

BIRD RINGING IN 2013

by

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Bird ringers visiting Lundy focused on three different projects in 2013: studying migrants, Manx Shearwaters and Wheatears. In April, three weeks were spent ringing spring migrants on their way north. Then for a week at the beginning of June, Wheatears were intensively studied by day and Manx Shearwaters by night. In late August and early September, two and a half weeks were spent ringing Manx Shearwater chicks emerging from their burrows, as well as some adult shearwaters. Small numbers of migrants were also ringed during the day. In late September and October, there were a further four and a half weeks of coverage, focused on returning migrants.

The total number of birds ringed in the year was 2,633. Despite increased coverage, this total is significantly lower than in 2012, primarily because the weather in spring and late autumn was less suitable for catching large numbers of migrants. In particular, the Swallow total was down from 1,189 in 2012 to 232 in 2013. Goldcrests presumably had a good breeding season, with 457 ringed, mainly in autumn. As usual, the other most numerous species among the migrants were Chiffchaff (249), Willow Warbler (295), Blackcap (353) and Meadow Pipit (141). Totals for thrushes and finches were disappointing, with unsuitable weather in late October, when large numbers usually migrate south.

Manx Shearwaters continued their rapid increase as a breeding species and topped the species totals for the first time. The 492 birds ringed included 335 chicks. Among the adults there were significant numbers of birds that had first been caught in previous years. Six had originally been ringed as chicks on Lundy, and these included one of just seven birds ringed in 2005, the first year of chick ringing, following rat eradication. The focus on breeding Wheatears resulted in a total of 61 birds ringed, with about 50 of these colour-ringed to establish a long-term study on the survival rates of adults from one year to the next, for the BTO's RAS scheme. It is hoped that visitors, as well as ringers, will contribute to this work by recording sightings of the colouring combinations.

Rarity highlights were a Booted Warbler and a Blyth's Reed Warbler, both wanderers from eastern Europe and both first records for Lundy, caught at the beginning of October. Other unusual species included Wryneck, Icterine Warbler and two Common Rosefinches. All species totals, and the grand totals for 1947-2013, are given in the table below.

An interesting selection of recoveries and controls received during 2013 include a Woodcock, shot in France in its third winter, and an 18-year-old Lesser Black-backed Gull found dead on Skokholm, where it had perhaps settled to breed. Long-distance movements were made by Swallows found in Spain and Nigeria, a Willow Warbler going to Spain, a Starling to Germany and a Blackbird from Norway. Willow Warblers ringed in spring in south Devon and on the Isles of Scilly reached Lundy in two and three days respectively, on their journeys north. Two Goldcrests, ringed on Lundy in their first autumns, were of interest: one was found in Ireland the following spring, while the other was still alive and well in its second winter. It is unusual for such a tiny bird to survive this long. Details of these and other recoveries are listed below.

Many thanks for help from The Birds of Lundy Fund, set up by Tim Davis and Tim Jones using the proceeds from their book, in purchasing rings used on Manx Shearwaters in 2013.

