

LUNDY FIELD SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 2024





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LUNDY FIELD SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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OFFICERS & COMMITTEE 2024

President

Vacant

Vice Presidents

Roger Chapple
Jennifer George
John Harman
Keith Hiscock
Alan Rowland
Sandra Rowland

Chair

Belinda Cox

Vice Chair

vacant

Secretary

Michael Williams

Treasurer

John Shelley

Membership Secretary

Lucy Lo-Vel

Committee Members

Richard Breese	(2023-2026)
Andrew Cleave	(2024-2027)
André Coutanche	(2024-2027)
Trevor Dobie	(2024-2027)
Jennifer George	(2024-2027)
John Hedger	(2024-2027)
Keith Hiscock	(2024-2027)
Tim Jones	(2022-2025)
Alan Rowland	(2024-2027)
Chris Webster	(2024-2027)

Co-options

Robert Irving – Lundy Marine Protected Area
Advisory Group Representative

Non-Committee posts

Island Representative – Sue Waterfield
Lundy Bird Observatory Representative – Tim Jones
Honorary Independent Examiner – Robin Hall

WELCOME

Kathy Weston (Editor)

This is my first year as Editor of the Lundy Field Society Annual Report. Unusually for this role, I'm not an expert in any aspect of Lundy's flora and fauna, merely a Lundy enthusiast. As I lack the vim and vigour to stride around the island with an LFS work party spotting rhododendrons on precipices and rebuilding dry stone walls, editing the Report seemed like a better option for me. I hope that I will manage to follow in the footsteps of my illustrious predecessors without stumbling too badly.

This year's report has some exciting stuff in it, and I recommend a thorough perusal, beginning with Honorary Secretary Michael Williams's excellent summary of the year. Those of you who attended this year's AGM in March will have heard Derek Green discuss the plans for bringing solar and wind power to Lundy, and you can read about that and much more in his Island Report, which also includes (whisper it!) some thoughts about the future of the Oldenburg.

I'm not the only new face in this Report: Lucy Lo-Vel has written her first report as Membership Secretary, and John Shelley, our new Treasurer, provides some reassuringly healthy accounts. And we have two changes to the species compilers: Chris Blackmore has done a fantastic job with the Reptiles, Land Animals and Bats, and Ben Long, with new Assistant Warden Tara McEvoy-Wilding, presents this year's Seal Studies, which are fascinating as always.

Some sad news too: David George and Steve Wing, two of the LFS's most valued members, died in 2024. Their obituaries, which appear in this Report, paint pictures of two people I dearly wish I'd had the pleasure of knowing. We send our sincere condolences to their families and friends.

One of the best things about taking on this job has been the revelation that on Lundy, everyone's observations matter. Previously, I thought that there was little I could contribute to the body of knowledge about the biological bounty on and around Lundy, but it turns out that we amateurs are actually wanted and needed! Most of our expert compilers can't be on the island the whole time, and they like nothing better than hearing about what the rest of us have discovered in their absence.

The birds (and birdwatchers!) of Lundy fill me with awe, but I've now found that many equally interesting things on Lundy move a lot slower than birds, and are more amenable to being looked at before they disappear into a bush. You don't have to be an expert to take a note (and preferably a photo) of something that intrigues you, and then record what you've found in the Logbook, or at the nightly Wildlife Log sessions in the Tavern. Some of our compilers have even given you email addresses on which to contact them if you'd like an expert opinion: please take them up on it. In 2025, let's all make a resolution to get something into the Logbook when we visit the island. Let's find the elusive toad that has been heard calling but never seen, more examples of the lichen *Heterodermia leucomelos*, the lichen parasite *Zyzygomyces bachmanii*, some bryophytes (no-one recorded any in 2024), the resurgent rabbits, and most definitely, our cover star the **Common Lizard!**

HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT 2024

Michael Williams

The LFS has had a productive year and promises to have a busy time ahead – more on which below.

During 2024, the LFS sent four Conservation Breaks to Lundy, one in spring, one in summer and two in autumn. Of the possible 56 places, 55 were filled, with several reserves stepping forward to fill the withdrawals that often crop up. Many diverse tasks were completed. In April this included fence and wall repairs, and removing stockade fencing from the willows below Government House. In June, activities included assisting Dr Keith Hiscock with marine surveys as well as the usual activities. There were two breaks in October: the first involved filling gabion baskets at Bramble Villas to support the road and assisting Cressida Whitton from Devon County Council's Historic Environment team with archaeological surveys, and the second trip included a range of tasks in Millcombe Valley and a seal survey. Many thanks to leaders Belinda Cox, Hilary Winsor, Sue Murray, and Mandy English.

The first LFS Field Studies Course took place in April. These courses are intended to develop expertise in recording natural history to ensure we can continue to maintain our deep and rich records of observation on Lundy. Participants spent a week on Lundy with experts sharing their knowledge of freshwater ponds and streams, bird ringing and Grey Seals.

Fungi surveys were carried out by Professor John Hedger and Mandy Dee in April, September and November, with a number of sightings also entered by LFS members in the logbook. The November survey yielded 18 species of fungi new to Lundy, bringing the current island total to 862, and included a Fungus Foray over the south of Lundy, attended by 32 people including visitors, LFS members and island staff. A new development for 2024 is the inclusion of fungi detected by extraction of DNA from soil and root samples and identified from DNA databases ('metabarcoding'). These were found by Ruben Mole as part of his LFS-funded study, described below.

On the marine front, Lundy continues to be a hotspot for gelatinous plankton in the south-west, the highlight of which must be the Spiral Salp. (Salps are colonial sea squirts that live in the open ocean.) A nationally rare sea slug *Trapania tartenella* was found on the wreck of the MV Robert. As mentioned above,

► June Marine Survey (photo: Hilary Winsor).



▲ Fungus foray (photo: Joe Parker).



volunteers on a LFS conservation break assisted Dr Keith Hiscock surveying the shores around Rat Island and at Quarry Bay to catalogue non-native marine species in June. While a very few non-native species were highly conspicuous and widespread around Rat Island, some others seen in previous years were not found. Non-native species at Quarry Bay comprised just one example of the Australasian invader 'Darwin's Barnacle'.

Some very long lists of botanical species were recorded in the LFS logbook this year, with at least two new species of flowering plants for the island potentially seen; these will need to be verified before they can be added to the official list. The New Year Plant hunt took place again on 1st January, but only a few species were found in flower at this early date, with the most widespread being Gorse and Fuchsia.

Various reasons conspired to delay this year's Lundy Cabbage count, so that much of the cabbage had started to go over. An estimate of almost 2,300 plants was made, but comparing the flowering and non-flowering plants in distinct areas suggested the total number might be 50% higher, equalling an average year count. Laura Larkin and Andrew Whitehouse of Buglife spent a couple of days on the island investigating the flea beetles and weevils found on Lundy Cabbage; a full report is expected in the next Journal.

Sticking with terrestrial invertebrates, the first record of a Green Snail since 1906 was made by Mandy Dee. Mandy also reported the first sighting of Masked Yarrow Aphid, and Mark West found a Ragwort or Tansy Flea Beetle at Quarry Cottages. Evidence of Emperor Dragonflies breeding continues to be found in larvae found at Pondsbyury and more ovipositing, this time at Quarry Pond.

The sighting of the year must be that of a Common Lizard seen on the Gorse bushes at Rocket Pole Pond. Andrea May had not realised it was a unique sighting until Joe Parker saw the picture when she was showing him a photograph of an out of season Bullfinch. This further supports the Common Lizard sightings from 2000 by a National Trust group.

A record total of 724 Manx Shearwaters were newly ringed in 2024, and 253 previously ringed birds were recaptured. Of these, 45 had originally been ringed as chicks so their age was known. The oldest adults were from 2007 and the oldest chicks from 2009. All provided valuable data on survival rates. Eggs were laid in 13 nest boxes and 10 produced fledged young.



▲ Shearwater ringing (photo: Joe Parker).

The long-term colour-ringing study of Wheatears had another record year. There were an estimated 69 pairs nesting in the study area between the Castle and Jenny's Cove, and the season ended with 124 of the breeding adults carrying colour-rings. Adult survival between the 2023 and 2024 seasons, including migration to and from sub-Saharan Africa, was at least 55%.

Please continue to add records to the logbook in the Tavern – there is always the possibility on Lundy that you may have seen something unique! It's always helpful to have photographs and as much detail as possible about location, and remember to always add your contact details so we can follow up any queries.

The LFS awarded three research grants this year, to Ruben Mole and Chenxi Zhang from Imperial College London (£900 and £460 respectively) and Amanda Mead from Middlesex University (£800). Both Ruben and Chenxi have authored papers for the next volume of the LFS Journal. Details of these fascinating projects can be found in Jennifer George's article on p13.

Separate financial support was provided for Ruben's mycological study to enable the analysis of soil samples, and the Society has also funded the renewal of the working parties' tools, and contributed towards the cost of a new website for the Marine Protected Area.

At the 2024 AGM, Alan and Sandra Rowland stepped down from their roles as Chair and Honorary Membership Secretary respectively. Alan has served on the committee for 25 years in various roles and will continue to do so. Sandra served a magnificent 17 years as our friendly and efficient membership secretary – a crucial role for the success of the LFS, which would be nothing without our members. The Society unanimously voted to elect Alan and Sandra as Vice Presidents.

Chris Dee retired as Honorary Treasurer – a post he had held since 2020. Chris has guided and managed our finances with great efficiency, including through the uncertain period of the pandemic. We were able to thank Chris for his contribution at the 2024 AGM. We have welcomed John Shelley as his successor and Lucy Lo-Vel as our new Honorary Membership Secretary.



John Hedger has migrated from editing the Annual Report to the LFS Journal, and Kathy Weston has become our new Annual Report editor.

We wish to ensure that the LFS remains sustainable well into the future. As a charity it is sensible to review our internal governance periodically. A small Governance Review Group has been established to evaluate our overall direction, effectiveness and accountability and its work includes auditing the skills of the current committee, reviewing the legal duties of its trustees and ensuring we are following the Charity Commission's guidance on good practice. It will report back during 2025.

The committee held four meetings during the year both online and in person. Mark West has been co-opted to the committee to lead on the

◀ Rhododendron hunt (unknown photographer).



▲ Sunrise from The Barn (photo: Kathy Weston).

proposed photo library and in early 2025 he agreed to act as Vice Chair whilst Bee went travelling. The Society's policies have been reviewed and our new Treasurer, John Shelley, is drawing up a reserves policy. A reserves policy is particularly relevant in our case because the LFS currently has significant reserves, mostly held in the form of stock market investments.

The technical infrastructure including the content management system for the website is being updated and the committee has agreed to implement a membership management system during 2025, which will help support the membership secretary and importantly, reduce the risks associated with our current standalone membership database.

Looking ahead, 2025 is the centenary of Martin Coles Harman buying Lundy as his private estate. A great lover of the natural world, he subsequently went on to found the Lundy Field Society in 1946. The LFS will be marking this anniversary in some modest ways, including reprinting his biography, 'Island King'.

We will be arranging another Field Studies Course in the autumn of 2025, covering the subjects of Lundy's fungi, archaeology and birds. We are grateful to Mandy Yates for taking on the organisation of this. Even further ahead, 2026 will mark the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Society so we are organising a Discover Lundy week in May of that year.

As ever, we could not do all of these things without you, our members. Thank you for your continued support.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

Lucy Lo-Vel

Well, my first full year in post has absolutely flown by! I'd like to start by thanking you all for continuing to be a member (and to all those who have recently joined) since I took over the reins from Sandra Rowland. Your subs and donations continue to make a real difference to the Society, as you'll be able to see from the Treasurer's report. I thoroughly enjoy receiving your emails and also the notes sent with your cheques – it helps me feel connected to the Island during mainland incarceration! I hope to see some of you on the Island in the coming months.

Some news: we have made some background changes to the Membership database, to bring it in line with Gift Aid rules, and we hope to start work on a new online membership portal soon. This will be a place for you to keep your details up to date and let us know of changes to things like Gift Aid status. It will not (for now) involve a new payment system though so please continue to pay by BACS or Standing Order where possible, or by cheque.

Subscriptions

Please note that once again rates remain the same:

£15 for students (of any age)

£25 for individuals

£28 for family memberships

£35 for overseas members & corporate

Membership News

Two of our members sadly passed away in 2024. David George and Steve Wing both contributed greatly to the Island and the Society and they will be very much missed. I send continued condolences to their friends and family. Please forgive me if I have missed anyone else.

Membership Count

At the end of 2024, there are **509** active memberships, of which 160 are joint/family memberships. Sixteen members let me know they wished to rescind their membership, but in addition, 27 members did not pay their subscriptions in 2024: if one of these is you, please let me know if this was simply an administrative error – I will be delighted to return you to the active list.

We have received 42 new applications for membership, of which 12 were joint, so a warm welcome to our 54 new LFS members:

Stuart Dennis
Alan Gough
Sandra Leite
Ian Blackwell
Izabella Harris
Anthony John Russell
Emma Hanlon-Penny
Kenneth Hanlon
Jane Coleman
Janet Clift
Philip Wolfgang
Ken Ebsworthy
Chris & Jane Tew
Laura & Rob Skeet
Liz Crow
Richard Kipling
Emma Welton
Martin Hancock
Sam Parham
Tom Weitzel
Mark Eccleston
Eleanor & Matthew Rust
Sam Parham
Katharine Dyson
Andy & Jean Young
Elizabeth Rice

Rachel Marsh
Sarah Charlton
Moira Allsford
Jemima Williams
David & Cherry Budge
Nigel & Linda Fewings
Diana Percy
James Banyard
Ruth Palmer
Ellena Parslow
Julie Mulgrue
Rachel Davies
Helen Lofthouse
Kevin & Deborah Harrison
Kate Renshaw
Chantal Coady
Lindsay Mahon
John Hind
Sam & Paul Parsons
Robert Moorhouse
John Shelley
Matt Wood
Robert Booth
Charlie Smith
Rachel Thompson

Change of Address

Please do let me know if you change your postal or email address. You will be able to do this yourself on the upcoming portal, but for the present please email any changes to membership@lundy.org.uk

TREASURER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

John Shelley, Treasurer

Support for valuable scientific and conservation activities on the island during the year means the society reports a deficit of £6.2k for 2024 but the charity remains financially very secure with large reserves, reliable income and very low running costs.

Significant non-recurring financial outlays during the year included awarding grants totalling £4.1k (2023: £0.6k) to fund research into Kittiwakes, Shearwaters and Fungi on the island, as well as £1.2k in funding to provide equipment for the bird observatory.

Other significant costs included continued funding for the society's highly successful Conservation Break programme, and the launching of the first Field Course event in March as well as the costs associated with the production of the bulletin and the annual report.

Regrettably the society also took a £1.9k charge to write off the remaining value of its copies of 'Lundy Fungi' as several years after printing it seems unlikely these will now be sold. This has no cash impact.

Excluding unusual items last year, underlying income in 2024 was broadly similar to the previous year although we are currently reviewing and updating our gift aid records, leading to a delay in submitting gift aid returns which will be caught up in 2025.

Subscriptions remain the key income line providing the bulk of our income (£11.8k, 2023: £11.5k).

The value of our investment fund increased by £2.6k to £87.3k and we also hold £27.8k in cash, most of it in an interest-bearing bank account.

Overall the society remains in a very strong financial position with substantial reserves available to be deployed in future years in support of our charitable aims.



▲ The Old Light (photo: Kathy Weston).

Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
Income		£	£
Subscriptions		11,762	11,477
Jennetts Trust donations		2,040	2,040
Other donations		856	2,187
Gift aid	1	-	2,357
Conservation break deposits		2,680	3,000
Day trip ticket sales		-	2,420
Book sales		1,220	2,179
Postage		7	28
Interest		314	136
	Total Income	18,879	25,824
Expenditure		2024	2023
		£	£
Admin Expenses			
AGM Expenses		853	607
Committee Expenses		155	114
Book / Publicity Printing Costs		283	258
Postage		94	169
Stationery		6	3
Sundries		-	336
Day Trip Ticket Refunds		-	2,511
Stock Value Reduction	2	1,885	2,419
Charitable expenditure			
Bulletin		1,663	1,157
Annual Report		5,217	5,113
Journal		-	3,979
Website		112	45
Bird Ringing		-	375
Conservation Breaks		6,918	6,534
Field Courses		2,182	106
Charitable Projects		1,620	2,637
LFS Library		-	217
Grants	3	4,096	599
	Total Expenditure	25,084	27,179
	Deficit for the year	6,205	1,355

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
Current Assets			
Stocks (Books)		295	2,181
2024 field course accommodation booking		-	2,054
2025 field course accommodation booking		712	712
2026 Discover Lundy accommodation booking		7,854	-
Cash at Bank		27,737	36,883
Total Current Assets		36,598	41,830
Less Current Liabilities			
Advance subscriptions		658	625
Advance conservation break deposits		2,680	2,200
Grant Commitments	3	3,460	-
Total Current Liabilities		3,798	2,825
		Net Current Assets	32,800
		32,800	39,005
Other Assets - 7im Investment Fund	4	79,300	79,300
		Total Net Assets	112,100
		112,100	118,305
Reserves			
Brought Forward		118,305	119,660
Deficit for the year		(6,205)	(1,355)
		Closing Reserves	112,100
	5	112,100	118,305

Notes to the Accounts

- 1) LFS did not submit any gift aid claims in 2024 as we have a project in progress to review and digitise our gift aid records. Catch up claims will be made in 2025 once this work is complete.
- 2) The stock value reduction relates to the write-off of the value of our remaining copies of Lundy Fungi as it seems unlikely that these will sell.
- 3) The society awarded three grants during the year in support of research into Fungi, Kittiwakes and Manx Shearwaters. Of these, one remains committed, but unpaid at the year end.
- 4) The unrealised gain on the value of our investment portfolio is not shown in the accounts. As at 31st December, the market value of the investments was **£87,294** (2023: £84,735).
- 5) The society has changed the presentation of its reserves in 2024 and is no longer showing the value of its investment fund as a separate reserve. Although the trustees have a general intention to hold these funds for the medium or long term, they are not restricted funds and remain available as part of the general reserve.

