

LUNDY WARDEN'S REPORT

2012 saw a number of changes within the Conservation Team on Lundy with Sophie Wheatley, Derren Fox and Donald Malone leaving the island for pastures new, and the new Warden, Beccy MacDonald, taking up her post on 8 February 2013.

Steve Pratt continued as the Ranger and was assisted in the practical conservation of the island by Andy Robinson from April to November.

Despite changes within the team during the year, visitor events included 12 snorkel safaris, 26 guided walks and 25 visitor talks. Eight school groups visited the island and enjoyed Warden-led activities. The education programme for Lundy will be reviewed and developed during 2013, with outreach activities being undertaken (very kindly) by Simon Dell.

Monitoring of Grey seals in 2012 ran until the end of September with eight surveys undertaken. The largest count, of 200 individuals, occurred in August, with approximately five females for every male. The maximum number of juveniles seen at one time was 67, which suggests a balanced demographic for the island's population. Three seals observed with entanglements led to some discussion, but due to the difficulties involved in capturing these individuals, it is unlikely that there will be any resolution to this problem in the near future.

The Wardens agreed to collect seal scats for a Plymouth University project. However, this activity was very demanding on time and effort with little reward and will not be repeated in 2013.

Cetacean research, using data from two C-PODs, was carried out by two students from Plymouth University looking into the movements of cetaceans around Lundy. In essence they found that the most common cetaceans detected were Harbour porpoises followed Common dolphins. Both of these species featured in monthly surveys by MARINElife between April and October. Other species seen included Risso's dolphins, Gannets, Puffins and Manx shearwaters. Full reports on these surveys can be found at www.marine-life.org.uk/ilfracombe-lundy.

The cup coral monitoring sites in Devil's Kitchen were surveyed in September and revisited in October when the Wardens were aiming to measure more individuals. Unfortunately, poor weather prevented them from completing the measurements in October. A total of 127 Scarlet & gold star corals and six Devonshire cup corals were found at the two sites.

Sunfish were recorded by the Wardens and MARINElife in August and September – the first known sightings of this species around Lundy – while Basking sharks were sighted of the East Side by visitors between June and July.

The clearance of *Sargassum*, an invasive alien seaweed, continued throughout the Landing Bay, with a particular focus on Devil's Kitchen. A total of 197 plants were removed.

Sarah Clarke of the Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) carried out research into the European lobster population around Lundy during May and July. This consisted of tagging and mapping the creatures to find out more about their movements. In order to involve local potters, a small reward was given for every tag reported. So far, over 3,000 lobsters have been tagged, over six sites, with around 546 being recaptured. It looks as though there is a small spill-over effect with some of the lobsters in the No Take Zone moving into the surrounding area.

The feral mammal stock was heavily culled in 2012 as counts carried out by Peter Hamlin and his team suggested that the populations of goats, Sika deer and Soay sheep were all high. Post-cull the numbers of each species were estimated at 156 Soays, 59 Sikas and 20 goats.

The rhododendron eradication programme made good progress with 15,000 seedlings pulled and 1,800 treated on the sidelands, and a further 1,600 seedlings treated on the plateau.

Steve Compton and Roger and Rosie Key counted 7,400 Lundy cabbage plants in flower at the end of May – an increase over the previous year. However, the number of seedlings had fallen.

Seabird monitoring again took place throughout the season, with Puffins having their best season for many a year. A peak count of 171 birds on 20 June was almost three times that of the previous season. Ringing of Manx shearwater chicks took place in late August and early September, with 251 chicks ringed.

BECCY MACDONALD
April 2013

REPORT OF THE LUNDY MARINE CONSERVATION ZONE ADVISORY GROUP

The Lundy Marine Conservation Zone Advisory Group (LMCZAG) provides a forum for the discussion of all matters relating to the island's waters and shores. The Group includes representatives from the island (the Lundy Company), Natural England, the Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority, the Lundy Field Society, the Marine Biological Association, English Heritage, Devon Wildlife Trust, Torridge District Council, commercial fishing interests, dive charter boat skippers and local dive clubs. The Group meets twice a year: in 2012 it met on 24 April on board the *MS Oldenburg* alongside Bideford Quay, and on 30 October at the Ilfracombe and North Devon Sub-Aqua Club, Ilfracombe. The LFS provides the secretariat for the LMCZAG.

A variety of issues were brought to the attention of the Group and discussed during the two meetings held in 2012. These are summarised below:

Atlantic Array windfarm proposal

The proposals for a windfarm north and north-east of Lundy were discussed at both meetings. Whilst the Advisory Group had been taking a close interest in the proposal's progress, most members of the Group were already represented by their own organisations with regard to submitting formal comments to the developers. Consequently, there was not an official Advisory Group position on the development.

Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)

It was reported that although Lundy automatically became a MCZ when the Marine & Coastal Access Act came into force, it was still a part of the consultation to be launched by Defra late in 2012. The boundary and the conservation objectives for the Lundy MCZ will be included within the consultation document. There was a contract being undertaken by the consultants APBMer in association with the Marine Biological Association to ensure that all existing data have been included in the assessment exercise.