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PUFFIN NUMBERS ON LUNDY DURING SUMMER 2006

By

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ABSTRACT

Between April and August 2006 a study was carried out to ascertain the number of puffins on Lundy, whether they were breeding and if so, where and how many breeding pairs were present. The 2006 survey showed activity at seven different burrows at St. Phillip's Stone. The highest number of puffins seen at once was eleven¹ on 13 July, and five puffins were photographed together² (Figure 2). A puffin was also observed delivering food to a burrow indicating that a chick was present.

Grant Sherman 13 July 2006² Stuart Leavy

INTRODUCTION

This report contains the results of a simple land based survey, using the methodology of Davey (1997). The wardens spent time locating puffin burrows and monitoring activity. Visitor sightings have been extracted from the LFS logbook to supplement the data obtained from the surveys.

METHODOLOGY

Simple Puffin Survey

Surveys were conducted from land using 10x35 binoculars and 45x telescope at fixed viewing points. These fixed points allowed views of the cliffs, sidelands and the sea from the Battery, around the North End and at Brazen Ward. Observation effort (time) at each location was recorded and all puffins that were seen on land, at sea or in flight were recorded. These data are given in Table 1.

Location Survey – St Phillip's Stone

In addition to the above a concentrated effort was made at St. Phillip's Stone as active burrows were identified. Observation effort was recorded and activity monitored at the site. The site was photographed (Figure 1) and active burrows were labelled in order that observations could be made at individual burrow sites.

RESULTS

Site checks were made at St Phillip's Stone on 19 June 2006, 3 July 2006, 11 July 2006, 20 July 2006 and 2 August 2006. Observations were made and puffin

movements were recorded. Details of these observations are recorded in table 2. The locations of the burrows at St Phillip's Stone are shown in Figure 1. Seven burrows were identified, with burrows C, D and E being the most active. The observation of five puffins at St Phillip's Stone is shown in Figure 2. It is worth noting that on 20 July a puffin was observed taking food into burrow E, indicating that a chick was present.

Logbook Records

A total of 217 sighting were recorded in the LFS Bird Logbook between April and August 2006. The first sighting of the year was on 7 April and the last on 28 July. A chart showing the time distribution of the recorded sightings is presented in Figure 3.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Activity at St. Phillip's Stone was fairly high. Burrow A was reported to be occupied early in the season before the surveys commenced, but no further activity at this burrow was observed during any of the surveys. The observations have shown activity at seven different burrows at St. Phillip's Stone. No chicks were seen, but successful breeding can be assumed at burrow E because of the delivery of fish. No land-based sightings were recorded at any time, except for those at St. Phillip's Stone.

It is proposed that a similar survey, with the aim of ascertaining burrow activity and breeding success, should take place next year in order to increase the data set. A site visit should be considered to check the burrows in mid May and again in mid July to ascertain the productivity of the colony.

It is possible that there may be other nest site locations around the island, although none were identified this year. A greater effort should be made In 2007 to observe different locations where historically puffins have been known to nest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES

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| | 12-Apr-06 | 17-May-06 | 29-May-06 | 19-Jun-06 |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Battery Point | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Needle Rock | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jenny's Cove (South) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jenny's Cove (North) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| St Phillip's Stone | 0 | · 0 | 3 | 5 |
| St John's Stone | 0 | 0, | | 0 |
| Bird Island | 0 | | 0 | 0 |
| North West Point | 0 | | 0. | 0 |
| North East Point | 0 | | 0 | 0 |
| Gannets' Rock | 0 | | 0 | 0 |
| Brazen Ward | 0 | | 0 | . 0 |
| Total per survey | 0 | 0 | 3 | 5 |

= No data collected

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Table 1. Simple Puffin survey. The number of Puffins observed at each location.

| | | 19-Jun-06 | 03-Jul-06 | 11-Jul-06 | 20-Jul-06 | 02-Aug-06 |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Observation effort (h) | | 01:00 | 02:15 | 03:30 | 02:30 | 02:00 |
| Start time | | 08:30 | 05:15 | 05:15 | 09:30 | 13:30 |
| End time | | 09:30 | 07:30 | 08:45 | 12:00 | 15:30 |
| Confirmed burrow activity | A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | В | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | С | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| | D | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | E | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1F | 0 |
| | F | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| | G | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Н | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Maximum number of puffins recorded at sea | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Maximum number seen at once | 1 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

F = Observed with fish

 Table 2.
 Summary of results for St. Phillip's Stone surveys.

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Figure 2. Five Puffins at St. Philip's Stone. (photo: Stuart Leavy)