Lundy Field Society Accounts Examination for 2024

'I have examined the accounts of the Lundy Field Society for the year 1st January to 31st December 2024 as presented to me by the Honorary Treasurer. I have confirmed the accuracy of the accounting statements and that they properly reflect the underlying accounting records. My examination provided me with no evidence that these financial statements do not provide a true and fair view of the Income and Expenditure, and Assets and Liabilities, of the Lundy Field Society for the year ended 31st December 2024.'

Robin O Hall,

Honorary Independent Examiner, 9th February 2025

RESEARCH GRANTS 2024

Jennifer George (Chair of the LFS Grants Subcommittee)

Grants awarded for research on Lundy in 2024

1. Funding was given to Ruben Mole (Imperial College MSC student) for study of the distribution of the Grey Waxcap fungus, *Cuphophyllus lacmus*. The relationship of this fungus with the roots of the Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) which covers much of the North End where this fungus is found, is being determined. The project, which took place in April, involved sampling for the presence of Grey Waxcap DNA in the soil and roots of the Heather in selected areas of Lundy. Samples were frozen and transported to mainland laboratories for soil and DNA analysis (funding: £900). Further funding was provided for expert DNA analysis at the University of Aberystwyth.

Results have led to a paper being submitted to the next LFS Journal. Ruben also presented his research at the LFS AGM in Crediton in March 2025.

2. Nest building behaviour of Lundy Black-legged Kittiwakes (*Rissa tridactyla*) was studied by Amanda Mead (Middlesex University PhD student). The research follows on from research in 2023 which studied aspects of the nest building behaviour of pairs of kittiwakes. Film footage was taken of nest building by pairs of kittiwakes in Aztec Bay, and data were analysed to see if there is synchrony across the colony. Weather data, such as wind speed, air temperature and rainfall were also recorded to assess their effects on kittiwake nest building. A further visit was made to assess behaviour of adult birds and any chicks in the nests that were studied (funding: £800).

Previous research on sibling aggression in kittiwakes was published by Amanda Mead and Tom Dickins in the LFS Journal, volume 8, 2023.

3. Funding was awarded to Chenxi Zhang (Imperial College student) to investigate the vocalisation of Manx Shearwaters (*Puffinus puffinus*) on Lundy. Research has shown that these birds have individual distinct calls. In May, Chenxi and her co-workers used passive recorders and microphones to collect Manx Shearwater calls in different colonies on Lundy. Call features such as entropy and frequency were analysed to test for within-individual, between individual and between colony variation (funding: £460).

Publications resulting from past grants

The Lundy Field Society and the Warden recently received a large report entitled 'Bat Research on Lundy Island 2014-2018' from Geoff Billington, who was given a LFS Grant in 2014.



▲ Manx Shearwater
(photo: John Tyrer).



▲ Sampling heather roots at the North End (photo: Ruben Mole).



▲ Nesting Kittiwakes, West Coast
(photo: Shaun Barnes).

ISLAND REPORT 2024

Derek Green – Managing Director, the Lundy Company

2024 will primarily be remembered for poor weather during the peak summer holiday season and extended work completed to MS Oldenburg.

Despite fine weather in May, June and July, constant poor weather through the peak summer months of August and September took its toll on our visitor numbers. The Island's total attendance was 15,443 passengers arriving by either ship or helicopter, including 9,025 day trippers and 5,440 staying visitors. While this was an increase on 2023, we must remember that the island received no day trippers in April or May 2023, due to the Oldenburg remaining in dry dock for an extended period following the flooding in winter 2022/23.

From Oldenburg's 101 scheduled sailings, we suffered a two-week delay to the start of the season because of another overrun in dry dock (see below). Bad weather also forced 26 complete cancellations and 10 'splash and dash' afternoon sailings on which day trippers could not travel, meaning that all in all, the ship didn't have the best season. The winter helicopter had a steady season. Of the 37 flights scheduled over the winter, five were affected by weather cancellations (mostly fog), so an average year.

Staying visitor numbers for the year were on a par with 2023, as our properties remained popular. Property occupancy as a result remained high at 88% for the calendar year – a slight drop from 2023 when we reached 90%. However, we must remember that 2023 contained many bookings that had been brought forward from the COVID years, so was a bit of an anomaly.

The most popular properties on the island remained Old House North, Castle Cottage and Radio Room, all booked for 98% of the year. It was pleasing to see that the Lundy Vestry was booked for 77% of available nights, having come fully online at the beginning of the season.

▼ The Vestry (photo: Carole Anne Lee).



Staff retention over the 2024 season remained steady with some changes. Notably, we welcomed first officer Andy Hall to the bridge of the Oldenburg and on the island, the Maintenance team welcomed some new faces with Richard Goodman, Ian Bushell and recently Engineer Tristan Howe and their respective partners joining the team. Tara McEvoy-Wilding and Matt White also joined the island's conservation team.

Oldenburg had a frustrating year with new gearboxes fitted in February and subsequent problems with the prop shaft seals during sea trials leading to replacements having to be fabricated in Spain. This latter issue resulted in the two-week delay mentioned above in returning to passenger service in April.



▲ Oldenburg in Sharpness dry dock (photo: James Williams).

Given the age of the ship and the mechanical issues over the last few years, we took up an invitation from Harland and Wolff, the local shipyard in Appledore, to explore a programme for future replacement when the time finally comes. We had an interesting day looking at potential plans for an Oldenburg 2, and also discussed time frame and estimated costs.

In tandem, we have also commissioned naval architects to report on the ship's current life expectancy and to present both the Landmark and National Trusts with a clearer idea of what a future maintenance programme along with the expected costs may look like in the short and long terms. The report is due in spring 2025.

At the end of the sailing season Oldenburg returned to Sharpness for her annual dry docking where we continued with the deck replacement programme, which this year was focusing on completion of the after deck and surveys of both the top boat deck and fore deck.

Work to complete the after deck was completed and thankfully, required works identified to the boat deck were found to be minor. However, following shot-blasting, large sections of the foredeck were found to need replacing, which resulted in most of the steel being replaced over the first quarter of 2025. As a result of this, the ship did not return to Bideford until the middle of March. At the time of writing, she is busy being prepared for the forthcoming season.

During the five months that the Oldenburg has been at Sharpness we have been well supported by the Severn Seas Shipping Company, a local company whose sturdy coaster, the Mair, has been carrying out weekly supply runs to the island, topping up fuel levels and bringing back waste and livestock. We are extremely grateful to Anthony and Tim for their ongoing support.



► The Mair (photo: Derek Green).

On Lundy, there was a focus on improving the Island's power system. Enabling works funded by the National Trust were completed over the winter, with a view to adding renewable energy to the system in 2026. The Island's three main generator sets and their associated control systems were overhauled, along with the installation of a new heating boiler and upgrades to the main heating loop.

In January the main PLC (Programmable Logic Controller) and generator control units were replaced with state-of-the-art units, which have allowed increased flexibility and provided stable power across the island. As part of the same project, we have also introduced new energy efficient storage heaters in Little St. John's as a pilot. Their performance is currently being monitored for future upgrades across many island properties. There are also plans afoot to run another pilot project in Stoneycroft from September 2025 with the introduction of an air source heat pump. Plans for adding renewable energy are underway and we are currently beginning the process of submitting a planning application for a small wind turbine, a solar PV array, and a new battery and inverter house, which collectively are expected to provide 85% of the island's energy needs, and which we hope to install in 2026.

Lundy's Renewable Energy Project

In tandem with the power upgrades, energy conservation in our properties was also a focus for the island's maintenance team, when we replaced many of the windows in our letting properties with purpose-built double-glazed units made by local firm Robeda Joinery. The new windows have reduced heat loss and draughts in many properties including Castle Cottage, Hammers, Little St Johns, Big St Johns, The Barn, Quarters, Bramble Villas, Paradise Row and The Barn flat. New single glazed units have also been installed in the offices of the Marisco Tavern.

The Island's water supply is always a concern, but with a new water tank recently installed, the reservoir is now much larger. To support the system we have also appointed a new contractor, Hydra-Tech of Holsworthy, to look after and service our water treatment plant. They have carried out several improvements to the control system of the water treatment system, and also installed a new "Scavenger" unit to take the peaty colour out of the water – although the water is potable, this has been a longstanding issue, as many visitors will know. As a result, the water quality is much improved across the island.

There have been lots of other maintenance projects completed and improvements made to properties following constructive feedback from regular visitors.

- Tibbetts – Replaced the boiler and completed external landscaping
- Millcombe – Replacement boiler, external decorations and improvements to the track
- Castle Cottage – New furnishings and double-glazing units. Refurbished shower
- Stoneycroft – New furnishings
- The Barn – Refurbished shower
- Bird Observatory Hub – Completed
- Vehicle Shed – Preparatory works to steel frame completed ahead of roof refurbishment
- Bramble Villas – Stabilisation works to bank
- Marisco Tavern – New commercial flooring throughout
- Beach Building – New Interpretation boards thanks to the generosity of a legacy from the late Rachel Penny

In addition to all these works, St Helen's Church has a new lightning conductor finally installed, thanks to the (ongoing) stalwart efforts of the Lundy Field Society's working parties. The Vestry has had an internal makeover, and it is pleasing to see that the external landscaping has been completed, following the refurbishment of the building.



▲ St Helen's Lundy (photo: Derek Green).

The farm had a challenging year. Following an extremely wet winter and the reduction in Oldenburg sailings due to bad weather, sheep could not be transported off the Island, leading to an unusual increase in their numbers. As a result, much work was needed to repair and reinstate the island's iconic dry-stone walls and boundaries. With the end of Single Farm Payments and other subsidies on the horizon, the island has taken the opportunity to review the Farm Management Plan in preparation for the submission of a new Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreement with Natural England. This is expected to bring changes to stock levels across the island and see an increase of cattle along with a large decrease in the number of sheep. It's expected that there will also be a reduction in the feral stock numbers, which have crept up continuously since COVID. Collectively, this will mean a heavier focus on nature and conservation and be a very positive move for the island. If successful, it will take a few years to implement the changes.



We had to replace / refurbish several Island vehicles last year as some of them came to the end of their useful life, having served the Island well in the harshest of marine environments. The Island's main cargo tractor, along with the fire tender, fire bowser, fuel bowser, the Coast Guard buggy and the Island R.H.I.B. were all replaced or refurbished. Shipping the heavier vehicles proved quite a challenge but thanks to Harland and Wolff, who assisted with their landing craft, we were able to complete the swap over.



▶▶ New Lundy RHIB (top) and cargo tractor (bottom). Both photos: Derek Green.

There were several events held over the year on the island, and we had visits from regular cruise ships over the season, including the iconic paddle steamer Waverley, visiting from her home port of Glasgow. While in the region, she took the opportunity to sail up the Torridge to Bideford for a rare visit. In July, we hosted the annual Lundy Trail run: a gruelling half marathon which takes 250 hardy runners three times around the island. In August we held our 24th fly-in, the annual rally for small aircraft. While most of the pilots arrived safely, one unfortunate aircraft landed a little bit too heavily, breaking one of the wheels off, which resulted in it remaining on Lundy for some months before it was able to be repaired and flown off. Thankfully there were no injuries other than to the pilot's pride.

At Hartland Heliport, there was work to do following winter storms and we took the opportunity to refurbish the exterior of the building, including new double-glazed windows. Internally we gave the departure lounge a makeover along with installing a new set of lovely interpretation boards.

The Shore Offices had a busy season. Despite our new online booking system taking over 60% of day trip bookings, there were many refunds to be processed with so many cancellations. A new Friends of Lundy scheme along with a new Marisco Club membership scheme was launched, both of which were an instant success with lots of existing and new members joining. To promote the new schemes, a new web page was launched early in the year

As we moved into 2025, the Lundy Postal Service issued its biennial offering of new stamps. This year we took the opportunity to celebrate Lundy's renewed membership of the Bird Observatory Council with five new stamps featuring Lundy's iconic birds. The set was designed and painted by local artist Sharon Read with assistance from trusted philatelic adviser Lars Liwendahl.

This year also marks the 60th anniversary of the Landmark Trust. Thanks to the generosity of one of our patrons, we will shortly have on offer a special anniversary whisky aptly named 'Auld Light'. There are 144 limited edition bottles, which we anticipate will be snapped up in short order by the whisky aficionados among you. For those less keen on whisky, the General Stores will be stocking a new 'Lundy Letterbox Game', based on our well-loved Lundy letterbox trail.

Looking ahead to 2025, we have many projects lined up. Together with the extensive renewable energy project, there are major works to the vehicle workshop roof in planning, and we hope to complete the exterior decoration to Millcombe and fit a new microgrid system in Tibbetts.

The Shore office is working on a project to bring period return travel tickets online for bookings by the end of the summer. Also in development is a new Marine Protected Area (MPA) website in partnership with members of the Lundy Marine Protected Area Advisory Group, so lots to be getting on with!

In summary, it's been a challenging and busy year all round with the weather dictating our fortunes as always. However, we've endured, and made significant progress across the piece, with the ship and Island power in much better shape. We are looking forward optimistically to a better weather year in 2025.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank all the Lundy team for their ongoing commitment and support: everyone on the island, the crew of the Oldenburg for their continual perseverance at Sharpness, the Shore Office teams, and the Ground Crew at Hartland. My grateful thanks go out to every one of them, who are all vital cogs in a (hopefully!) well-oiled machine.

I'd also like to thank the Lundy Field Society for your ongoing support over the last 12 months and wish you a successful 2025. We look forward to welcoming you to Lundy!



▲ The Conservation team conducting a nocturnal survey during a magical aurora display (photo: Joe Parker).

CONSERVATION TEAM REPORT

Joe Parker – Lundy Warden

It's been a great year for wildlife conservation on Lundy. 2024 was my first full year as Island Warden, and opened up opportunities for the wider team to settle into their roles. Assistant Warden Tara McEvoy-Wilding, has brought a fantastic marine focus to the island and really sank her teeth into our engagement and outreach programmes, putting together superb resources and leading on many of our school visits. I'll touch on that a bit later. Roger White quickly settled into the Ranger role and I'm sure many LFS work party members will be familiar with his handiwork. The season has also been a great opportunity to work more closely with the Island farmer, Tom Carr, as thoughts turn towards a new stewardship scheme on the horizon.

As always, a huge thank you to our residential volunteers this season. I'm really proud of the volunteer programme Lundy continues to offer; many of the season's successes are thanks to their invaluable efforts and time in the field so it's great to see the team 'fledge' the island and move on to the next chapters of their conservation journeys. Thomas Weston was first to arrive in March as the Bird Observatory Assistant Warden, conducting the daily census counts and bird ringing studies into late September, when Tom Williams picked up the baton in October to see out the remainder of autumn migration. Lucy Pécasse settled into the Seabird Fieldworker role, becoming a top-rate fieldworker and Manx Shearwater ringer through the spring and summer until the role transitioned into our Seal Fieldworker, expertly fronted by Ben Long, who diligently recorded the season's seal activities. A full breakdown of the seal season can be found in the report produced by Tara and Ben on pp58-62.



▲ The superlative Lundy Ambassadors (photo: Lucy Lo-Vel).

Euan Leach took on the Assisant Ranger role, maintaining the island infrastructure and getting stuck in with the various LFS and National Trust work party tasks, no matter how mucky! It was also great to see some familiar faces eager to return and get their Lundy fix. Luke Marriner, a former Bird Observatory Assistant, returned in the late autumn alongside Angus Croudace and new Lundyite, Brenig Hughes, who was introduced to the island through an RSPB Storm Petrel tracking visit and returned to volunteer with the Observatory later in the season. A summary of the birding year can be found on p36.

Our wonderful Lundy Ambassadors also deserve a special thank you. If you are not familiar with this supergroup, these wonderful folk help deliver our guided walks every sailing day, alongside school group visits and outreach on the mainland! This season we clocked up 97 'ambassador days', delivering 66 guided walks to over 750 island visitors, plus 17 school trips to Lundy. The majority of those are primary

schools from the local catchment, representing 14 of those outings, with the remainder consisting of three secondary schools and two college groups. We've also focused efforts on improving the educational value and 'journey' each school group receives; not only are they



▲ Action shot of Tara McEvoy-Wilding leading a school trip, as featured in DevonLive.

enjoying a memorable day trip, we have also been fine tuning the experience with pre-trip outreach visits into the school, setting new Lundy Superhero activities, and post-visit engagement, all with marvellous input from Amanda Head and Francis Stuart. Next season we're looking to pull together more engagement tools and roll out a seal champion competition, tackling the topical issue of seal disturbance by bringing it to the attention of our catchment schools and empowering local families.

In addition to the conservation team illustrated talk every changeover, the Bird Observatory team runs a daily wildlife log, collating the island sightings from the day. During peak migration, this 8pm gathering regularly snowballs into large crowds of stayers filling the wheelhouse and my logbook with excellent wildlife records. If you're staying on the island this year, please do consider joining if you've not been before. While all records are most welcome, you do not need to have a notebook full of records to contribute – simply grab a drink from the Tavern and listen to what sightings have been seen on the island today. For those looking to get more hands on, Tara delivered 19 Snorkel Safari sessions, carefully planned around the tides and sailings, taking over 100 people out snorkelling around the Landing Bay to interpret the island's Marine Protected Area. When the weather had other ideas, these events were replaced with Rockpool Rambles, exploring the wildlife-rich intertidal zone on foot.

If you've popped over to the island in the last few months, you might have noticed that our interpretation panels at Hartland Heliport and in the Landing Bay Boat Building have been updated and improved. The revamp is thanks to the Penny legacy, and I can definitely recommend you take a look on your next visit.

The Lundy Marine Protection Area Advisory Group meets a couple of times a year to discuss all MPA matters, bringing together local water users, charter boats, researchers and management organisations. Conservation team attendance and efforts have focused on revising island and marine codes of conduct, increasing awareness of the MPA and sensitivities such as the seabird and seal colonies and wider marine environment. To help deliver this message further, we've set up a mailing list with all the local charter boats, promoting what's happening on the island, shouting out success stories, sharing seal and seabird updates, and circulating best practices. Coupled with a full renovation of the island's RHIB which is set to be back on the water in 2025, the warden team are set to enjoy a greater presence across the MPA.



