on tree maintenance. The trees all along the east sidelands are now looking much better for the efforts of volunteers who have been replacing guards and weeding. An alarming number of Rhododendron seedlings are growing by Three Quarter Wall and volunteers have made a start in removing these.

Helen Cole has organised several LFS working parties for next year; two of these are large groups who will be part of "Rhododendron Month"! We actually have two months (May and September) of large volunteer groups planned. I also have the help of two long term volunteers coming to work as voluntary wardens over the summer months. They will work primarily on nature conservation tasks and should be valuable assistants during the busy summer ahead.

The Field Society have already been a great help to me. I do appreciate your support and look forward to working with and meeting many LFS members on Lundy in the future.

EMMA PARKES
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