



▲ Mirror Carp *Cyprinus carpio* (photo: Mandy Dee).



In conclusion, the fish in the three ponds seem to be doing well, with the presence of juveniles showing that breeding is successful. A detailed survey of the fish in these ponds, as well as Pondsby and Quarterwall Pond, is required.

(Thanks to the fish observers in 2023: Chris Baillie, Chris Dee, Tim Davis, Tim Jones, Dean Jones, Alan and Sandra Rowland, Steve Rosser, Tim Smith, Richard Ware).

◀ Quarry Pond with reflections and Golden Orfe *Leuciscus idus* swimming around in May 2023. (photo: Alan Rowland).

## AMPHIBIA (Frogs and Toads)

Jennifer George

### Is the Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*) living on Lundy?

Although there have been some unverified records of the Common Toad being heard on Lundy by visitors in 2000, 2001, and 2003 (see the Report on Exotic Animals on Lundy by Alan Rowland, which follows this text), it has long been thought that Amphibia do not occur on Lundy. Amphibia are not often found on small islands as they are not good travellers.

However, on 7th May 2023, toad calls were heard near Quarry Pond by Stuart Cossey, and again on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

On 13<sup>th</sup> May, the toad was still calling in Quarry Pond, and a recording of the calls was made by Chris Baillie.

On 15<sup>th</sup> May, the toad was still calling in Quarry Pond and was heard by Jackie Watt and John Hedger, who had been seeking fungi in that area. Calls were also heard by Chris Dee and other Lundy visitors. In the afternoon, quiet calls from presumably a second toad were heard by Paul Dean and later on by Chris Dee. These calls came from the Quarry Beach footpath where a stream trickle meets the footpath.

The **Common Toad** (*Bufo bufo*), with a body length of 8-13cm, can reach a weight of 80gm. It feeds on earthworms, snails, and other invertebrates. Larger ones can eat small Slow –worms, mice and shrews.

Toads usually hibernate from October to March and breed from April onwards. They prefer the larger deeper ponds than the shallower ponds used by the Common Frog. Eggs are laid in long strings around water plants. Toad tadpoles possess toxins that make them very unpleasant for predators, and they can live in ponds with fish that often eat frog tadpoles. Adult toads also contain these toxins in their skin glands.

Toads are known for their mass migrations when seeking their breeding ponds and many are killed by cars on UK roads each year.

The Common Toad is not found on many UK islands, e.g., Scottish islands, Scilly Isles, Isle of Man, and many of the Channel Islands.

So, is Lundy unique in having a Common Toad? The Warden and Conservation Team are hoping to verify their existence now that toad calls have been heard and Alan Rowland, who is currently surveying the Lundy ponds and streams, will be looking for eggs and Toad tadpoles in the Quarry Pond.

▲ Common Toad *Bufo bufo* photographed in Cornwall (photo: Alan Rowland).