▲ Lundy Superheroes classwork ahead of a Lundy school trip.

Another focus of the season has been taking a closer look at the livestock and grazing regime across the island. One of the positives of my season has been sitting down with Tom Carr, the Lundy Company and the National Trust to consider the role and vision for the domestic and feral livestock. Excellent progress has already been made to reduce the domestic sheep flock and the Sika, Soay and goat populations in preparation for a managed increase in cattle and ponies, which will benefit our heathland cover, bracken management and species-rich grasslands. Looking ahead, we'll work alongside the National Trust and Natural England to forge a new management plan as we look to transition into a new countryside stewardship agreement. Over the last 18 months, we have increased our transparency around the feral livestock management conducted on the island. The management team attend our warden talks and letters are circulated across the properties during visits to explain why and how we carry out these activities.

We are still reaping the rewards of our continued rodent-free status. While it is important to recognise this achievement, it is also important that the island does not become complacent and remains ready to manage a rodent incursion at any given moment. Rodents stowed away on vessels can comfortably swim for a couple of kilometres, so ongoing checks are needed to ensure our nationally important seabird colony can breed in peace. We are delighted to work with the Biosecurity for LIFE project and last summer welcomed their newest member of staff: Kuki, an Australian Cattle Dog

and highly trained conservation detection dog, to conduct a routine check for rat signs. Dogs have 300 million scent receptors compared to our six million, making them ideal companions to detect rodents. Rather than relying solely on passive surveillance techniques such as wax blocks, the ability to add an active detection technique to our biosecurity toolkit is a real game changer.

Changes in the law now mean as of 2025, we can no longer use second generation anticoagulant rodenticides in outdoor locations. This is overwhelmingly good news for the responsible use of rodenticides nationally, but it has immediate impacts on our ability to deal with incursions on important seabird colonies on islands. Fortunately, HSE have recently agreed to issue 'fast-track' approval of critical situation permits to Lundy (and other seabird islands) within 24 hours of a suspected incursion. We can all play our part in maintaining the island's biosecurity, so please continue to check your cargo before traveling to the island – it'll save the conservation team a lot of stress!

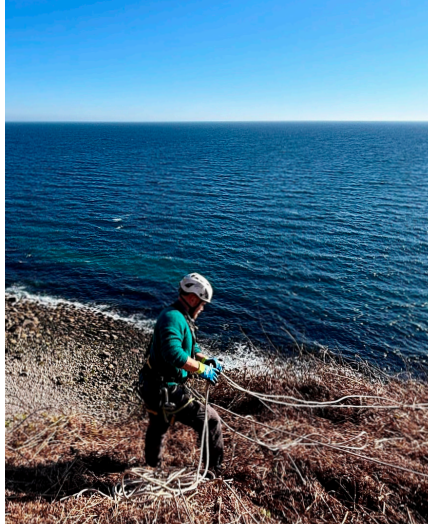
The Lundy Field Society has been instrumental over the last few decades in the ongoing non-native and invasive *Rhododendron* eradication. After a stellar effort from various work parties and rope access visits, I'm optimistic that we'll have a non-flowering year this season. When I came into this post, this particular goal felt a little



▲ Left to right: Tessa Coledale (Biosecurity for England Officer), Joe Parker (Island Warden), Laura Bambini (dog handler) and Kuki (biosecurity detection dog) (photo: Joe Parker).

ambitious, but concerted efforts in 2024 covering vast expanses of the plateau, sidelands and east coast cliffs are paying dividends. If you spot any pesty waxy-leaved *Rhododendron* plants popping up from the seed bank, please let us know! The lack of *Rhododendrons* helps the Lundy cabbage population, although 2024 was very much a middling year for cabbage. Other tasks completed with the LFS work parties include repairing the Manx Shearwater nest boxes, clearing the Millcombe fruit cage and wider walled gardens, beach cleans and Heligoland trap maintenance.

Another success story has been the positive response from the Lundy climbing community following the announcement of more extensive restrictions to reflect the continued expansion of Lundy's seabirds. As the island now boasts the third-largest cliff-nesting seabird colony in England, it's no longer suitable for visitors to scramble around sites like The Flying Buttress (AKA The Battery) through the breeding season. Devil's Slide and select east coast sites remain open year-round, however the vast majority of the coastline is now restricted until later in the season. Most restrictions are lifted by mid-August, but extensions remain in place for the later breeding Fulmars into September. For the latest climbing information, please visit the Landmark Trust website.



▲ Action shot of the Peninsula Access team about to abseil down on to unsuspecting *Rhododendron* plants thanks to a grant from The Banister Trust (photo: Joe Parker).

Now here's a question I didn't expect to be asking in a Lundy publication... How did a Common Lizard make it over to the island? I'm not sure we'll ever get to the bottom of this particular oddity, but you can read more about this bizarre record on p64 of the report. It'll be really interesting to conduct further surveys. So if you're visiting the island, particularly over the summer months, please keep an eye out for reptiles. The conservation team will deploy some corrugated metal sheets around the island which will function as great little basking spots for reptiles, so we'll be inspecting these over the coming years. We'll keep you posted, and with so much to look forward to in the coming season, I hope to catch many of you on Lundy in 2025!



▼ LFS work party installing the refurbished Manx Shearwater nest boxes (photo: Joe Parker).

David George, 1938-2024

David was well known to many on Lundy for two reasons: firstly his important contributions, begun in 1971, in partnership with Keith Hiscock and others, to the study of the marine environment around Lundy; secondly his role as the other half of a life-long partnership with Jenny George, who for her part began and continues the study of freshwater biology on the island. Their regular visits to the island over the years would in any case have resulted in a legacy of knowledge of both the marine and freshwater ecology of Lundy, but from 2003 David also began work on terrestrial matters by getting involved in a project with John Hedger to photograph and catalogue the fungi on Lundy, a third string to his already impressive academic bow.



▲ David at Hammers, September 2018 (photo: Jenny George).

David was borne in Portsmouth, a naval town, and was always ready to tell stories of his father, who was a Naval Engineer and a strong character, something David himself also showed throughout his life: typically, his dislike of the name John led to an insistence on using his second name. He studied Marine Biology at Southampton (1956-62) followed by postdoctoral years in Canada (1962-64) and a return to work for the rest of his academic career in the British Museum (Natural History) where he worked on marine invertebrates especially polychaetes and sponges. He commuted from Holyport near Maidenhead, where he and Jenny had made their home in a house appropriately called *Sabella* after a genus of very pretty marine fan worm. He was a pioneer underwater photographer and took many early and important pictures of marine life during expeditions to both tropical and temperate marine areas including the first photographs of living Pogonophora worms taken on an expedition to Norwegian waters. He and Jenny published in 1979 'Marine Life: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Invertebrates in the Sea'.



David first went to Lundy in August 1971 when he took part in a diving expedition (led by Keith Hiscock) to survey the waters around Lundy. The results showed how diverse the marine community was and resulted in Lundy becoming a voluntary marine reserve. He continued diving around Lundy throughout the 1970s and 1980s and focussed on the marine bristle worms and sponges. He took many photographs of Lundy's invertebrates and algae during this time which led to two publications on worms and sponges

◀ David photographing fungi on the Airfield, September 2018 (photo: Jenny George).

in the LFS Annual Reports in 1974 and 1983. The research of Keith Hiscock and his team (including David) led to Lundy becoming the first statutory Marine Nature Reserve In the UK.

David and Jenny soon established a base in Appledore, making access to Lundy easier by buying a small cottage in Irsha Street. Many have enjoyed their hospitality while en route to the island, although they had to squeeze past the zodiac boat David kept fully inflated on its side in the hall of the house! Travel to Lundy before the Oldenburg was on several boats, including the small Lundy Gannet, the Polar Bear, Balmoral and the paddle steamer, Waverley. David visited Lundy nearly every year, often on the LFS annual day excursions, including the infamous trip in 1988 when the Waverley did not return to Lundy until the early hours of the next morning to pick up the stranded LFS members, who had spent a happy night in the Tavern.



▲ Jenny and David George with Graham Colman sampling at Pondsburry, January 2006 (photo: John Hedger).

Apart from his underwater photography David also took many photographs of Lundy's land flora and fauna and was an expert in macrophotography. By the 2000s he had realised that the future was in digital photography and purchased a Minolta to complement his existing film camera, at first taking both film and digital images. This coincided with the beginning of a new project with John Hedger to catalogue and photograph the fungi on Lundy. The first trial visit in autumn 2003, staying in Stoneycroft, was a success; they got on well, and David continued thereafter to make autumnal visits with John and Jenny, walking with unflagging energy over the whole island to search for and photograph the fungi, often lying flat on cold wet ground to get the right close-up shots. Once in position no conversation was allowed as he strived to get the perfect photo. Woe betide those who broke the rule. He preferred the brighter and more colourful fungi, and was more reluctant to do his best for ones he regarded as 'brown jobbies' and 'grey jobbies'. However many autumns saw him up at the North End helping to count the fruit bodies of the Grey Waxcap, often getting shelter in John O'Groat's House in bitter winds to have lunch. The fungus is still known as the 'Grey Job'.

The accumulation of the photographs and the growing species list of fungi over the years led to the proposal for the LFS to publish a book on the fungi of Lundy. The task was made easier by the careful way David had curated his photographs, now all of course digital. A bequest to the LFS from Tony Langham's estate eventually made the project possible and the book appeared in 2018, jointly authored by David and John Hedger. It features many of David's superb photographs and is the authoritative book on Lundy Fungi, a great legacy.

David continued in robust health doing heavy gardening and moving his large pots containing his collection of Tree Ferns until autumn 2024 when he developed heart problems. He died on 31st December. He had a woodland burial on 29th January 2025 attended by over 40 people, including two representatives of the LFS Committee, on which Jenny continues to serve. Fittingly his beloved Minolta camera was buried with him. We extend our sympathy to Jenny for her loss and hope she will continue to be as active as ever in the affairs of the LFS.

*John Hedger
with thanks to Keith Hiscock and Jenny George.*

Steve Wing 1957-2024

Steve Wing, who has died suddenly at the age of 67, was a highly respected and engaging ornithologist who was warden of Birdwatch Ireland's Cape Clear Bird Observatory off west Cork. The "birders' birder", Wing employed humour and wit to impart his knowledge to thousands of students and visitors to Cape Clear island over the years. 'There is no such thing as a seagull,' was one of his first pieces of advice to participants in Birdwatch Ireland courses which he ran with colleagues at the observatory.

Steve was born in February 1957 in Bradfield in Berkshire and was one of a family of three boys. He attended Bradfield primary school and completed his education at Bideford Grammar School. His passion for birds developed early in life and he trained as a bird ringer in the Chew Valley with Michael King and Cyril Matthews. Regarded as the brainiest of the family, one of his brothers recalled he would often recite Latin while walking to catch the school bus. A keen Liverpool football supporter, he would hitchhike to their games, and he maintained a lifelong interest in sport.

Steve's first job was in a tax office, and he then worked in the pay office at Appledore Shipyard in Devon before moving into construction. When he applied for a nine-month work scheme on Lundy, it was to change his life. On Lundy, he met his long-term partner, Mary Gade, who also shared his passion for birding. They lived on Lundy for six years together before moving back to Appledore in the mid-1980s. Steve continued his ringing activities on Lundy, where he began to appreciate the magnetic attraction of islands for vagrant species.

When he was back working in construction, Steve received a phone call from a good friend, scientist Geoff Oliver, to say the Cape Clear observatory was looking for a warden. He took the first of several 13km ferry journeys there from Baltimore in March 1998 — and then moved there permanently with Mary. The observatory building required some work and Steve once more employed his building skills for its extensive renovation.

'Steve diligently carried out his duties as warden — everything from the domestic running of the observatory to walking the beat around the island to count birds, running weekend courses, ringing birds and tirelessly filling out the daily log', his close friend Dick Coombes recalled at his cremation. Such was his amiable nature that he provided 'the perfect link between islanders and visiting birders', Coombes said, and he and Mary immersed themselves in island life. Wing worked as observatory warden till 2012 and the couple then ran Cotters pub where their weekly 'Thai night' meals were legendary.



▲ Steve Wing (photo: Thyes Kavanagh).

After Mary became ill, the couple made many journeys to hospital until she passed away in Devon in May 2018. After her death, Steve resumed his post at the observatory with the new title of wildlife officer, and worked to complete a book published four years ago, entitled *The Natural History of Cape Clear 1959-2019*, with contributions by specialists on the island history and on marine and wildlife. As he explained, many migratory species, both wing and finned, track by the island which has its own micro-climate. The light from the Fastnet Rock Lighthouse is said to be one of the reasons why rare birds sometimes also land there.



▲ Mary Gade and Steve Wing on Lundy, October 2015
(photo: Tim Davis).

During his time on the island he recorded some very rare birds, including Western Bonelli's Warbler, Arctic Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler and Short-toed Lark. He recorded Ireland's first Chimney Swift and spotted a Black Kite several months ago — only the second recorded on the island.

As an instructor, Steve would spend many happy hours with students explaining the biology of fragile little birds and demonstrating ringing techniques. His smiling, bearded face on the quay was often a visitor's first introduction to the island and he would be there on the quay to see course participants off again.

Cape Clear resident Michael John Cadogan described Steve as a great ambassador for Cape, and said 'he is a big loss to us and to the bird watching community of Ireland and beyond. Both Steve and Mary were islanders. They came to us from Lundy and were part and parcel of the community in Cape for 25 years'.

Steve once told someone he would like to come back as a chough in his next life, Coombes told mourners in his eulogy. 'For those who don't know, that's the black crow with a red bill and red legs that you see tossing about the cliffs on Cape,' he said, adding: 'We'll be keeping an eye out for you Steve.'

This obituary is adapted with kind permission from that written by Lorna Siggins for the Sunday Independent on 24th November, 2024.



▲ Mary and Steve in No. 2, Quarters (photographer unknown).

LUNDY MARINE PROTECTED AREA ADVISORY GROUP REPORT

Robert Irving (LMPAAG Secretary)

The Lundy Marine Protected Area Advisory Group (LMPAAG) provides a forum for discussion of all matters relating to the island's waters and shores. The Group includes representatives from the island (the Lundy Company/Landmark Trust), Natural England, the Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (D&SIFCA), Historic England, the Lundy Field Society, the Marine Biological Association, MARINElife, local nature conservation groups, commercial fishing interests, dive charter boat skippers and local dive clubs.

The Group holds two meetings each year. In 2025, the spring meeting took place on the evening of 7th May at the Clubhouse of the Ilfracombe Sub-Aqua Club in Ropery Road, Ilfracombe. This was the first 'hybrid' meeting of the Group, meaning that attendance was either in person or remotely via the on-line communications app MS Teams (thanks to hosting by the Lundy Company). There being no major technical issues, it was agreed this format should be adopted for all future meetings.

The autumn meeting was held on 27th October, also at the Ilfracombe Sub-Aqua Club. At this meeting it was agreed that, thanks to the generosity of Ilfracombe Sub-Aqua Club, all future meetings would be held at their Clubhouse, as not only could they host hybrid meetings but Ilfracombe was a more convenient location to reach for most members of the Group than Bideford. This second meeting was the 20th for the Advisory Group in its present guise and the 77th since its first meeting as the Lundy Marine Consultation Group back in 1985.

In my role as Secretary to the Group, I report the key points raised at these two meetings to the Lundy Management Forum (consisting of all organisations with responsibility for the overall management of the island), at Forum meetings which take place soon after each of the aforementioned Advisory Group meetings.

Below is a summary of discussion points that were raised during both of the Advisory Group meetings held in 2024.

MSc thesis on the governance of the Lundy Marine Protected Area

During the spring and summer months of 2024, a postgraduate student from University College London, Theodora Stephens-Manassieva, undertook an MSc research dissertation on the governance effectiveness of the Lundy MPA entitled: *Ship-shape and Bristol fashion: an MPA success story in the Bristol Channel*. Her research involved a number of interviews with members of the Advisory Group, underpinned by a discourse analysis. Her study revealed that 'the Lundy MPA is managed through a top-down, government-led approach, but one that is greatly reliant on local leadership in particular. Statutory bodies and government agencies have played a central role in Lundy's management, which has been supplemented with partnerships with other key actors, such as fishermen, scientific researchers and local business operators.'

Request for information at the end of each diving season on which sites divers have visited

How many dives are taking place within the MPA each year and where are they taking place? In the original 1983 Marine Management Plan, a map was included showing where dives had been undertaken during the tenure of the first marine warden in 1978, but at present no records are kept of where divers are asking to dive within the MPA; these data would be really useful for the on-going management of the MPA. Information from dive groups staying on the island as well as

those being brought to the island from the mainland would be required. It was agreed this could all be possible without too much effort and would certainly prove useful. It would also be useful to have a record of numbers of divers snorkelling with seals, which is an activity often on offer during the divers' 'rest period' between dives.

Request for the Marine Management Plan to be updated

The latest version of the MPA's Marine Management Plan was published in 2017. It was hoped that the Plan would be reassessed and updated (if required) every five years, so an update is now overdue. Several parts of the Plan now require updating such as the inclusion of the latest Zoning Scheme (introduced in 2019); and the inclusion of HMS *Montagu* as a Scheduled Monument, also in 2019. An update on the current populations of seabird species is required too. Approaches to Natural England (as the lead managers of the MPA) to fund the cost of such updating have been declined, so this task remains on hold for the time being.

Use of drones within the MPA and over the island

An incident took place during the summer when a small drone was flown from a dive boat close to the shore and ended up crashing on to rocks, leading to the disturbance of a number of seals basking in the vicinity. The skipper of the boat in question pointed out that the MPA's Code of Conduct should include a policy on the use of drones within the MPA, which currently does not exist. It was agreed there was an urgent need for the policy covering drones flying from the island (which effectively bans all drone flying unless special permission had been granted) to be extended beyond the 100m buffer zone around the cliffs. As a consequence, it was agreed that the drone no-fly zone should include the whole of the MPA as well.

