

# BIRD RINGING IN 2012

by

TONY TAYLOR

26 High Street, Spetisbury, Blandford, Dorset DT11 9DJ

Email: ammataylor@yahoo.co.uk

Ringling coverage in 2012 totalled twelve weeks. In spring, 18 days were spent ringing migrants in April and early May. During 12 days in late May and the beginning of June, there was more ringing of migrants, as well as some work on Manx Shearwaters and Wheatears. After some shearwater tracking work in mid August, chicks and adults were ringed during 17 days from late August to mid September. Small numbers of migrants were also ringed at this time, with the main autumn migrant work taking place for a week in late September and three weeks in October.

The total number of birds ringed in the year was 4,339. This is the second-highest year total for Lundy. In April, a significant landmark was achieved when the grand total of birds ringed on Lundy reached 100,000. Among the 56 species of 2012, Swallows were caught in particularly large numbers in both spring and autumn, with their total reaching 1,189. Other notable totals for migrants included 721 Blackcaps, 549 Willow Warblers, 320 Meadow Pipits, 303 Goldcrests and 227 Chiffchaffs.

The increase in Manx Shearwaters continued, with 252 chicks and 53 adults ringed. Two Storm Petrels were also caught in late spring. There were hints that they might be breeders, as both had brood-patches and one was recaptured four nights after ringing. So there is hope that, like the shearwaters, they are benefiting from the eradication of rats. However, as well as breeding in burrows and only visiting them at night, Storm Petrels pose the additional challenge that they are much smaller than shearwaters, making them even harder to study.

Lundy's breeding population of Wheatears has been doing well in the last few years, in spite of their listing as a Species of Conservation Concern for the UK as a whole. Nesting in burrows and crevices, they have probably been incidental beneficiaries of the rat eradication on Lundy. The 41 Wheatears ringed, compared with a total of 30 over the previous ten years, partly reflect this increase but are also the result of a targeted effort to find out more about them.

Another species with an exceptionally high total was Swift: seven were ringed in spring, with only six caught on Lundy in the previous 65 years. Also unusual were a Merlin, two Melodious Warblers, two Subalpine Warblers (both caught on the same day), seven Yellow-browed Warblers (with five caught on one day), a Red-breasted Flycatcher, a Golden Oriole and a Common Rosefinch. A full list of the year's ringing totals is given opposite.

Recoveries and recaptures for 2012 include a Lesser Black-backed Gull seen in south-east Ireland in winter. This contrasts with all previous records of Lundy birds, which have been in south-west France, Iberia and beyond. A Redwing and a Chaffinch, ringed on Lundy as late autumn migrants, were recaptured by ringers in Finland and Norway respectively, where they would have been on, or en route to, their breeding grounds. Other birds that were clearly migrating were a Chiffchaff arriving from The Netherlands after 12 days, a Blackcap from Lands End in four days and a Swallow to south-west Portugal in 26 days. Remarkably, this is the first British-ringed Swallow ever found in Portugal: their standard migration route follows the east coast of Spain. Details of these and other recoveries are listed on p 64.

Another notable movement, albeit on a much smaller scale, involved one of the House Sparrows colour-ringed on Lundy by the University of Sheffield. A female, hatched on 3 May 2011 and ringed as a nestling, was seen in Hartland, Devon, on 27 February 2012. It was thought to have been there for about two weeks before the record was confirmed.

We are extremely grateful for two generous donations. David Morgan provided a wide selection of ringing equipment and Professor Terrence Burke of the Department of Animal and Plant Sciences, University of Sheffield, provided new mist-net poles.

