

work alongside and meet extraordinary people who show such dedication to a small piece of granite.

I would like to finish by thanking everyone for their continued support over the last year and to wish the Field Society a successful 2010.

DEREK GREEN

March 2010

LUNDY WARDEN'S REPORT

Mike McKinnon arrived as a seasonal volunteer, a role that has become an annual position providing essential assistance to the conservation team. Interviews for the 2010 volunteer post have been held and the post will shortly be offered to the successful candidate.

The ongoing Lundy interpretation project has resulted in the production of further leaflets this year, which include 'Lundy Codes' and 'Lundy Walks'. These add to the 'suite' of interpretive leaflets which are helping to consolidate the 'Lundy Style', and to provide a better experience for our visitors by increasing their awareness. Many thanks must go to Bettina Newman from BMLD Graphic Design for her expertise in all of this work.

Bettina and Mike Langman also designed Lundy's Beach building and updated the existing interpretation that was produced in 1999. The Landmark Trust launched an appeal to raise funds for this project, which is on target to open the newly refurbished beach building this season. New display panels will run along the north and south walls with wooden panels beneath which will be etched with scenes of Lundy's wildlife. On the east wall there will be a marine mural which has been created by a local artist, Mick Loates.

Any LFS members planning a visit to Lundy after mid-May are encouraged to take a look and provide the wardens with constructive feedback.

Other projects have included the 2011 Calendar, which is in the shop and selling well already, and the 'Lundy Guide' has been updated to the new style.

In June 2009 Lundy hosted its first underwater photography competition, the 'Lundy Splash-IN'. The event planning actually began in January with lots of behind-the-scenes work going on to make sure that the day ran smoothly. On the day the weather was a little unpredictable with strong winds, but local charter boats and both Appledore and Ilfracombe Sub Aqua Clubs braved the seas and made it across to the Island. There were thirteen entries into the competition, which was a little lower than hoped for, but encouraging for a first time event.

The winning entries were by Mark Lavington with his picture of a Jewel Anemone in the 'Mega to Macro' category; Mike Deaton with his picture of a Seal in the 'Marine Nature Reserve Ambience' category and James Wright with his picture of a Compass Jellyfish in the 'Marine Abstract' category. This latter picture was also chosen as the overall winner.

Generous sponsorship for the event was received, with over £2000 worth of prizes donated. Preparations for the 2010 event are well advanced and £2000 has already been pledged. More details are available on the Lundy website.

On 12 January 2010 Lundy became the UK's first Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ). This is a direct result of last year's Marine & Coastal Access Act which aims to protect England's most important marine habitats and species. Lundy's new status establishes it as the cornerstone of a new network of Marine Protected Areas that the Government aims to have in place around our coasts by 2012.

All of our wildlife and zoning scheme leaflets have already been updated to reflect the change in status and the DVD that was produced in 2008 is also being re-edited. The change to MCZ status has given fresh impetus to the revision of the 'Scuba Diver's Guide to Lundy Marine Nature Reserve'. This had met some problems but is now under way and should be published by the end of 2010. Its new title: 'A Guide to the Lundy Marine Conservation Zone – Rockpooling, Snorkelling and Scuba Diving', indicates the increased scope of the guide.

Education and awareness continue to be an important part of the warden's role and with the recent interpretation drive, the resources to support this are continuously growing. As well as the traditional on-island events for visiting school and community groups, the program of mainland school visits continues to develop. This outreach program gives pupils who may be unable to make the trip to Lundy, the opportunity to learn about the island from afar. To date, ten schools have been visited with around 700 primary school pupils learning about Lundy's wildlife.

In 2009 a cetacean and sea-watch sightings pack was developed, which was distributed to local charter boats and the *Oldenburg*. The intention was to encourage reports from boats and thus get a far better picture of the marine sightings around Lundy. Initial indications suggest that this initiative will be very successful. For example, from the ten packs distributed, in addition to several useful reports, 62 records of Common Dolphin were reported between 14 May and 23 October. This compares to just 18 during the whole of 2008.

All such records will be forwarded to the appropriate organisations and feed into the national databases. 'MapInfo' has also been obtained and in the long term the hope is to use this software to record and map all the species reported.

Basking Sharks arrived at Lundy early in 2009. The first sighting was on 1 June off Brazen Ward. Then on 3 June three were seen on the west coast, with three more recorded over the next six weeks. This is a slight improvement on previous years, but still a poor show with only eight sharks recorded for 2009.

The fourth consecutive productivity surveys of Guillemot, Fulmar and Kittiwake were carried out during the 2009 breeding season. Results are variable across species and sites. For example, the Kittiwake colony at St Mark's Inlet produced just 18 fledged chicks from 106 nests (productivity = 0.17), whereas the Aztec Bay colony produced 19 fledglings from 28 nests (productivity = 0.68). Conducting the surveys on an annual basis will continue to build a picture of the overall health of our breeding seabird colonies. A full report of the 2009 survey will be published in due course.

The 2009 Puffin survey produced mixed results. The newly identified nesting site at Jenny's Cove was included in this year's survey, but this resulted in a reduction in the observation effort at the St. Phillip's Stone colony. The survey concluded that only two pairs attempted breeding at St. Phillip's (compared with five pairs in 2008). However, five pairs attempted breeding at Jenny's Cove.

Despite the low breeding numbers at St. Phillip's it was not all bad news as there were up to six non-breeding individuals in attendance at the colony from mid-May. This is too early in the season for immature birds to be making exploratory visits, so it may suggest that these were fourth- year birds which have chosen their breeding colony and were preparing burrows for next year.

The second week of July brought an exciting development with a large increase in puffin attendance at both colonies. St. Phillip's stone had a peak of eleven puffins sighted on 7 July and over twenty puffins were recorded at Jenny's Cove on a number of occasions. This would suggest that immature birds are visiting Lundy prospecting for burrows and may return in future years to breed.

Manx Shearwaters continue to increase their numbers building on last year's success. There has been an estimated 250% increase in the breeding population and productivity is good. David Price and Tony Taylor repeated the annual shearwater monitoring by ringing 144 chicks, 98 of which were at the Old Light colony.

Tim Guilford also carried out a shearwater tracking survey in August.

Fifteen GPS devices were deployed on shearwaters during the chick rearing stage; these were configured to record a geographic position fixed every five minutes. Of the fifteen devices deployed ten were successfully retrieved and provided data of foraging trips. The foraging trips of these birds lasted between three and ten days – most of the birds spent this time reasonably close to Lundy, and Tim's results suggest that an area to the north west of Lundy is a key foraging area for the breeding shearwaters. There were also examples of birds making longer trips, with one bird venturing well into the Irish Sea. Geo-locators were also fixed to twenty shearwaters which will be retrieved next season to provide data on their movements over the winter months.

The annual mammal counts took place in May. The weather was unfavourable this year and all the counts returned low figures which may not necessarily reflect the true population size. The Soay sheep count was 180, the feral goat count was 27, with a maximum count of just 56 Sika deer. The rabbit numbers in May were estimated to be in the region of 2000, probably reflecting the current boom in their cyclical population.

The Rhododendron clearance is going well, with just one stand remaining. LFS and National Trust working parties are helping with the clearance as well as also helping with other important tasks such as renovating the Terrace Heligoland Trap, and repairing walls.

NICOLA SAUNDERS
March 2010