A short documentary film about Lundy's No Take Zone

As one of the projects that was undertaken during the Marine Festival (July-September 2022), a film was commissioned about the effectiveness of the No Take Zone off the east side of the island. The film was conceived and co-produced by Robert Irving, filmed and directed by Gareth Alvarez and Rob Whitney of North Devon Moving Image, and was sponsored by the Blue Marine Foundation.

The resulting 30 minute film, entitled *Safeguarding Our Seas: Lessons From Lundy*, had its first public screening on 26th April at the end of a one-day conference run by South-West Marine Ecosystems in Plymouth. The film's sponsors were very pleased that both John Balls and Ben Bengay, representing the North Devon fishing community, came down to Plymouth and were happy to speak at the end of the film about how the NTZ at Lundy has worked. Derek Green, Lundy General Manager, commented that he had been very impressed by the film and that it had had a very positive reaction from all those who had seen it.



▲ Holding screen for the film about Lundy's No Take Zone (North Devon Moving Image).

The film is now up on YouTube and is available for anyone to watch (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ecsil2ChwA8&t=556s>). At October's meeting, Lauren Parkhouse (D&SIFCA representative) informed the Group that a colleague of hers had shown the film at a meeting in Húsavík, Iceland looking at the benefits of setting up a No Take MPA in the local area. Closer to home, there were also screenings at the Appledore Book Festival on 18th September and at the Braunton Countryside Centre on 23rd October. A shortened 12 minute version of the film has been entered into the Edinburgh Film Festival, due to take place in April 2025.



▲ The underside of a 'berried' female lobster, showing a clutch of eggs. The female will hold onto the eggs, which may number from 8,000 to 40,000 depending on her age, for up to nine months. The eggs start off red and gradually turn black when ready for release. Berried lobsters must be returned to the sea unharmed: it is illegal to land them. (Photo: Robert Irving).

Concern raised over anchoring on sensitive habitats

At the October meeting, a discussion was held concerning how anchoring on sensitive habitats could be restricted in some way. Of particular concern was the potential disruption to pink sea fans: the hope was that, because of the fans' slow recovery from the infection which decimated their numbers almost 25 years ago, any activities which might be adversely affecting their recovery should be minimised.

The Assistant Warden, Tara McEvoy-Wilding, proposed that a narrow, shallow-water strip along much of the island's east coast, between 300 – 650m wide, could be designated a No Anchoring Zone. Most of the sea fans present on the east side of the island were found within this area. However, the charter boat skippers thought this was a little excessive as there were times when their divers or snorkellers were wanting to enter the water in small coves where they might encounter seals. It was here where they would want to anchor if there was no possibility of tying up to a mooring buoy.

The eventual compromise reached was that it was recommended the number of eco-moorings should be increased in popular locations, thereby allowing boats to moor instead of anchoring. The existing eco-moorings had proved popular with the skippers of these boats, the only concern being that there weren't enough of them! The Assistant Warden agreed to look into how this might be done, with Derek Green adding his support to the proposal. We hope next year's report will tell of a positive outcome to this situation.

Your input

If there are any matters which LFS members would wish to have addressed at the Advisory Group meetings, I would be happy to raise them on your behalf: robert@sea-scope.co.uk.

SOME NEW OLD HEMIPTERA RECORDS

Alan Rowland

I came across a reference to Morgan (1957) while researching Hemiptera records and obtained a copy. The original reported on early records of Hemiptera found on Lundy. Intrigued, I decided to find out more about these early and, in some cases, unique records.

The Lundy Field Society Annual Reports revealed that the author, HG Morgan and his wife, were founder members of the LFS and at that time living at Staplake Mount, Starcross in Exeter. It further showed that they, along with Mrs & Mrs ES Wiggins of Lustleigh, B Chugg of Braunton and HE Ridge of Barnstaple, all also members, had stayed on the island between 26th and 9th August 1947.

Volume 1 of the LFS Annual Report included an initial report, 'Terrestrial and Freshwater Habitats' (Anon, 1947), and stated that their visit was largely exploratory but that some work was carried out. In particular 'datum markers' and the telegraph poles were recorded on the six-inch Ordnance Survey map of the island, and bench marks were singled out and highlighted in white paint. Particular attention was paid to the aquatic habitats where collection of aquatic Hemiptera were made. Additionally a permanent 10 yard square was established in the deep burnt area west of Middle Coombe, the stakes of which can still be seen 77 years later.

This team re-visited the island again the following year (Morgan, 1948) and reported on further classes of Hemiptera. No details of species were recorded, although the absence of Plecoptera, which remains absent, was noted. This 1948 report gives Classes only and forms a basis for future exploration, although it does highlight that no Ephemeroptera were noted in July and August. In fact there has still only been one species of mayfly recorded on the island, *Cloen dipterum*.

Other freshwater species are Odonata: 'several species of adults and nymphs'. There have been 15 species recorded since then. One species and two genus of Trichoptera were noted which has now risen to 24 species in 2023.

Morgan's speciality was in Hemiptera/Heteroptera and he deposited a list of species with the Secretary who was at that time LA Harvey. Extensive enquiries at Exeter and the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (where a later secretary Major AB Gay worked) have failed to discover any such lists.



▲ Notonecta.



▲ Corixida.

However the report by Morgan (1957) does provide us with a partial list.

Name in 1948	Current name	Notes on sightings
<i>Notonecta obliqua</i>	<i>Notonecta obliqua</i>	previously first recorded 1979 pushed back to 1956
<i>Notonecta maculata</i>	<i>Notonecta maculata</i>	previously first recorded 1993 pushed back to 1956
<i>Corixa lateralis</i>	<i>Sigara lateralis</i>	previously first recorded 1995 pushed back to 1956
<i>Corixa nigrolineata</i>	<i>Sigara nigrolineata</i>	previously first recorded 1979 pushed back to 1956
<i>Corixa praeusta</i>	<i>Callicorixa praeusta</i>	previously first recorded 1979 pushed back to 1956
<i>Corixa limitata</i>	<i>Sigara limitata</i>	previously first recorded 1978 pushed back to 1956
<i>Corixa scotti</i>	<i>Sigara scotti</i>	previously first recorded 1993 pushed back to 1956
<i>Corixa distincta</i>	<i>Sigara distincta</i>	previously <i>Sigara distincta</i> first recorded 1993 pushed back to 1956
<i>Corixa castanea</i> *	<i>Hesperocorixa castanea</i>	Not previously recorded – new record
<i>Corixa linnei</i> *	<i>Hesperocorixa linnei</i>	Not previously recorded – new record
<i>Corixa sahlbergi</i> *	<i>Hesperocorixa sahlbergi</i>	Not previously recorded – new record
<i>Corixa punctata</i>	<i>Corixa punctata</i>	previously first recorded 1978 pushed back to 1956

References

Morgan HG (1957) *Some new County Records for Aquatic Hemiptera*. Entomologist's Monthly Magazine 93:88

Anon (1947) *Terrestrial and Freshwater Habitats*. Lundy Field Society Annual Report 1:12-15

Morgan HG (1948) *Miscellaneous Notes on Terrestrial Invertebrates* Lundy Field Society Annual Report 2:38-41



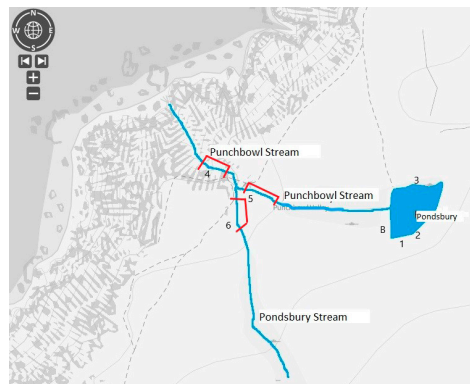
▲ Surveying Pondsbury.

LFS FIELD STUDIES COURSE 13-16 APRIL 2024 – FRESHWATER MODULE

During the LFS Field Studies Course, nine students undertook surveys of both flowing (Lotic) and standing (Lentic) waters of Lundy.

The survey stations were selected on the perimeter of Pondsbury (Figure 1 sites 1, 2 and 3) and a syndicate of three took turns at developing their techniques. An additional survey of 1m² mud from the bottom of the pond was also taken (Figure 1, site B). At the end of the session the catch was rinsed and then taken back to St Helen's Centre for identification to group and in some cases species.

A second session to survey three sites on the streams flowing from and by Pondsbury was also undertaken by the three syndicates of three students and after rinsing the catch also taken back to St Helen's Centre for identification (Figure 1 sites 4, 5 and 6).



▲ Figure 1: Survey sites around Pondsbury: 1,2,3 Pondsbury B - bottom sample; 4,5,6 Stream kick sampling.

Table 1

*all 'blood worms'

Scientific	Common	Stage	Lentic 14 April 2024		Lotic 15 April 2024		Pondsbury Stream
			Pondsbury		Punchbowl Stream		
			Water column	Benthos	Below confluence	Above confluence	
Platyhelminthes - Flatworms							
<i>Polycelis nigra</i>	a flatworm	adult			6	2	
Nematoda - Roundworms							
<i>Nematoda</i>	a nematode worm	adult			6	3	
<i>Tubificida</i>	a tubifex worm	adult		1			
Isopoda - Crustacea							
<i>Proasellus meridianus</i>	Water Hoglouse	adult	1		108	40	
Ephemeroptera - mayflies							
<i>Cloeon dipterum</i>	a mayfly	larva	2				
Odonata – Dragon and Damselflies							
<i>Ischnura elegans</i>	Blue-tailed Damselfly	nymph	6				
Hemiptera – True bugs							
<i>Notonecta glauca</i>	Backswimmer	adult	2				
<i>Corixidae</i> sp.	Water boatman	larva	7				
<i>Ilyocoris cimicoides</i>	Saucer Bug	adult	1				
Coleoptera - Beetles							
<i>Dytiscidae</i>	Diving beetle	adult	6			1	
	Diving beetle	larva			1	1	
<i>Halipidae</i>	Crawling water beetle	adult	1			1	1
Trichoptera – Caddis flies							
<i>Limnephilus vittatus</i>	a cased caddis	larva	1				
	a caddis fly	pupa					1
Diptera – True flies							
<i>Chironomidae</i>	a non-biting midge	larva	2	5*	9	3	6
	a non-biting midge	pupa	1		6	1	
<i>Corynoneura</i> sp.	a non-biting midge	larva	1				
<i>Chaoborus crystallinus</i>	Phantom midge	larva		2			
Number of species			10	3	5	6	3

None of the surveys were the standard 3-minute (streams) or 5-minute (pond) surveys. The students were learning the techniques and identification skills. The Pondsburry samples, with the exception of the benthic samples were combined but the stream samples were kept separate.

Table 1 lists all species and the locations in which they were found. George and Stone (1978) gave a comprehensive survey of Pondsburry as did Clabburn (1993). With one exception, nothing different from their species list was found.

As was expected, Pondsburry showed the widest diversity of species reaching a score of 11 different species when both water column and benthic samples were combined. The Chironomidea found in the bottom silt of Pondsburry were all of the “bloodworm” variety red in colour due to haemoglobin which enables them to survive in anoxic conditions. Despite being open water species, *Chaoborus crystallinus* were only found in this bottom sample.



▲ Identifying specimens in St Helen's Centre.

Surprisingly, the combined streams of Punchbowl and Pondsburry below their confluence was the next highest rating falling one lower than the part of Punchbowl stream above the confluence. This may be due to the difficulties in surveying particularly in the steep sided valley above the Atlantic Ocean where a gale force wind was blowing directly in from the west. Long (1993) surveyed Pondsburry Stream which he labelled as 'W4' and found many more species than in this survey, as well as those that were found by the course.

Pondsburry stream had never previously been surveyed. It is frequently dry during the summer and held predominantly opportunistic Diptera larvae although the unidentified Caddis fly pupa was an interesting find.

The highlight of these introductory sessions was what was thought to be the addition to the Lundy fauna of an unreported true bug: *Ilyocoris cimicoides* the Saucer Bug. It was found on the southern edge of Pondsburry at site 1. On checking my records, I found that *I. cimicoides* had been seen but not reported until this date. It was first seen by the author on 8 July 2021 at Pondsburry, and again on 20 May 2023 by Miles Thompson on the track near Pondsburry. This was the third sighting in three years of adults and juveniles, confirming its successful colonisation of Pondsburry. *Corynoneura*, a distinctive non-biting Midge (determined by J. George), has been previously seen in Pondsburry but not reported so this is a first confirmatory record. At 3mm in length and in peat stained water the colour of tea, in detecting it the eyes of these new surveyors proved to be extremely sharp. Thank you Mark, Sandy, Tony, Kristin, Sue, Rob, Zdena, Richard and Carole Anne!

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- Clabburn, PAT** (1993) *Freshwater biological survey of Lundy, 1993: further studies of the fauna of Pondsburry*. Lundy Field Society Annual Report 44:73-83
- George JJ and Stone BM** (1979) *The flora and fauna of Pondsburry*. Lundy Field Society Annual Report 30:20-31
- Long PS** (1993) *A study into the macroinvertebrate fauna and water quality of Lundy Island's lotic environment*. Lundy Field Society Annual Report Annual Report 44:59-72



▲ The Saucer Bug *Ilyocoris cimicoides*.



▲ Bird Observatory Council AGM, Feb 2025 (photo: D Balmer).

BIRDS ON LUNDY 2024

Joe Parker (Lundy Warden)

Another bumper year was enjoyed by Lundy Bird Observatory, which has just celebrated its second birthday, with only one more year of probation to go until we earn our full Observatory status in February 2026! Highlights included:

- Record total of 169 species were recorded during 2024
- New maximum count for **Purple Sandpiper**
- Lundy's second **Green-winged Teal**, **Pallid Swift** and **Spoonbill**
- A long-staying **Short-toed Lark**
- Unprecedented influx of **Snow Bunting** and **Cory's Shearwater**
- A record **Wheatear** breeding season
- Highest **Manx Shearwater** nest box occupancy to date
- Ten colour-marked **Yellow-browed Warbler** as part of a national project
- Excellent coverage: 97% of census days recorded
- First documented breeding of **Yellow Wagtail** for Lundy
- Second-highest annual ringing total on record

While records from the entire island are collected, the Lundy Bird Observatory core 'census' recording area covers a distance of approximately five km, sampling all habitats present within the southern quarter of the island. The route is walked daily during spring and autumn migration, and periodically during the summer and winter months. The defined recording area covers most sites south of Quarter Wall, encompassing the vegetated combs of Millcombe and St John's Valley, the rugged sea cliffs of Benjamin's Chair, freshwater habitats around Rocket Pole, and the grazed, semi-improved grasslands and drystone walls bordering South West Field, Old Light, Ackland's Moor and the Village. In 2024, the census route was covered on 97% of required survey days, comfortably exceeding the threshold laid out by the Bird Observatory Council, who are the body responsible for our accreditation.

Lundy Bird Observatory Census Route



▲ Lundy Bird Observatory daily census route.

The New Year and early spring

The new year opened with very unsettled weather, delaying any quality birding to kick-start the birding calendar. Undeterred, a trip down to Brazen Ward on 2nd was rewarded with a record-breaking count of 13 **Purple Sandpiper** at high tide, only to be broken again by an additional individual during a subsequent visit on 13th January!



▲ Green-winged Teal on Pondsbury, 28th January
(photo: Joe Parker).

A winter seal census was conducted along the east coast on 28th January as part of Cornwall, Devon and SW Wales wide study coordinated by Cornwall Seal Group Research Trust. It would have been rude not to have checked Pondsbury en route to North End and a preliminary long distance scan on approach revealed a small group of **Teal** and **Mallard**. A closer inspection kicked up two **Common Snipe** and quickly revealed eight **Eurasian** and a drake **Green-winged Teal** – incredibly only the second island record (the previous record dates back to May 2006). At times it was looking like the American vagrant had paired up with an Eurasian counterpart, lingering until 1st April before finally moving on.

After the usual winter clearout, by 1st February the first returning **Skylark** appeared, confirmed by a between season re-trap encountered during a nocturnal ringing session on the Airfield. Another check of Pondsbury, this time on 5th March, yielded a stonking adult **Iceland Gull**, the first and only record of the year. This species is an annual vagrant with one record per year on average. The bird was roosting with a flock of **Herring**, **Lesser Black-backed** and **Great Black-backed gulls** on Pondsbury before flying off towards the west coast. Twelve days later (17th March), another 'white-winged gull', this time an adult **Glaucous Gull**, was discovered dead on the island just south of Gannets' Combe during the feral livestock annual count. The bird was promptly swabbed for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and fortunately came back negative. In fact, over the course of the season I'm pleased to report that zero positive cases were logged on the island.

▼ Early returning Skylark photographed during nocturnal ringing session (photo: Joe Parker).



Spring migration

The first **Chiffchaff** occurred on 9th March, followed by the first **Wheatear** the following day. By 16th March, two female **Merlin** were seen along the Southwest Field boundary and the North End. This coincided with our first **Swallow** of the year and a mini arrival of **Wheatear** and **Chiffchaff**, plus two **Puffins** off Jenny's Cove. The migration tap began to open on 21st March with the arrival of 45 **Chiffchaff** and 26 **Goldcrest**. Incredibly, the 42 **Goldcrest** logged on 26th March was the highest spring total for many decades, although this count did not beat the 60 on the 27th-31st March 1989 or the 50 on the 27th-28th March 1974. March featured a notable count of 511 **Puffin** on 26th, with Jenny's Cove doing most of the heavy lifting, and the remaining 41 individuals all logged at The Battery. By 31st, we had resumed our ever-popular seabird stations at Jenny's Cove for the breeding season.



▲ One of the many Chiffchaff seen feeding on the floor in Millcombe on 17th March (photo: Thomas Weston).

By 2nd April, the lingering southerly wind resulted in another little arrival of migrants to the island, including a **Short-eared Owl** being mobbed by **Herring Gull** over **Millcombe**, a **White Wagtail** in St Helen's Field and a **Black-headed Gull** feeding in Tillage Field. Then the migrant inspiring southerly winds quickly changed to a westerly wind overnight. This seemed to stir a little displacement of some of our long distance, high Arctic waders leading to a small arrival on the island. This was noted when a **Eurasian Curlew** was heard in flight and a **Golden Plover** was seen flying over the Village heading south on 3rd, both the first of the year. Following Storm Kathleen's 65 mph gusts, a slight ease in the wind and a change to south-easterlies on 8th April resulted in a bit of movement at dawn. The standout highlight was a stunning male **Pied Flycatcher** who was the first of the year, followed by the first **Sandwich Tern** the subsequent day.