LUNDY RINGING TOTALS, 1947-2013

	2013	1947-2013		2013	1947-2013
Greylag Goose		1	Puffin		10
Mallard		41	Stock Dove		1
Quail		1	Woodpigeon	1	16
Little Grebe		1	Collared Dove		22
Fulmar		147	Turtle Dove		13
Manx Shearwater	492 (335)	2,807	Cuckoo		43
Storm Petrel	1	265	Long-eared Owl		4
Cormorant		46	Short-eared Owl		2
Shag		1,187	Nightjar		2
Sparrowhawk	1	19	Swift		13
Buzzard		7	Hoopoe		1
Kestrel		25	Wryneck	1	22
Merlin		5	Great Spotted Woodpecker		8
Peregrine	1 (1)	11	Short-toed Lark		1
Water Rail	2	52	Skylark		616
Spotted Crake		1	Sand Martin		190
Corncrake		5	Swallow	232 (4)	10,126
Moorhen		1	House Martin	2	373
Oystercatcher		37	Richard's Pipit		1
Ringed Plover		3	Olive-backed Pipit		1
Dotterel		6	Tree Pipit		72
Golden Plover		3	Meadow Pipit	141	4,554
Lapwing		211	Red-throated Pipit		1
Knot		4	Rock Pipit		26
Semipalmated Sandpiper		1	Yellow Wagtail		5
Little Stint		6	Grey Wagtail	1	66
Least Sandpiper		2	Pied Wagtail	3	189
Pectoral Sandpiper		6	Citrine Wagtail		1
Curlew Sandpiper		2	Wren	41	1,214
Dunlin		82	Dunnock	8	929
Buff-breasted Sandpiper		2	Robin	28	1,949
Jack Snipe		12	Thrush Nightingale		1
Snipe		35	Nightingale		9
Woodcock		12	Bluethroat		3
Bar-tailed Godwit		1	Red-flanked Bluetail		2
Whimbrel		21	Black Redstart		41
Curlew		34	Redstart	3	376
Greenshank		2	Whinchat		118
Green Sandpiper		1	Stonechat	5	252
Wood Sandpiper		1	Wheatear	61 (6)	556
Common Sandpiper		1	Desert Wheatear		1
Turnstone		3	Swainson's Thrush		2
Lesser Black-backed Gull		456	Grey-cheeked Thrush		1
Herring Gull		2,949	Veery		2
Great Black-backed Gull		132	Ring Ouzel		41
Kittiwake		2,535	Blackbird	40	4,513
Guillemot		2,704	Fieldfare		33
Razorbill		1,238	Song Thrush	5	1,035

LUNDY RINGING TOTALS, 1947-2013 continued...

	2013	1947-2013		2013	1947-2013
Redwing	18	1,175	Treecreeper	1	28
Mistle Thrush		7	Golden Oriole		7
American Robin		1	Red-backed Shrike		10
Cetti's Warbler		3	Great Grey Shrike		1
Grasshopper Warbler	7	441	Woodchat Shrike		11
Aquatic Warbler		1	Jackdaw		2
Sedge Warbler	10	2,420	Carrion Crow		20
Paddyfield Warbler		1	Raven		47
Marsh Warbler		3	Starling		1,229
Reed Warbler	4	121	Rose-coloured Starling		1
Blyth's Reed Warbler *	1	1	House Sparrow	10	579
Icterine Warbler	1	18	Tree Sparrow		5
Melodious Warbler		32	Red-eyed Vireo		6
Booted Warbler *	1	1	Chaffinch	56	8,847
Blackcap	353	6,836	Brambling		145
Garden Warbler	3	835	Greenfinch	3	569
Barred Warbler		11	Goldfinch	50	995
Lesser Whitethroat	1	124	Siskin		1,482
Whitethroat	10	3,202	Linnet	5	1,642
Dartford Warbler		1	Common Redpoll		4
Ruppell's Warbler		1	Lesser Redpoll		74
Subalpine Warbler		8	Crossbill		38
Sardinian Warbler		1	Common Rosefinch	2	28
Greenish Warbler		2	Bullfinch		23
Arctic Warbler		2	Hawfinch		5
Pallas's Warbler		2	Yellow-rumped Warbler		1
Yellow-browed Warbler	1	76	Blackpoll Warbler		1
Radde's Warbler		1	Common Yellowthroat		1
Western Bonelli's Warbler		2	Rufous-sided Towhee		1
Bonelli's Warbler sp.		1	Lapland Bunting		8
Wood Warbler		49	Snow Bunting		11
Chiffchaff	249	5,454	Yellowhammer		1
Willow Warbler	295	15,071	Ortolan Bunting		6
Goldcrest	457	9,883	Rustic Bunting		2
Firecrest	10	238	Little Bunting		6
Spotted Flycatcher	12	1,340	Yellow-breasted Bunting		1
Red-breasted Flycatcher		23	Reed Bunting		11
Pied Flycatcher	4	753	Rose-breasted Grosbeak		1
Long-tailed Tit		13	Northern Oriole		2
Blue Tit		123			
Great Tit		35	Total	2,633	106,818
Coal Tit		74	Number of species	45	175

Numbers in brackets indicate pulli ringed in 2013 (these have been included in the main totals). Pullus totals are not known for some past years, so their grand totals cannot be given.