## LUNDY RINGING TOTALS 2012

Manx Shearwater	(252)	305	Blackbird	48
Storm Petrel		2	Song Thrush	12
Merlin		1	Redwing	19
Water Rail		1	Spotted Flycatcher	26
Swift		7	Robin	47
Great Spotted Woodpecker		2	Black Redstart	1
Golden Oriole		1	Redstart	10
Goldcrest		303	Whinchat	1
Firecrest		3	Stonechat	1
Coal Tit		5	Wheatear	41
Skylark		1	Red-breasted Flycatcher	1
Sand Martin		30	Pied Flycatcher	9
Swallow	(3)	1,189	Dunnock	6
House Martin		33	House Sparrow	2
Yellow-browed Warbler		7	Grey Wagtail	1
Chiffchaff		227	Pied Wagtail	1
Willow Warbler		549	Tree Pipit	1
Blackcap		721	Meadow Pipit	320
Garden Warbler		13	Rock Pipit	2
Lesser Whitethroat		4	Chaffinch	110
Whitethroat		48	Brambling	1
Subalpine Warbler		2	Greenfinch	5
Grasshopper Warbler		11	Goldfinch	45
Melodious Warbler		2	Siskin	3
Sedge Warbler		66	Linnet	42
Reed Warbler		5	Lesser Redpoll	3
Treecreeper		1	Common Rosefinch	1
Wren		39		
Starling		2	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,339</b>

Numbers in brackets indicate pulli (included in the main totals)

## LUNDY RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS 2012

**Storm Petrel** 2580614 – ringed as an adult on Lundy, 29.6.1999. Controlled on Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, 22.8.1999. (54 days; 177 km; bearing: 358°).

**Shag** 1396162 – ringed as a chick on Ynys Gwylan Islands, Aberdaron, Gwynedd, 15.6.08. Found (ring only) on Lundy, 15.9.12. (1553 days; 182 km; 180°).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** colour-ring: blue, with white L, on left leg; metal on right – ringed as a chick on Lundy, 25-29.6.95. Seen at Duncannon Beach, Wexford, EIRE, 20.12.12. (6379-83 days; 195 km; 217°).

**Swallow** Y705778 – ringed as a first-year bird on Lundy, 21.9.12. Controlled at Forninhos, Odemira, Beja, PORTUGAL, 17.10.12. (26 days; 1543 km; 192°).

**Chiffchaff** Arnhem AAN722 – ringed as a first-year bird at Vlieland, Vlieland, THE NETHERLANDS, 3.10.11. Found freshly dead (killed by bird, probably Water Rail) on Lundy, 15.10.11. (12 days; 695 km; 251°).

**Willow Warbler** DBE110 – ringed as an adult male at Portland Bill, Dorset, 18.4.10. Controlled on Lundy, 12.4.12. (725 days; 172 km; 295°).

**Blackcap** L902631 – ringed as a first-year female at Longham Lakes, Dorset, 9.9.11. Controlled on Lundy, 3.5.12. (237 days; 198 km; 284°).

**Blackcap** Y101842 – ringed as an adult female at Nanjizal, Land's End, Cornwall, 28.4.12. Controlled on Lundy, 2.5.12. (4 days; 144 km; 31°).

**Blackcap** Y498590 – ringed as an adult female on Lundy, 26.4.12. Found dead on Lundy, 4.5.12. (8 days).

**Blackcap** D161958 – ringed as a first-year female on Lundy, 14.10.12. Found dead (killed by Sparrowhawk), 14.10.12. (0 days).

**Sedge Warbler** Paris 6354503 – ringed as an adult at Roseliere, Chenac-Saint-Seurin-d'Uzet, Charente-Maritime, FRANCE, 29.7.10. Controlled on Lundy, 28.4.11. (273 days; 691 km; 336°).

**Redwing** RF40556 – ringed as a first-year bird on Lundy, 28.10.09. Controlled at Pihlajaniemi, Kerimäki, Mikkeli, FINLAND, 12.6.12. (958 days; 2398 km; 60°).

**Chaffinch** L026586 – ringed as a first-year female on Lundy, 14.10.09. Controlled at Bomyra, Randaberg, Rogaland, NORWAY, 23.4.12. (922 days; 1086 km; 37°).

**Goldfinch** Y705502 – ringed as a juvenile on Lundy, 19.9.12. Controlled at Ledstone, Kingsbridge, Devon, 4.11.12. (46 days; 116 km; 147°).