▲ Golden Plover near Quarry Cottage, 24th April (photo: Thomas Weston).

▶ First Pied Flycatcher of the year (photo: Thomas Weston).



After a couple of fogged out days, the 12th April brought the first three **Grasshopper Warbler** of the year, the first female **Redstart** of the year (going back and forth around the Heligoland Trap), a male **Pied Flycatcher** in the willows in Quarry Pond and a fall of **Willow Warblers**, **Chiffchaff** and **Blackcap** with a high proportion along the East coast. Added to these were a passage of **Linnet** and **Goldfinch**, with the highest count of the year for the former, an arrival of new **Wheatear**, four late **Redwing** and a steady passage of hirundines.

Two **Night-heron** – an adult and a sub-adult – on 13th marked the fifth island record. They were first seen in lower Millcombe, in the area between the gates of Millcombe House drive and the gas store just after 08.00 hrs on 13th. Both birds were seen intermittently over the next few days, mainly in the lower Millcombe area, including Smelly Gully, Brambles Gully and the eastern end of Millcombe Wood. Less often, one or the other was seen in flight over the Lower East Side Path near St Helen's Combe/the Ugly, or over the Landing Bay. At times, both roosted in trees in Brambles Gully, or in Millcombe Wood, enabling many visitors to enjoy excellent views. However, after the initial sighting when both birds were together, they were always seen separately. The sub-adult, which appeared to struggle more than the full adult to maintain its physical condition, was last seen by the stream at the mouth of Smelly Gully on 16th, whilst the adult was finally seen perched in a tree by Millcombe Pond at noon on 21st.



▲ Adult Night-heron in Millcombe, 13th April (photo: Thomas Weston).



▲ Male Whinchat along the Upper East Side Path (photo: Richard Campey).

The exciting morning continued upon discovery of a male **Golden Oriole** in Millcombe, coinciding with a notable early influx of Golden Oriole to South West England. It was seen intermittently – at times showing extraordinarily well – over the next week, though could be typically elusive for long periods, frustrating the efforts of many searching for it. Sightings were nearly all in Millcombe, though also occasionally in St Helen's Combe. It was last seen in Millcombe on 20th. Although completely silent during almost all of its prolonged stay – perhaps surprisingly for an adult male – it was heard sub-singing very briefly once or twice. During the evening of 19th it was watched for about 15 minutes as it hunted for large caterpillars in the blackthorn scrub between the Ugly and the top of the walled gardens in Millcombe, perching shrike-like to scan for prey, then pouncing once located and taking its prize back to the cover of a nearby sycamore tree to knock off coarse hairs before consumption. This sequence was repeated at least three or four times. This individual marks the 12th record of the last decade, eleven of which have been in spring. It was also the second earliest Golden Oriole ever recorded on Lundy.

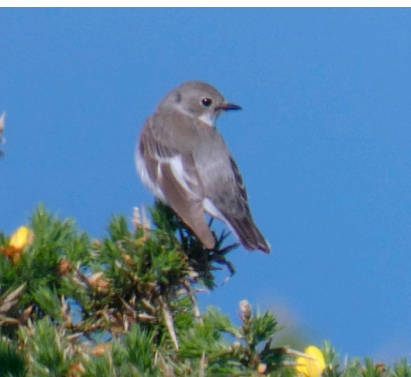
Spring overshoots continued through the week, with a **Purple Heron** on 15th April, a **Woodchat Shrike** on 18th April and the island's eighth **Little Ringed Plover** on 21st. After a couple of quieter days, the first **Teal** brood appeared on 27th, with a female spotted with 10 ducklings on Pondsburry. A slight northerly breeze on 28th broke the trend as cool weather led to an increase in migrants and a slight fall overnight. Walking through Millcombe Pines, the appearance of a female **Pied Flycatcher**, and small flocks of **Willow Warbler** totalling 30 was a welcome surprise. Quarter Wall Pool was illuminated with the first **Whinchat** of the year and a **Stone-curlew** briefly graced the nearby track.

Species diversity increased through early May and a run of notable records included the ninth occurrence of **Little Ringed Plover** and only the second **Spoonbill** record, both logged on 10th, swiftly followed by a **Wood Sandpiper** and **Osprey** logged the next day. A second spring **Woodchat Shrike** for the year appeared on 14th, accompanied by a possible **Montagu's Harrier**, although frustratingly the latter went unconfirmed. Following reports of a male and a female **Golden Oriole** in Millcombe on 11th, and a female-type seen on 12th, there were daily records in the Millcombe



▲ Golden Oriole in the hand, 18th May (photo: Sam Pitt-Miller).

area from 14th to 19th, with up to three individuals present – a male (singing at times) and two female-type birds (multiple observers). One of the latter was trapped and ringed in Millcombe on the morning of 18th. The red-letter Millcombe ringing session also featured a **Nightingale** in the hand, the twelfth to be ringed on Lundy. At the same time, a female subalpine warbler sp. was photographed feeding in gorse bushes just west of Ackland's Moor Pond during the late afternoon and later relocated near Pointless Wall that evening. What was almost certainly the same individual was seen moving south along the drystone wall at the main track gate in Quarter Wall at 09.05 hrs on 18th, but could never be pinned down to species.



A female **Tufted Duck** was seen at Pondsbury during the afternoon of 19th and remained up to and including 24th, representing the 26th island occurrence. Meanwhile, a striking grey-cast female flycatcher sp. on 21st had the team reaching for literature to separate flycatchers. The grey rump was particularly striking in this individual, however the white primary patch was too reduced to make a convincing case for Collared Flycatcher. One for the British Birds Records Committee, but most likely to be left unproven. Correspondence with neighbouring Skokholm Bird Observatory and an instructive image of a bird in the hand would support the Lundy flycatcher being within the pale range for **Pied Flycatcher**. A stunning bird nonetheless!

◀ Lundy flycatcher spp., 21st May (photo: Thomas Weston).

Summer

May came to a close with a **Lapwing** on 30th and a late **Reed Warbler** trapped and ringed in Millcombe. June opened with a **Red Kite** on 5th, struggling to depart the island with poor visibility shrouding Wales from view. Following on from **Yellow Wagtail** records pertaining to ones and twos during spring passage on 17 dates from 13th April to 17th May, a single male was logged regularly in Barton Field from 8th June, being joined by a female **Blue-headed Wagtail** from 17th June onwards. Sightings of both birds – especially the female – became more sporadic later in the month and the pair's discreet behaviour prompted strong suspicions that a breeding attempt might be underway. Successful breeding was confirmed in July when the male was seen carrying food in Barton Field on 6th, and a nest containing four well-grown young (all of which were ringed) was found there on 7th. This is the first fully documented record of breeding on Lundy, following unsubstantiated reports dating back to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the last of these concerning a pair said to have bred in 1930 (Wynne-Edwards & Harrison, 1932). Mixed pairs of Yellow and Blue-headed Wagtails are recorded regularly in the UK (e.g. as reported in Bird Atlas 2007–2011), particularly in southern England, closest to the geographical intergrade between the two races. The hybrid offspring are commonly referred to as 'Channel Wagtails'.

By 14th June, our first **Manx Shearwater** chick had hatched within our study colony and a busy night survey for the same species that evening resulted in the oldest bird caught being originally ringed as an adult in 2007. At the time this bird was potentially already four years old making it at least 22 years old! Over the course of the season, a record total of 1,049 **Manx Shearwater** were encountered during ringing efforts. 2024 celebrated the highest shearwater nest box uptake to date, with 10 chicks fledging, two failing at egg stage, one failing at chick stage and prospecting activity detected in up to seven additional boxes.

The first **Puffling** was observed on 26th June, followed up the next day with a ringing session at our **Herring Gull** productivity site resulting in a total of 23 chicks ringed. Broods of one and two were most frequently encountered, with a single brood of three being the most

► Lundy Bird Observatory team conducting shearwater ringing (photo: Joe Parker).



▲ Recently hatched Manx Shearwater chick in the hand (photo: Joe Parker).



noteworthy. The birds were only metal ringed this year, but plans are in the pipeline to colour ring the colony in the future to understand the lives of our breeding gulls better. In recent years, numbers have crashed on the island for large gulls, possibly due to low breeding success and potentially poor adult survival with HPAI not helping the numbers. Overall, seabird productivity ended poor-to-average. A poor season was recorded for **Kittiwakes** stemming from starvation, suspected predation and poor weather. **Puffin** and **Guillemot** had an average season and **Fulmar** nest site occupation continues to decline. However, positives can be drawn from the RSPB-led HPAI impact assessment census of Jenny's Cove. The survey conducted in early June found promising increases in the Jenny's Cove **Guillemot** (+26%), **Razorbill** (+75%), **Puffin** (+34%) and **Kittiwake** (+61%) populations compared to data from 2023. **Fulmar** remained in the red, clocking up a worrying 19.5% decrease across Jenny's Cove when compared to the previous season, which is in line with the general trend since the seabird recovery project was completed in 2004.

Autumn migration

An evening of ringing in Millcombe with the hope of catching some migrants resulted in the first juvenile **Willow Warbler** of the 'post breeding season' and a nice mix of juveniles of **Linnet**, **Robin** and **Goldfinch** on 17th July offered the first hints at autumn passage to come. A little more movement on 23rd involved a **Whimbrel** at Gannet's Rock, two **Green Sandpipers** on Pondsbury and a **Lapwing** on Barton's Field, plus an island rarity in the form of a **Little Egret** flying north past the Landing Bay. Appearances from **Greenshank**, **Ringed Plover** and **Curlew** (alongside the ever-present **Oystercatcher**) the following day resulted in the lofty heights of seven different wader species logged on the island over 48 hours.

By the end of July, **Willow Warbler** passage was well underway and after a lull in mid August, the first **Water Rail** since the spring was heard on 24th. A flyover **Turnstone** was spotted heading north up the east coast, five **Willow Warblers** demonstrated a small arrival of this species, with another few noted on the plateau, and there was a single **Goldcrest** in Millcombe Pines, and a single **Spotted**

Flycatcher in the trees near the Gas Store, with at least another four encountered elsewhere. The first southerly winds for a while encouraged a fall of scarcities on 28th and the day started brilliantly with a **Wryneck** in Millcombe on census, in between heavy showers and thick fog. There was also a small fall of flycatchers: island day totals were nine **Pied Flycatcher** and eight **Spotted Flycatcher**. Overhead, two **Tree Pipits** called south in the morning. The fog lifted at 2pm and a **Melodious Warbler** was later found on the east coast just south of Gannet's Coombe. The bird showed very well, popping up among the bracken and granite over the course of several hours. On the walk back a further two **Wryneck** were flushed from the east coast path, one at the stile at Three Quarter Wall and one at North Quarry. Two **Whimbrel** were present and the first post-breeding flock of five **Common Snipe** flew over the village.



◀ Melodious Warbler at Gannets' Coombe, 26th August
(photo: Angus Croudace).

A drop in strength and a slight NE wind resulted in another excellent day of autumn passage on 30th August. Standout highlights included a **Wryneck** around the Quarry/Quarry Beach area, a **Melodious Warbler** in Millcombe, a **Green Sandpiper** circling the island, a **Redshank**, **Ringed Plover**, **Whimbrel** and **Curlew** over the Village, a late **Swift** among a large hirundine flight and a **Great White Egret** off the east coast. All of this came to an abrupt halt the following day owing to strong easterly winds bracing the island. The next big fall was on 3rd September, featuring 430 **Willow Warbler** and 32 **Spotted Flycatcher**, the latter trumped on consecutive days from 7th-9th with 42, 42 and 57 individuals respectively. The count on 9th represents the second highest autumn count of recent years and coincided with a **Red-backed Shrike** and movement of 184 **Blackcap**, only exceeded by the 240 **Blackcap** logged on 24th. The 10th was greeted with a big clear out of common and scarce migrants, but a seawatch from South West Point in strong westerlies yielded a **Pomarine Skua** for the effort. Heavier showers downed some migrants on 12th, with a female type **Common Redstart**, our second autumn **Whitethroat** and our fifth **Wryneck** of the autumn all dumping into Millcombe mid-morning.

A **Kingfisher** flashed through the Landing Bay on 13th September, logged while the Island Warden was swimming! While an attempt to catch **Storm Petrel** in the Landing Bay later that evening was unsuccessful, two **Ringed Plover**, the sixth and seventh ever ringed on the island were a reasonable substitute. Between 14th-15th September, a **Little Bunting** was logged around the gardens in front of Paradise Row/Quarters, becoming the 24th record for Lundy, the sixth consecutive year, and the earliest ever in autumn. Prior to 2011 there had been no September occurrences on the island. A **Turtle Dove** flushed near Tibbetts on 15th seems likely to have been the same individual seen flying from the Upper East Side Path by Barton Field towards the Tavern and former stonecrusher area but then lost to view on 16th and photographed on the main track between Pondsburry and Tibbetts later that evening. Sadly, these were the only sightings of the year for this species. A first-winter **Red-breasted Flycatcher** seen on the side of the Ugly near the top of the 'Steps of Doom' that run between Millcombe and St Helen's Combe became the second earliest recorded for the island. Presumably the same individual was relocated in Millcombe Pines on 18th, remaining to 21st.

The stellar September run continued with a **Great Spotted Woodpecker** on 18th, **Osprey** and **Knot** on 19th, **Lapland Bunting** on 20th, **Wood Warbler** on 21st and **Short-toed Lark** on 22nd. The latter constitutes the 24th island record and quickly settled into island life, remaining along the main track near Pondsburry to Halfway Wall between 23rd Sep to 11th October. By 26th, the island welcomed the eagerly anticipated first **Yellow-browed Warbler** of the autumn which was recorded on at least 23 dates, with a maximum of five on 23rd October. Ten individuals were trapped and colour-ringed during October as part of a nationally coordinated programme of colour marking in an attempt to shed light on the onward movements of migrating **Yellow-browed Warblers** in autumn. Amazingly, one of these birds, ringed in Millcombe on 24th October, was re-sighted (and photographed) just a few days later at Lower Moors, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, on 4th November! This was the first movement of any distance registered under the colour-marking project.

► Long-staying Short-toed Lark (photo: T Williams).



A first-winter **Purple Heron** was clocked flying north approximately 1 km off the east coast on 6th October. Shortly after, a run of **Barnacle Goose** records ensued, kick-starting with seven logged on 8th, shortly dwarfed by a flock of 14 touring the island on 11th before a separate individual settled into Barton Field between 18th-28th October. Overall, these added up to the 13th to 15th Lundy records. Three **Whooper Swan**, two adults and a juvenile, were seen flying north up the west side of the island on the morning of 10th, as well as being independently picked up distantly over Gannets' Combe by passengers on the MS Oldenburg.

An unprecedented total of 37 **Cory's Shearwater** were seen by multiple observers over the 17th October: for perspective, there are only two previous Lundy records, both involving individual birds, in 2011 and 2023. The **Cory's Shearwater** influx continued with 35 seen the next day, with all but one of the records before midday. Unprecedented numbers were recorded off the Isles of Scilly during October 2024 and it seems probable that the Lundy birds comprised the outermost edge of larger feeding aggregations in the Celtic Sea/South West approaches, possibly nudged towards the island by prevailing weather patterns on 16th/17th. Elsewhere, seawatching produced two **Arctic Skua**, two **Great Northern Diver**, and five adult **Mediterranean Gull**.

An **Ortolan Bunting** found among grass tussocks near the main track on Castle Hill on the morning of 18th October remained in the same general area until 22nd. It was often rather elusive, spending part of its time concealed within the rough grassland but at other times could be watched feeding in the open along the track, on the Castle 'turning circle' and on Castle Parade. Despite the continuing warm weather, autumn steadily progressed with an increase in thrushes through late October. 352 **Redwing** were counted on the 27th, and the first **Mistle Thrush** and **Fieldfare** of the autumn were encountered on the 26th and 28th respectively. **Swallow** numbers gradually decreased to single figures. The influx of **Hawfinch** into southern England produced four on the 25th, and three on the 26th, including one ringed. A **Cetti's Warbler** joined the party on 26th, trapped and ringed in the 'Secret Garden', Millcombe and becoming the eighth record and seventh ringed.



▲ Ortolan Bunting near the Castle, 17th Oct (photo: Richard Campey).



▲ Pallas's Warbler on the Terrace, 29th Oct (photo: B Hughes).

The eighth **Pallas's Warbler** was found on the Terrace during the morning of 29th October at the southern end of the Terrace near the Heligoland trap. It was quite mobile, moving between willow clumps and bracken cover, but often showed at close range, at times with a **Yellow-browed Warbler**. November then welcomed an unprecedented **Snow Bunting** arrival, logged on at least 22 dates between 7th October to 13th November, with the first individual at North End on 7th, and an October maximum of seven on 22nd. An exceptional influx at the start of November brought colossal counts (for Lundy) of 42 on 1st and 44 on 2nd, including flocks of 12 and 29 seen simultaneously. Twenty-five were feeding in South West Field on 6th November, while 14 were still present at South West Point on 13th November (including at least two ringed individuals). Nocturnal ringing sessions resulted in nine **Snow Bunting** being ringed, including singles on 24th and 30th October, one on 4th November, and five on 5th November. The counts of 42 and 44 logged on 1st and 2nd November equalled, then exceeded, the previous record day-total for Lundy of 42, set some 74 years previously on 9th November 1950! Prior to the autumn of 2024, the all-time ringing total for the island (1947 to 2023) stood at just 12!

Finally, a run of late autumn records saw a drake **Pochard** in the Landing Bay on 8th: only the tenth island record and the first since 2003. The subsequent day boasted a drake **Shoveler** on Rocket Pole Pond – only the 16th record for Lundy – before the wildfowl bonanza continued the day after that with a **Great Crested Grebe** flying past Lametry – only the 8th island record! To round off the season, a **Dartford Warbler** and **Richard's Pipit** occurred on 12th November and a **Pallid Swift** was documented over Millcombe and the Landing Bay area during the late morning and early afternoon on 16 November, representing only the second island record (first appearance on the Lundy list back in 2016).