*Species added to the Lundy ringing list in 2013.

LUNDY RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS 2013

Manx Shearwater EX74477 – ringed as an adult on Lundy, 7.6.13. Found dead (not fresh) on Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, 31.8.13. (85 days; 177 km; bearing: 358°).

Woodcock EX62011 – ringed as a first-year bird on Lundy, 13.10.10. Found freshly dead (hunted) at Wirwignes, Pas-de-Calais, FRANCE, 3.1.13. (813 days; 453 km; 97°).

Lesser Black-backed Gull GP95657 – ringed as a pullus on Lundy, 29.6.1995. Found dead (not fresh) on Skokholm Island, Pembrokeshire, 23.9.13. (6,661 days; 74 km; 325°).

Lesser Black-backed Gull colour-ring left leg, pale blue with white 'L'; metal ring on right – ringed as a pullus on Lundy, 25-29.6.1995. Seen at Mimizan, Landes, FRANCE, 5.11.13. (c.6,706 days; 818 km; 161°).

Swallow X226968 – ringed as an adult on Lundy, 22.4.09. Controlled at Estancia Escoron, Ejea de Los Caballeros, Zaragoza, SPAIN, 30.9.11. (891 days; 1049 km; 166°).

Swallow L026271 – ringed as a first-year bird on Lundy, 11.10.09. Found dead, Oleh region, NIGERIA, 6.3.13. (1,242 days; 5188 km; 169°).

Goldcrest DPP689 – ringed as a first-year male on Lundy, 19.9.11. Controlled at East Anstey, Devon, 4.11.13. (411 days; 76 km; 290°).

Goldcrest EPY554 – ringed as a first-year male on Lundy, 21.9.12. Found freshly dead at Ardfert, Kerry, EIRE, 3.4.13. (170 days; 375 km; 103°).

Chiffchaff DLX466 – ringed as a first-year bird at Nanjizal, Land's End, Cornwall, 12.9.10. Controlled on Lundy, 25.4.13. (956 days; 144 km; 31°).

Willow Warbler DER481 – ringed as an adult on Lundy, 22.4.11. Controlled at Isla Grosa, San Xavier, Murcia, SPAIN, 7.4.12. (351 days; 1514 km; 169°).

Willow Warbler ERA078 – ringed as an adult at Porth Hellick, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, 23.4.13. Controlled on Lundy, 25.4.13. (2 days; 180 km; 40°).

Willow Warbler HBC211 – ringed as an adult at South Milton Ley, Devon, 9.4.13. Controlled on Lundy, 12.4.13. (3 days; 116 km; 331°).

Blackbird LB46135 – ringed as a juvenile male on Lundy, 12.9.10. Found freshly dead on Lundy, 27.9.13 (1,111 days).

Blackbird Stavanger ring 7576377 – ringed as a first-year female at Sore Merkeskog, Utsira, Rogaland, NORWAY, 15.10.12. Controlled on Lundy, 23.10.13 (374 days; 1086 km; 214°).

Starling LB46253 – ringed as an adult male on Lundy, 24.10.12. Found freshly dead (killed by cat) at Bierbergen, Hohenhamlen, Braunschweig, GERMANY, 23.3.13 (150 days; 1025 km; 84°).

Meadow Pipit D184441 – ringed as a first-year bird on Lundy, 8.10.13. Controlled at Watercombe Water Works, Cornwood, Devon, 31.10.13. (23 days; 96 km; 149°).