Reference:

Wynne-Edwards VC and Harrison TH (1932) *A bird census on Lundy Island* (1930). *Journal of Ecology* 20:371-379.

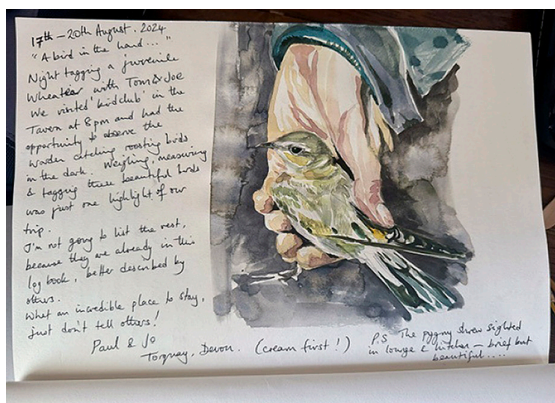
The Wheatear Re-trapping Adults for Survival (RAS) project

As a result of the rat eradication on Lundy Island in the early 2000's, the number of ground nesting birds and our seabird populations have increased. One of the success stories has been the **Wheatear**. To understand how the population dynamics of the **Wheatear** changes each year, a British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) Re-trapping Adults for Survival (RAS) project measuring the survival of the species was set up in 2013 by Tony and Ann Taylor and is now in its 12th year.

The BTO RAS projects use amazing techniques to understand survival rates by looking at re-encounter rates of individuals within a population. In this writeup, 'survival rate' indicates the proportion of birds that survive and return to the site to breed each year; and 're-encounter rates' provide a measure of the probability of a bird's presence being detected should it have survived and returned. In theory, the higher the re-encounter rate, the more precise the survival estimate should be.

In 2024, the Wheatear RAS team arrived on the 18th May and left on the 8th June. Using spring traps, a total of 61 newly colour-ringed birds were captured between Castle Hill and Halfway Wall on the west coast during this RAS study period. This included 24 breeding males and 35 breeding females. Two of the birds were captured with metal rings only. These birds had not lost any colour rings but were nestlings that had been ringed on the island in 2023 showing some great site fidelity.

Throughout the same period that the catching was being undertaken, a total of 63 adults that had been colour-ringed in previous years were re-sighted. These included 35 males and 28 females. Through looking at the life histories of the birds recorded, we know that the oldest of these birds were three females, ringed in 2016, 2019, and 2021. As they were already adults when originally ringed, this makes them at least nine, six and five years old respectively. It is amazing to think that the 2016 female has crossed the Sahara at least 18 times during her life so far. Additionally, with 63 ringed females, and at least six in the study area that were not able to be caught for colour ringing, there were an estimated 69 pairs in the RAS study site in 2024. This is the highest number of pairs ever recorded in the RAS study site. Through the resighting, we know the adult survival between 2023 and 2024 was 55% with the average annual survival since 2013 being 56%.



▲ Watercolour of a Wheatear in the hand (credit: Paul Clarke).

Through monitoring the pairs, a total of five broods, totalling 20 chicks, were found within accessible nests and metal-only ringed when they were of appropriate sizes. This is a small proportion of the total number of nests that were found in 2024, but compared to the previous years, this is a record for the RAS study.

NB: The systematic list, dates of migrants, breeding and ringing records can now be found on the Lundy Bird Observatory website (<https://lundybirdobs.org.uk/>)



▲ Willow warbler, April 2025 (photo: Tony Taylor).

Digitisation of Lundy Bird Ringing records: update

Tony Taylor

A short paper in the LFS Annual Report 2022 documented the digitisation of all available ringing records from the years 1972 to 2022, by entering them into the BTO's Oracle database using their DemOn system (Taylor, 2022).

It was noted in the paper that details of all Swallows and Willow Warblers ringed between 1972 and 1979 were missing. However, in autumn 2024 the relevant sheets from the species logs were located and sent to the Lundy Bird Observatory. The records have now been added to the Oracle database, making them easily available for analysis.

One discrepancy was found between the annual ringing totals published in relevant LFS Annual Reports and the recently located records: the Report for 1973 lists two Swallows as having been ringed that year, but there are none in the species log sheets. Every number in the relevant sequences of rings in use at that time is accounted for, so these birds cannot have been omitted accidentally from the species logs: the error has to be in the printed totals list. Possibly the two Swallows ringed in 1972 were included again in 1973 by mistake.

This means that the total for all species ringed in 1973 becomes 1795, and any subsequent grand totals published up to and including 2022, for Swallows and for all species combined, are also too high by two.

Many thanks to Michael O'Donnell, who realised the significance of the record sheets when he found them, and sent them to the Observatory.

Reference

Taylor, AM (2022) *Digitisation of Lundy Bird Ringing Records*. Lundy Field Society Annual Report 72:104-106

BIOLOGICAL RECORDS FROM LUNDY

The reports that follow have been compiled by the recorders for each group of organisms. Most of the records have been taken from the pages of the LFS Logbook not devoted to birds, and we thank all of those who have taken the time and trouble to enter their observations of animals, plants, bryophytes, lichens and fungi while on Lundy. We have not attempted to verify all the records, but unusual or interesting observations will have been checked with the originators. Most of the information will also eventually appear on the LFS website and on various national databases.

All visitors to Lundy have a wonderful opportunity to contribute something truly worthwhile to our knowledge of the natural world. Please keep entering your 2025 sightings and sending us photographs that can be used to illustrate the 2025 Annual Report!

MARINE SPECIES

Keith Hiscock

Records in 2024 benefited especially from entries in the LFS logbook by Assistant Warden Tara McEvoy-Wildling. Those records were mainly from seashore safaris and provide a list of 'usually seen' species against which unusual records will stand out. In late June, I was assisted by members of an LFS Conservation Break searching around Rat Island and at Quarry Beach to document the status of non-native marine species. While a very few (*Wireweed Sagassum muticum* and Red Ripple Bryozoan *Watersipora subatra*) were highly conspicuous and widespread around Rat Island, some others recorded in previous years were not seen (Pom-pom Weed *Caulocanthus okumarae* and Harpoon Weed *Asparagopsis armata*) although the latter species continued to be abundant subtidally around Landing Bay Jetty. Searching for the Australasian barnacle known as 'Darwin's Barnacle' found only one individual (in about 45 mins searching) at Quarry Bay where no other non-native species were found.

Records from subtidal seabeds were exceptionally sparse in 2024 and I had only one dive off Gull Rock on 6th June in 2024.

There were three highlights in 2024. The description of a previously undescribed species of polychaete worm, *Arabella ampulliformis*, was published in 2024 (Darbyshire & Kara, 2024). The worm was sampled during the Lundy Marine Festival in 2022. A nationally rare species of nudibranch seaslug, *Trapania tartenella*, was photographed on the wreck of the MV Robert by Rollin Verlinde. As in most years, Lundy attracted unusually high (for south-west England) numbers and species of 'gelatinous plankton': the most spectacular and unusual one being the Spiral Salp *Pegea confoederata*.

Names of taxa given here are the most recent (at February 2024). For authorities for each species and to check against changes to names, go to www.marinespecies.org.

ALGAE

OCHROPHYTA

There were no unusual species recorded. Wireweed, *Sargassum muticum*, was in usual (sparse) numbers floating at the surface at low water from Landing Bay Jetty and was conspicuous in rockpools at Devil's Kitchen.



▲ Accumulation of 'gelatinous plankton' among drift seaweed at the foot of Christie's Quay in the Landing Bay on 25th June. The species present include Crystal Jellies *Aequorea* sp., a likely Blue Jellyfish *Cyanea lamarkii*, Moon Jellyfish *Aurelia aurita* and Northern Comb Jellies *Bolinopsis infundibulum*. (Photo: Keith Hiscock).

MARINE INVERTEBRATES AND ASCIDIANS

GELATINOUS PLANKTON

Lundy attracted a wide range of gelatinous plankton species most often seen on snorkel safaris but visible to anyone swimming, diving or looking along the water line – especially in the cove adjacent to Christie's Quay. Gelatinous plankton are listed together (not in taxonomic order with other groups) here. Many of the species were present around Landing Bay Jetty area for most of the summer.

CNIDARIA: HYDROZOA

By-the-wind Sailor *Velella velella*

Stranded on the beach behind Landing Bay Jetty on 24th April (Anon.).

A hydrozoan *Neoturris* sp. Recorded on 5th August and also likely this species on 30th August during Snorkel Safaris around Landing Bay Jetty (Tara McEvoy-Wilding: hereafter TM-W). Identified as *N. pileata* in previous years.

Crystal Jelly *Aequorea* sp.

One noted on 3rd July (TM-W). Much less common in 2024 than in recent years but there were many at the foot of Christie's Quay on 25th June (Keith Hiscock).

A phylonect siphonophore *Nanomia cara*

Likely this species seen in two 'strings of red beads'. Recorded on 2nd June during a Snorkel Safari around Landing Bay Jetty (TM-W).

CNIDARIA: SCYPHOZOA

Blue Jellyfish *Cyanea lamarkii*

Recorded off the Landing Bay Jetty on 4th May and 3rd July ('lots') (Joe Parker and TM-W) and noted as present amongst other gelatinous plankton at the foot of Christie's Quay on 25th June (Keith Hiscock).

Purple Jellyfish/Mauve Stinger *Pelagia noctiluca*

In the Landing Bay on 4th May (Joe Parker and TM-W). Recorded on 2nd June (about 10 with associated small fish) and 3rd July ('lots') during Snorkel Safaris around the Landing Bay Jetty (Tara McEvoy-Wilding). *P. noctiluca* was widespread and often in very large numbers throughout the summer in south-west England.

Compass Jellyfish *Chrysaora hysoscella*

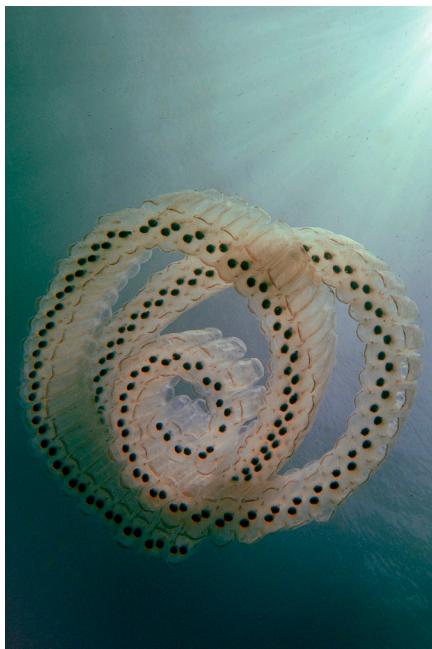
Recorded on 2nd June and 3rd July during a Snorkel Safari around the Landing Bay Jetty. Significant numbers and large with long trailing tentacles and associated small fish. Also in the Landing Bay on 1st-5th June (Steve Evans). Also on 3rd July (TM-W).

Moon Jellyfish *Aurelia aurita*

Recorded on 2nd June during a Snorkel Safari around Landing Bay Jetty (Tara McEvoy-Wilding) and on several days off the east coast 1st-5th June (Anon.).

Barrel Jellyfish *Rhizostoma octopus*

Two off Quarry Bay on 22nd April (Thomas Weston). A further record from the same area on 23rd April (M. Allen). Offshore of The Quarries on 12th October (Paul & Jackie Holt).



CHORDATA: ASCIDIACEA

Spiral Salp *Pegea confoederata*

Several seen and photographed from 13th August to the end of August between the Knoll Pins and Gannets Bay with another likely record in the Landing Bay. Doubtless present elsewhere around the island (Kirsty Andrews, Rollin Verlinde and an anonymous snorkeler).

CTENOPHORA

Sea Gooseberry *Pleurobrachia pileus*

Recorded on 2nd June (abundant midwater) and 3rd July (one) during Snorkel Safaris around the Landing Bay Jetty (TM-W).

Northern Comb Jelly *Bolinopsis infundibulum*

Recorded on 2nd June during a Snorkel Safari around Landing Bay Jetty – very abundant on 3rd July (TM-W). Present in an accumulation of gelatinous plankton at the foot of Christie's Quay on 25th June (Keith Hiscock).

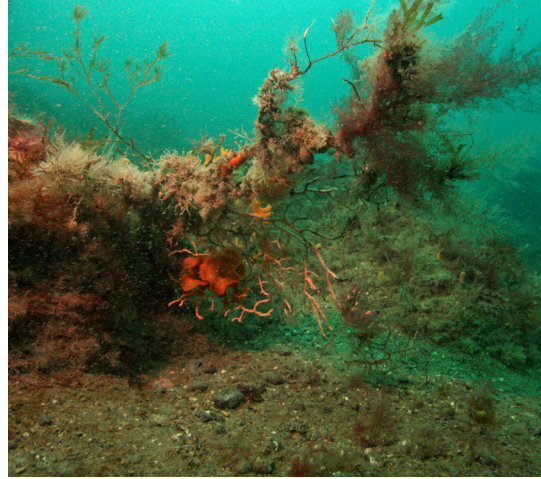
◀ Spiral Salp *Pegea confoederata* off the east coast on 13th August (photo: Rollin Verlinde).

SEASHORE AND SEABED SPECIES

CNIDARIA: OCTOCORALLIA

Pink Sea Fan *Eunicella verrucosa*

The abundance of Pink Sea Fans has declined since about the mid-1980s at Lundy and so records are kept (where possible) of abundance and condition. Off Gull Rock and towards the Knoll Pins at the seaward edge of the boulder tumble at about 15m below chart datum and during a 57-minute dive, several 'healthy' but smallish fans (ranking as 'occasional') were present. However, there were many long-since-dead fans fouled with a wide variety of attached species including Bull Huss eggs (a fairly recent phenomenon). (Keith Hiscock).



▲ A heavily fouled Pink Sea Fan *Eunicella verrucosa* present near Gull Rock on 9th June. Living branches can be seen on the lower part of the fan (photo: Keith Hiscock).

ANNELIDA: POLYCHAETA

A eunicid polychaete *Arabella ampulliformis* *Arabella ampulliformis* is a polychaete worm that was collected during the Lundy Marine Festival in 2022 and described in a paper by Darbyshire & Kara (2024).



▲ A polychaete worm new to science from Lundy: *Arabella ampulliformis* (anterior end) (photo: Teresa Darbyshire).



▲ The Orange-tipped seaslug *Trapania tartanella*, photographed on the wreck of the MV Robert (photo: Rollin Velinde).

**MOLLUSCA: GASTROPODA:
ONCHIDIIDAE**

Celtic Seaslug *Onchidella celtica*

Seventy-three counted in Devil's Kitchen on 25th August (Joe Parker). Particularly notable that the population (originally found in 2020 by Rosie Ellis) is still present in large numbers.

**MOLLUSCA: GASTROPODA:
NUDIBRANCHIA**

Crested Aeolis *Antiopella cristata*

Recorded on 5th August during a Snorkel Safari around Landing Bay Jetty (Ben Long).

Orange Doris *Gargamella* (was *Discodoris*) *rosi*

Seen on Landing Bay Jetty during a snorkel safari on 3rd July (TM-W). A conspicuous species that was the furthest north record when first seen at Lundy in 2022. Becoming more widespread in south-west England and now known from south-west Wales.

Orange-tipped Trapania *Trapania tartanella*

This nudibranch ranks as 'Nationally Rare' (until another location is reported) and was photographed by Rollin Verlinde on the MV Robert on 17th August. The species has only recently been discovered in Britain (Picton and Morrow, 2023).



▲ A single individual of Darwin's Barnacle *Austrominius modestus* (distinguished by having only four wall plates) among Stellate Barnacles, *Chthamalus montagui*, found at Quarry Bay (photo: Keith Hiscock).

Darwin's Barnacle *Austrominius modestus*

A non-native species common on the mainland but rarely seen at Lundy. Although found in very small numbers in past years, none were found in the region of Christie's Quay after much searching in June 2024 but, in a 45 minute search at Quarry Bay, one was located (Keith Hiscock).

CRUSTACEA: DECAPODA

Spiny Spider Crab *Maja squinado*

A frequently seen species around Lundy and sometimes seen in moulting aggregations. In 2024, a large number of shed carapaces were stranded near the Landing Bay Jetty noted on 3rd July (TM-W).

BRYOZOA

Red Ripple Bryozoan *Watersipora subatra*

This species was first found at Lundy on 27th May 2021. In 2024, it covered extensive overhanging or vertical (shaded) rock surfaces on the NW side of Rat Island and on the jetty fenders as well as under some boulders but was not found elsewhere. Systematic quadrat photographs were taken along the transect in 'Anemone Cave' on the north side of Rat Island. (Keith Hiscock and TM-W).

Ross 'Coral' *Pentapora foliacea*

Many colonies of *Pentapora foliacea* observed at Gull Rock in June were infested with Filigree Worms (*Filograna implexa*) perhaps suggesting that they were not in good condition. A similar situation was observed off The Battery during the Marine Festival surveys in 2022 and George (1975) notes about the worms: 'Common on rocks, stones, shells and *Pentapora* at all sites visited from 10-36 m'.

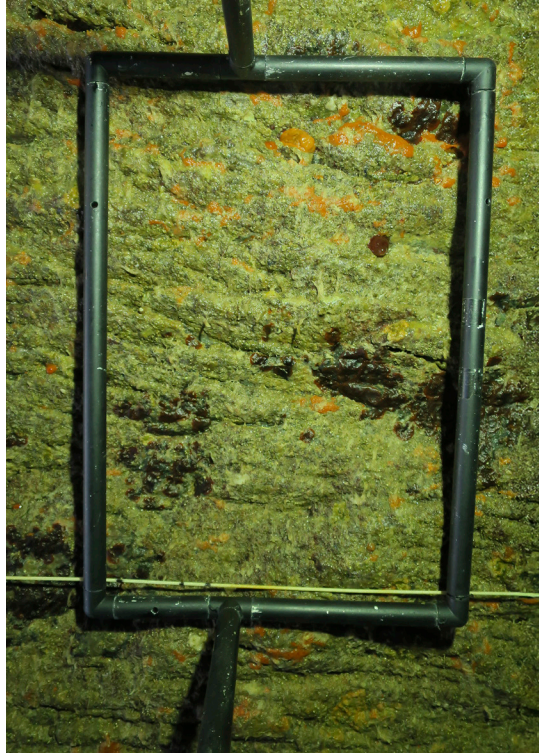
FISH

CHORDATA: PISCES

There are several fish species commonly seen by snorkelers and divers around Lundy including Bass, Grey Mullet (at the Landing Bay Jetty), Pollack, Ballan Wrasse, Cuckoo Wrasse and sandeels. Less frequently sighted species are noted here.

Basking Shark *Cetorhinus maximus*

A possible sighting of a basking shark in Jenny's Cove on 22nd June by a visitor – 'two fins moving slowly'. (Reported by TM-W).



▲ One of the survey quadrats along the 'Anemone Cave' transect (established in 1985 and 're-strung' on two stainless-steel screws, here on 22nd June). The dark patches are Red Ripple Bryozoan *Watersipora subatra*. (Photo: Keith Hiscock).



▲ A Nursehound / Bull Huss egg case ('Mermaid's Purse') attached to a Yellow Staghorn Sponge *Axinella dissimilis*, cutting into the branches (photo: Keith Hiscock).

Nursehound / Bull Huss *Scyliorhinus stellaris*
There were no records of the fish in 2024 but eggs entwined around Pink Sea Fans especially continued to be frequently seen. The egg cases remain after hatching and the tendrils from them may damage the Pink Sea Fans and cut into branching sponges such as the long-lived and slow-growing *Axinella dissimilis*.

Sunfish *Mola mola*
Just south of Brazen Ward on 30th July (Ishbel Hayes, Helen Cole, P. Hayes). Also seen on a crossing to/from Lundy on 30th August (AC and TJW).

Atlantic Bluefin Tuna *Thunnus thynnus*
One 'jumping' off Millcombe in the Landing Bay on 30th July and one on 3rd August (Thomas Weston).

TURTLES

CHORDATA: REPTILIA: DERMOCHELYIDAE

Leatherback Turtle *Dermochelys coriacea*
A probable Leatherback Turtle drifted north close-in past Millcombe on 14th August at around 0630 (Thomas Weston).

WHALES, DOLPHINS AND PORPOISES (CETACEANS)

CHORDATA: MAMMALIA

Overall, the number of records and of individuals seen of Harbour Porpoise and Short-beaked Common Dolphin were greater than in 2023. There were two sightings of Bottlenose Dolphin in 2024 (one in 2023, one in 2022, none in 2021 and one in 2020).

MARINElife record sightings of cetaceans on ferry trips between Ilfracombe/Bideford and Lundy. The number of sightings are reported on their website - <https://www.marine-life.org.uk/survey-reports>.

Short-beaked Common Dolphin *Delphinus delphis*
There were eight days (from early March through to early December on which there were logbook entries for Common Dolphin seen from the island: usually three or four together. There was one record on 18th May by MARINElife observers off the south coast from the land. Notably, on 7th May, a pod of 26 plus smaller groups of six and six passing Jenny's Cove between 1200-1400 (Thomas Weston). On 14th July, a pod of 25 was observed about 800m off the west side of the island just north of Quarter Wall (Chris and Sharron Blackmore). On 29th July a pod of c. 20 was reported heading north off Old Light/Battery on the west coast (Thomas Weston) and likely the same pod on the same day reported as 25 off Montagu Steps (Adam Hobbs).

There were sightings by MARINElife from five (out of 10) Oldenburg passages. On 18th May, there were sightings almost the whole way across to the island, off both port and starboard sides.

Bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*

Three were observed on 18th May '20 minutes east of the island' – presumably from a trip to the mainland (Ian Lewis). Eight were seen off the SW Point on 27th October during a cetacean watch: they were very far out but lots of breaking and playing made it easier to identify them (Anon.)

Risso's Dolphin *Grampus griseus*

Possible two large and one smaller Risso's on 12th October: moving NW to SE from Big St John's (Anon.).

Possible three Risso's off Rat Island on 18th October at 0800: impression was that dorsal fins were taller than for common dolphin (Tim Jones).

Harbour Porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*

There were 15 days on which there were logbook entries for Harbour Porpoise, mostly singles or two individuals. On 1st November, nine porpoise were seen – three off South Light, one more off SW Point, and five off North Light – all feeding in tidal races (Anon.).

There were sightings by MARINElife from three (out of 10) Oldenburg passages. On 18th May, there were sightings almost the whole way across to the island, off both port and starboard sides.

Minke Whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*

Likely a Minke Whale recorded on 9th May about 1.5 km off the south coast at about 1330, then seen moving rapidly off Rat Island at 1340 and then off Tibbetts Point at about 1352 (Chris and Carol Bailey). One heading north off Jenny's Cove on 25th June (Sally Kunzig) and likely the same one on 26th June feeding off The Battery (TM-W).

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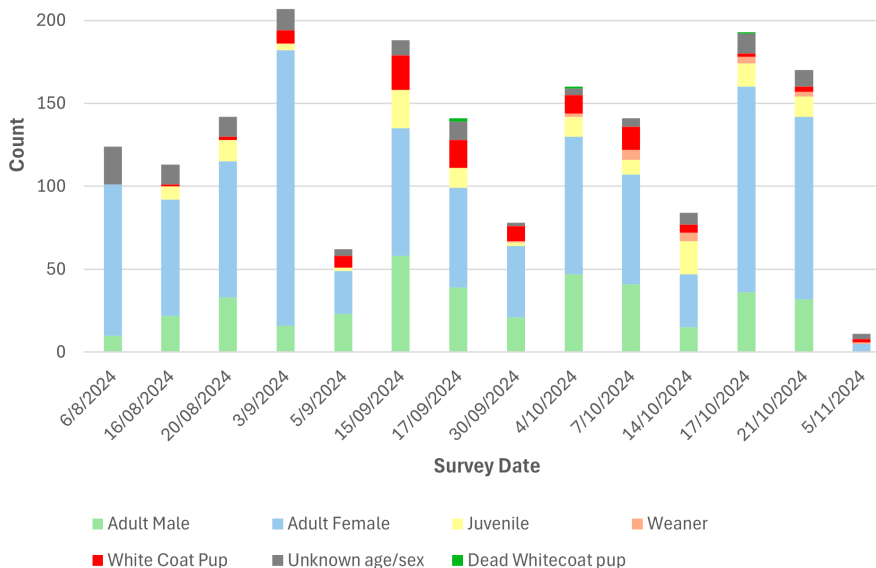
ATLANTIC GREY SEAL *HALICHOERUS GRYPUS* POPULATION AND PRODUCTIVITY STUDIES IN 2024

Ben Long, edited by Tara McEvoy-Wilding

The Atlantic Grey Seal population has been monitored consistently on Lundy since 2011, with evidence of *ad hoc* counts and monitoring recorded beforehand. This monitoring has historically been carried out by the conservation team, keeping the data for the island's own records. They would survey during peak breeding season to understand the distribution, population dynamics and productivity of the Lundy Grey Seals. In 2016 the survey method was reviewed to enable the data collected on Lundy to contribute to wider seal population assessments, such as the Sea Mammal Research Unit (SMRU) national seal surveys.

Population survey results

Fourteen population surveys were completed over the 2024 season between 6th August and 5th November. The highest population count of Atlantic grey seals, *Halichoerus grypus*, recorded on Lundy in 2024 was 207 individuals (166 females, 16 males, 4 juveniles, 8 white-coat pups, 13 individuals of undetermined age or sex), on 3rd September. This is 28 less than last year's recorded peak population count. Two whole island surveys were conducted this year, with only a few individuals recorded along the west coast during these surveys. The east coast continues to be an important habitat area for Atlantic grey seals. Three-Quarter Wall Bay remained an important haul-out area: the largest haul out the season was recorded there and consisted of 53 seals.



▲ Results of population surveys.



▲ Large haul-out of 53 seals recorded on 17th October 2024 at Three-Quarter Wall Bay consisting of 32 adult females, 12 adult males and 9 juveniles (not all pictured) (Photo: Ben Long).

Across the season, the majority (22%) of recorded seals were sighted in Three-Quarter Wall Bay. This was followed by Brazen Ward Battery (7.5%) and Gannets Bay South (6.5%). The largest recorded haul-out of the season consisted of 53 individuals (32 females, 12 males and 9 juveniles) at Three-Quarter Wall Bay on 17th October.

Productivity survey results

A record 71 pups were born on Lundy in 2024. The first white-coat pup was sighted on 11th August on Ladies' Beach. However, on 14th August a fully moulted and weaned pup was sighted in the Landing Bay. Thus, it is likely that due to the age of this pup when it was found, the pupping season on Lundy in 2024 officially started at the end of July. September was the busiest month for pup births, with 65% of pups born during this month. White Beach remained an important pupping area, with most pups first sighted here.

Despite a record year for pup numbers, mortality was high due to pup births coinciding with numerous easterly storms throughout the season. Observed mortality was calculated at 21%, much higher than the 8% recorded in 2023.



▲ Pup 8 on Ladies' Beach (Photo: Ben Long).



▲ Bobinett (80564) in the Landing Bay on 25th September 2024 (Photo: Paul Dean).

Tagged seals

Two tagged seals were positively identified during the 2024 season. The first individual was an adult female encountered on 25th September in the Landing Bay. This female was identified as individual 80564, also known as 'Bobbinett'. She was cared for at RSPCA West Hatch and later released at Coombe Martin, North Devon in January 2022. She has been sighted on Lundy three times previously, including last year, when she was sighted on Rat Island on 3rd August 2023.

A second individual was encountered on 21st October in Gannets' Bay South. This female was identified as individual 80408, also known as 'Tutti Frutti'. Tutti Frutti has previously been sighted on Lundy, in August 2021, as well as in West Cornwall.

Photo Identification

With guidance from the Cornwall Seal Group Research Trust, albums were created containing close-up shots of seals sighted during seal surveys and pup checks. These were then sent away for photo identification to establish where individual seals had previously visited and if any mothers had previously pupped on Lundy.



LUN345 'Moth eaten cookie cutter' was previously sighted in 2018, with her pup (number 21) on Ladies' Beach. She was also sighted in 2019 in Lametry Bay, but there was no record of whether she had a pup or not. This year, her pup was born on White Beach on 27th September 2024 and then later moved to Ladies' Beach, but we are unsure if the pup survived to stage 5. We hope to obtain more positive identifications in the coming months.

◀ LUN345 'Moth eaten cookie cutter' and her pup on Ladies' Beach, 7th October 2024 (Photo: Ben Long).

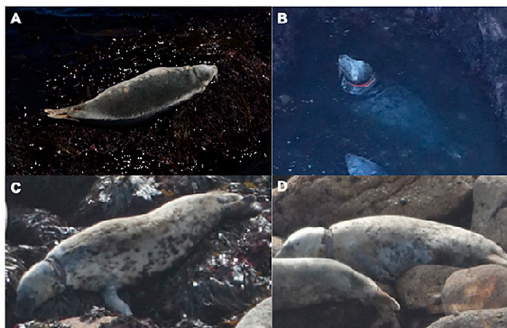
Entanglements

Four entangled seals were sighted in 2024, all entangled in marine pollution from anthropogenic sources. An adult female with fishing line around its neck was encountered on the 20th August at Gull Rock (image A right), and a second adult female with a plastic ring around its neck was observed on 17th September at North Gannets' Rock (image B right). On the 17th October, two separate individuals were seen with fishing line entangled around their necks hauled out at Halfway Bay (images C and D right). Both individuals were suffering from deep, open wounds. The Seal Research Trust were made aware of these individuals.

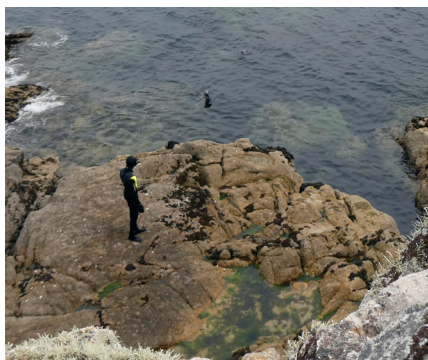
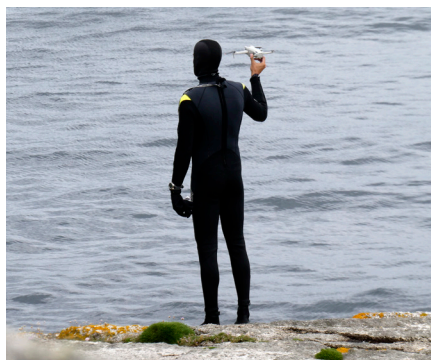
Disturbances

Outside of disturbance surveys, which did not contain any major disturbance issues, two incidental observations of disturbance were recorded. The first was observed on 17th August by Patrick Penny, a Lundy Ambassador. The incident involved a visiting dive group who were using a drone from a boat to film seals hauled out at Brazen Ward Battery. When the drone crash-landed at Brazen Ward, one of the divers swam ashore to retrieve it. This caused seven hauled-out seals to flush off the rocks and crash-dive into the sea. Lundy's Code of Conduct prohibits recreational drone use without permission on and within 100 metres of the island. Local charter boats were made aware of this incident and the detrimental effects disturbances such as this can have on seals. This incident has raised wider issues concerning drone usage in the Marine Protected Area.

A second incident occurred on 7th September, observed by the conservation team aboard MS Oldenburg. Three paddleboarders passed between Mouse and Rat islands at low-tide and thus within 100m of 11 hauled-out seals on Mouse Island. This caused the seals to flush and crash dive into the sea. The people involved were unaware of the disturbance they had caused.



▲ A) Adult female with fishing line entangled around its neck at Gull Rock on 20th August 2024. B) Adult female entangled in plastic ring at North Gannets' Rock on 17th September 2024. C) Adult female with fishing line entangled around its neck at Halfway Bay on 17th October 2024. D) An individual of undetermined age and sex with fishing line entangled around its neck at Halfway Bay on 17th October 2024.



▲ Man with retrieved drone on Brazen Ward Battery. ► Seven seals flushed into the sea after being disturbed by drone use while hauled out at Brazen Ward Battery (Photos: Patrick Penny).

Engagement

Regular engagement on Lundy's seal population comes from the tri-weekly talks led by the island's wardens. The talks, which centre around the island's wildlife, educate visitors on the population status and ecology of the island's grey seal population as well as informing visitors of the effects of seal disturbance, and how to prevent disturbance events. In 2024, additional talks from visitors, including Gareth Richards (Gower Seal Group) and Carole Lee (Seal enthusiast) provided further insight into the biology and conservation of the UK's Atlantic grey seal population.

During the pupping season, signs informed the public that Devil's Kitchen, Quarry and Landing Bay beaches were closed to prevent disturbance of seal pups. Signs were also used to convey information to visitors on best practices when observing seals; these were set up outside the Landing Bay boat building and in the Marisco Tavern. This information was also presented in free leaflets available in the Tavern and in the Landing Bay boat building. Lastly, engagement with the public came through conversations during surveys and nightly wildlife logbook meetings. Overall, engagement with the public was well received and talks were well attended. Conversations were positive, with many visitors interested in the status of the island's Atlantic grey seal population and the progress of pups.

Engagement with water users

Due to increasing concerns about seal disturbance from boats and recreational activities such as 'snorkel with seals' boat charters, the conservation team decided to set up a mailing list to promote best practice.

Initial contact involved a brief introduction to the island conservation team as well as sharing best practices from DEFRA and the Seal Alliance. Subsequent emails contained updates on seal and pup numbers and discussed the effects of significant disturbance events that had occurred and social media posts showing bad practice. We then mentioned what actions had been taken following the event(s). In one case, our escalation, with help from the Seal Research Trust, led to an email being issued to a charter boat company from Natural England after we were alerted to a post on social media which showed a snorkeler 'hugging' a seal.

Conclusion

Overall, a year of record pup numbers on Lundy which unfortunately coincided with a year of unfavourable weather conditions, including multiple easterly storms. Despite this, it was great to see many moulted and weaned pups hauled-out and swimming around in the Landing Bay later in the season!

Disturbance from water users continues to be an issue on the island. However, by expanding outreach and education surrounding the issue, we hope to ensure better behaviour from water-users. Disturbance levels will continue to be monitored.

Acknowledgements

A big thank you to Lundy Wardens, Joe Parker and Tara McEvoy-Wilding, for all their guidance and support throughout the season, and to the conservation team and Lundy Field Society for their help with island-wide surveys. Thank you to Sue Sayer MBE, Kate Williams and the team at Seal Research Trust for their help with photo identification and guidance surrounding issues of disturbance, and to the RSPCA for their help with identifying tagged seals and providing additional information for each seal. Thanks to Carole Lee and Gareth Richards for their great talks on all things seal, and lastly, to all the Lundy locals and visitors for their continued updates on seal whereabouts and sightings throughout the season.



▲ Crucian Carp (photo: Alan Rowland).

FRESHWATER FISHES

Jennifer George

The three main species of fish found in the Lundy ponds all belong to the Carp family: the **Mirror Carp**, *Cyprinus carpio*, the **Golden Orfe**, *Leuciscus idus*, and the **Crucian Carp**, *Carassius carassius*.

Mirror Carp seem to be restricted to the Rocket Pole Pond, and Golden Orfe to Quarry Pond. **Crucian Carp** occur both in Pondsbury and the Quarry Pond. Descriptions of the fish and their feeding and breeding habits were given in the 2023 LFS Annual Report. Both large forms and juvenile fish have been recorded in the last five years which shows that spawning has been successful. Spawning of **Mirror Carp** was observed and photographed by the Warden, Dean Jones in 2021 (2021 LFS Annual Report).



▲ Mirror Carp (photo: Jennifer George).

All three species appear to be thriving, but in 2024 only two observations were found in the LFS Log Book. Michael Williams observed 35 **Golden Orfe** in Quarry Pond in August, and three **Mirror Carp** were seen in the Rocket Pole Pond in October (Anon).



▲ Golden Orfe (photo: David George).

Until a full fish survey can be attempted it would be helpful if both Staff and Visitors record the fish seen, their numbers and sizes, and the location and date of observation in the LFS Log Book, together with any photographs.



▲ Rocket Pole Pond (photo: Kathy Weston).

TERRESTRIAL EXOTICS

Yet again, as the front cover of this Report attests, one of the species sightings we have been so sceptical about has proved to be based on reality.

Slow worms *Anguis fragilis*, first thought to have been accidentally introduced around 2011 but reported as long ago as April 2000, were last year joined by the sound of a Common Toad *Bufo bufo* calling near Quarry Pond in May 2023; again, this creature had been sighted in 2000 and 2001 by National Trust visiting work parties.

This year these two 'exotics' were joined by a third, a **Common Lizard** *Zootoca vivipara* (see Reptiles, Land Mammals and Bats in this issue). Warden Joe Parker and I scrutinised the photograph submitted almost accidentally by Andrea May. Andrea was seeking confirmation of an out-of-season sighting of a Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* when the Common Lizard photograph was spotted by Joe – she hadn't realised how unusual the lizard sighting was until Joe pointed it out. It was in the middle of a sequence of photographs, all so obviously identifiable as taken on Lundy that there was no doubt in our minds of it being a Lundy sighting.

It turns out that this was yet another species seen by a National Trust party at the millenium and not thought worthy of highlighting; lizards are relatively common on the mainland, so they must have thought its presence on Lundy was just as common.

So, how did all these exotics come to be on Lundy?

I suggest that we can dismiss deliberate introduction as there are no other easily transferred species – frogspawn for example. Accidental introduction also seems unlikely, especially most recently with the biosecurity measures that are in place. Translocation of species is thought to result in an extremely low return (1.6%; Nash *et al*, 2020) with relocated species either moving on – not practical on Lundy – or simply dying out for lack of suitable habitat.

Lundy seems to have the ideal habitat for Slow worm and Common Lizard, and they have little impact on the fauna of the island: Slow worms depend on a variety of invertebrates, including slugs, snails, worms, spiders, insects and ant larvae (indeed, the first confirmed recent sighting of a Slow worm was under slate in an ants nest in Millcombe (Rowland 2012); Common Lizards are carnivorous and prey on small invertebrates, particularly soft-bodied prey such as spiders.

In discussing the favourite haunts of the Common Lizard, Michael (2024) might be describing the typical Lundy habitat where the Lizard was found: 'habitat features which provide shelter from the wind appear to be particularly valuable; these might include dense scrubby plants, such as Gorse *Ulex europaeus* and Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, and vegetated but rocky quarry-like micro-habitats.' There is plenty of Gorse harbouring populations of soft-bodied spiders and other invertebrates on Lundy.

Why are we seeing these exotics with increasing frequency now? The explanation could be that these species have always been on Lundy, and it is another benefit of the successful Sea-bird Recovery programme completed in 2004, which rid the island of the major omnivorous predators – Brown and Black Rats. Whatever the case, please do look out for these three exotics and the one that is still missing, the Adder *Vipera berus*.

References

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An incidental sighting of my first Lundy Common Lizard occurred on 4 August 2024, on gorse near Rocket Pole Pond. I was slowly ambling about, always keen to find Lundy specimens. Following a break in the clouds, the sun came out, and a slight movement caught my eye: the lizard had seen me first, but we stared at each other for quite a while.

I reached for my phone, standing very still so as not to be seen as a threat, and the little critter carried on with its business. It looked like it was searching for food but could have been sunbathing. After obligingly posing it wandered off – let's hope it has a mate!

Such a charismatic, unique animal – I feel lucky and privileged to have had this encounter.

Andrea May

REPTILES, LAND MAMMALS AND BATS

Chris Blackmore

Amphibians

The surprising sound of a **Common Toad** *Bufo bufo*, heard at the Quarry and possibly a second below the Terrace as recorded in the 2023 Annual Report has not been repeated in 2024, with none seen or heard.

Introduced Reptiles

A first for Lundy! ... or not? Warden Joe Parker was recently sent a photo of a **Common Lizard** *Zootoca vivipara*. It was seen by Andrea May on 4th of August 2024, 'on top of gorse between Rocket Pole Pond and the Kistvaen before it quickly disappeared'. This was really exciting news and thought to be a first. However, Alan Rowland wrote in the LFS Annual report 2023 of reports of Common Lizard sightings on Lundy in previous years, the latest being in May and September 2000 by National Trust visiting teams. Please do keep an eye out for this addition to the island's wildlife.



▲ Slow worm by 'Village' sign by Millcombe, June
(photo: Alan Rowland).

There were only 10 sightings of **Slow-Worms** *Anguis fragilis* recorded in 2024. Unfortunately three were dead, one had a missing tail and was bleeding but still alive and 'David' reported one on 16th May in Millcombe Valley 'taken by adult starling to feed early young'.

Most sightings were in Millcombe, although J Parker and B Maxted recorded a male on the Main Track, parallel with Pondsburry on 19th May, and assistant warden Tara McEvoy-Wilding recorded one on the West Coast on 26th April, 50cm long and moving across the grass north of Pyramid.

Native Land Mammals

Lundy's only native terrestrial mammal, the **Pygmy Shrew** *Sorex minutus* continues to be recorded throughout the island and in many of the properties. In 2024 there were 53 recorded sightings of a total of 90 animals, four of which were dead. They were seen as far north as Widow's Tenement and Brazen Ward. A notable series of sightings on 8th August by P St. Pierre and C Lock recorded 14 between the Castle and Old Light and others were recorded during nocturnal surveys, including thermal, at various locations by Joe Parker and assorted helpers.

Bats

There were few recorded sightings of bats during 2024. **Common Pipistrelle** *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* were detected between the farm and church on 3rd June by Steve Evans using wildlife acoustic detection methods. Two **Pipistrelles** were recorded by Thomas Weston at the Barn on 5th May, as well as in Millcombe on 8th June by P St. Pierre and C Lock. Our intrepid Joe Parker ensured that a **Common** or **Soprano Pipistrelle** *P. pygmaeus* was liberated from the Tavern on 11th August.

Feral Land Mammals

The feral ungulates are monitored and controlled according to the terrestrial management plan. A feral stock count was carried out in March 2024 and culls took place in February, September and October. Please do keep reporting sightings in the logbook as these add to the information gained from the formal stock counts.



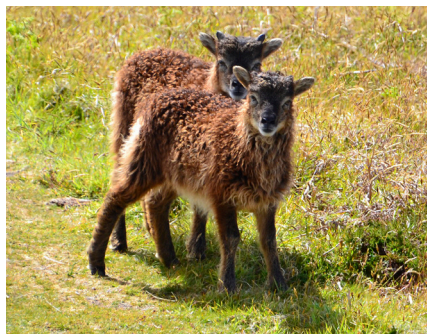
▲ Sika conga (photo: Chris Blackmore).

Sika (*Cervus nippon*)

Sika are now being recorded from Rocket Pole to the North End and on both west and east coasts and are far less shy than previously. A stock count in March by J Parker, T Weston and A Rowland recorded 125 animals (82 hinds and 43 stags). Further significant counts throughout the year included 16 on both the 16th and 17th April in Southwest Field by Carole Lee. Intriguingly one had only '1 horn, a unicorn' which Carole saw twice. Chris Dee recorded 65 in St Helen's Copse on the 15th April. An anonymous entry in the logbook, seen at the Tavern on 21st August, of '2 stag and 1 Red Deer' perhaps indicates the ale must have been particularly good that day! In February, 13 stags and eight hinds were culled, six stags in September and three stags in October.

Soay Sheep (*Ovis aries*)

The stock count in March by J Parker, T Weston and A Rowland recorded 295 animals, (234 ewes and 61 rams). Further significant sightings, both by M Williams, were 52 on the West coast from Halfway Wall on 26th May and 35 at Middle Park on 28th December. In February one ewe was culled, 38 rams and 3 ewes were culled in September and 25 ewes and nine rams in October.



▲ Soay lambs (photo: Kathy Weston).

Goat (*Capra aegagrus*)

The stock count in March by J Parker, T Weston and A Rowland recorded 47 animals, (26 nannies and 21 billies). Further significant sightings were of 18 from the Upper East Coast Path (One billy, 11 nannies and six kids) by A Rowland on 19th March, 15 (four billies and 11 nannies/kids) by Chris Dee on 15th April, and 18 at Old Light by Carole Baillie on 3rd October. One billy was culled in February, three billies and one nanny in September and seven billies in October.

Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)

The slow recovery in numbers continues with no reported outbreaks of Myxomatosis or Rabbit Viral Haemorrhagic Disease, although four carcasses were reported and on 10th December one was seen near the steps at North Light by Anna Northam who recorded, 'it didn't appear to hear me approaching and the right eye was opaque so probably no vision'. This could possibly have been a diseased animal. Highest counts were increased on 2023 numbers with 18 recorded between the Castle and Old Light on 8th June by P St. Pierre and C Lock, 12 on the Main Track and North End Sidelands with a thermal imager on 10th June by J Parker, 25 in the Village 'dazzling route' on 28th September by J Parker and 10 on a nocturnal survey on 10th January by J Parker. One was also seen with puffins at St Martin's Stone on 16th June by L Pecasse. Please do continue to record your rabbit sightings.



▲ Wingnut (photo: Chris Blackmore).

FRESHWATER INVERTEBRATES

Jennifer George

Introduction

In 2024 the freshwater invertebrate records emanate solely from the research of Alan Rowland, who is continuing his long term study of the Lundy streams, particularly the Millcombe Stream and St John's Stream. He monitored both together with Brambles Pond in March and November. Additional records are from Lundy's largest body of freshwater, Pondsburry, when the LFS Field Course students, led by Alan, sampled Pondsburry and its surrounding streams in June (see separate report, pp 33-35) and again by Alan in November.

A new record for Lundy was the finding of the caddisfly larva, *Limnephilus affinis/incisus* from Pondsburry in November. For more details, see in the Trichoptera (Caddis fly) section.

Platyhelminthes (Flatworms)

As in 2023 two species, the **white flatworm**, *Phagocata vitta*, and the **black flatworm**, *Polycelis nigra* occurred in both Millcombe and St John's streams. *Phagocata* was particularly abundant in March with 66 being found in St John's Stream between the Quarters and Brambles areas.

Nematomorpha (Horsehair, Hair worms)

A **Horsehair worm**, carrying eggs, was found in the Millcombe stream in November. Eggs are laid in long jelly streams on water plants. The larvae which develop are parasitic in insect hosts such as beetles or grasshoppers. Adults grow to maturity in the body of the host and then emerge to seek water where mating and egg laying occurs. after which the adult dies.

Oligochaeta (Segmented worms)

Both streams contained the black *Lumbriculus variegatus* worm and the **Sludge worm**, *Tubifex* sp. which had the largest numbers, 12, occurring in the Quarters region of St John's Stream. Brambles Pond contained the **Square-tailed worm**, *Eiseniella tetraedra*.

Hirudinea (Leeches)

The **Horse Leech**, *Haemopsis sanguisuga*, which is often seen in depressions near the Quarterwall Gate, was found in the Millcombe Stream Cascade in March. The black leech, *Erpobdella* sp. also occurred in the Millcombe Stream above the confluence.

Mollusca (Snails, Mussels, Limpets etc)

The small black **Jenkins Spire Snail**, *Potamopyrgus antipodarum*, occurred in very large numbers in both streams. Numbers ranged from 380 in the Millcombe Stream Cascade to 282 in St John's Stream near Square Cottage in March. This very successful small snail (see photo) was also found in large numbers by Long in his 1993 survey of the Lundy streams. (LFS Annual report 1993). This snail was originally a brackish water species in New Zealand but since the late 19th Century it has colonised freshwater habitats throughout Europe and the UK. It was first recorded in London freshwaters in 1859.



▲ Jenkins Spire Snail, *Potamopyrgus antipodarum*
(photo: Alan Rowland).

Its success is due to the fact that it reproduces asexually as well as sexually, with females carrying up to 120 embryos. It can live on damp surfaces and is quoted as surviving being eaten by birds and passing through their guts. Birds could have carried them to Lundy.

Other Molluscs found were the **Wandering Pond Snail**, *Perigrina peregra*, in the Millcombe Stream and Brambles Pond, and the **Pea Mussel** (Family Sphaeriidae) in St John's Stream near Square Cottage.

Crustacea (Shrimps, crabs, water fleas, copepods, ostracods)

Crustacea were represented by the small **seed shrimps**, Ostracoda, found in areas of St John's Stream and Brambles Pond. **Water fleas** of the Family Daphniidae occurred in St John's Stream. The **Water Slater**, *Proasellus meridianus*, was found in both streams and in Pondsburry. This species occurs in almost all of the Lundy freshwater habitats crawling among leaves and debris on the bottom sediments.



▲ Water Spider (*Argyroneta aquatica*) in Pondsburry 1986 (photo: Jennifer George).



▲ Crane fly (*Limoniidae*) larva (photo: Alan Rowland).

Arachnida (Spiders, mites)

A **water mite** of the Suborder Hydracarina was found in the Millcombe Stream Cascade in March. The **Water Spider**, *Argyroneta aquatica*, which was first recorded in Pondsburry by Gallford in 1953 and then found in fairly large numbers in the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, seems now to have disappeared from the Lundy invertebrate fauna. Despite several surveys from 2000 to 2024, no trace of this spider has been found. Considerable amounts of dredging of Pondsburry occurred after 1993 with the heightening of the dam on the western bank, and this probably contributed to the loss of this species.

Insecta (Insects)

Fly and Midge larvae

Millcombe Stream had the greatest diversity of larvae with **Blackfly** (*Simulium*), **Long-Legged Fly** (*Dolichopodidae*), **Trickle midges** (*Thaumaleidae*), **Meniscus midges** (*Dixidae*), **Non-biting midges** (*Chironomidae*), **Crane fly** (*Limoniidae*) and **Mosquito** (*Culicidae*) all being found, with the latter three species also occurring in St John's Stream and Brambles Pond. The **Biting Midge** (*Ceratopogonidae*) was recorded in Brambles Pond and in St John's Stream near The Quarters.

Odonata (Dragon and Damselflies)

Nymphs (larvae) of the **Blue-tailed damselfly** (*Ischnura elegans*) were found in Pondsburry in November. A nymph of the **Emperor Dragonfly** (*Anax imperator*) also occurred there. Adults of this species have been recorded around various

ponds in recent years and ovipositing has been observed at Rocket Pole Pond in 2018 and in Quarterwall Pond in 2022. The nymph found by Alan this year is a young instar (see photo) which reflects successful breeding of this species.

Hemiptera (Water Bugs)

Water bugs are more frequently found in ponds, and **Water Crickets** (*Velia* spp) are more common in flowing waters. One juvenile *Velia* was found in the Millcombe Stream Cascade in March. Bugs recorded in Pondsburry included the **Saucer Bug** *Ilyocoris cimicoides*, found by the students in June (see photo on p35). This broad-bodied flattened bug up to 16mm long with hair-fringed hind legs is a fierce predator on other invertebrates and has a bite painful to humans. The large **Water Boatman**, *Notonecta maculata* and the smaller Corixid bug, *Hesperocorixa linnei*, were found in Pondsburry in November.

Trichoptera (Caddis flies)

Eight species of caddis fly larvae were found in the Lundy streams and Pondsburry with the most exciting find being *Limnephilus affinis/incisus* in Pondsburry, a new record for Lundy. Larvae of these species build a case of overlapping pieces of plant material (see photo) and feed by 'shredding' (tearing and chewing plant material and debris) with their strong mouthparts, together with possible predation on smaller invertebrates.

This species could either be *L. affinis* or *L. incisus* – adult material is needed for definitive identification as the larvae cannot reliably be separated from one another. However, a clue may lie in where it was found: *L. affinis* lives in brackish as well as fresh water, while *L. incisus* prefers neutral to alkaline waters. As Pondsburry is an acidic water body (its pH has been recorded as 4.8–5.5 over the years), and it can receive sea spray during storms, it is likely that this Lundy species is *Limnephilus affinis*.

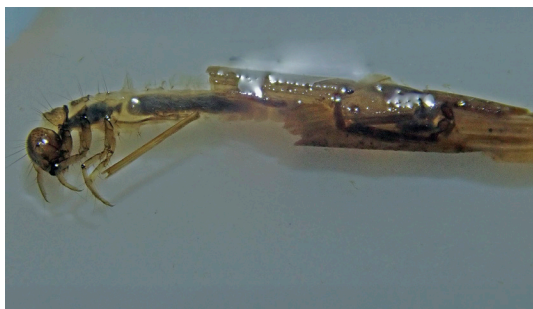
Other caddis larvae found in the streams are the cased larvae, *Sericostoma personatum* in both streams and Pondsburry, *Micropterna sequax*, and a Glossosomatid larva in the Millcombe stream. The caseless caddis *Diplectona felix*, *Wormaldia occipitalis* and a *Psychomyid* species occurred in the Millcombe stream. *Plectronema geniculate* was found in St John's Stream near the Quarters.

Coleoptera (Beetles)

In St John's Stream a **diving beetle** larva (Family Dytiscidae) (see photo overleaf) was found, which also occurred in Brambles Pond together with an adult *Dryops* sp. – a small beetle covered with a grey/yellow pubescence often found at the edges of streams. Two adult beetles were recorded in Pondsburry in June: *Noterus clavicornis* with its orange/brown strongly convex dorsal surface, and the larger black *Ilybius ater*.



▲ Young nymph of Emperor Dragonfly, *Anax imperator* (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Caddisfly larva, *Limnephilus affinis/incisus* emerging from its plant case (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Diving Beetle (*Dytiscidae*) larva (photo: Alan Rowland).

Conclusions

The Millcombe and St John's streams together with the records from Brambles Pond and Pondsburry show that these freshwater habitats have a very diverse range of organisms. The invertebrates have survived the 2022 drought when many of the freshwaters dried up or became much reduced. Alan Rowland is intending to continue with his streams survey and is also now surveying Pondsburry regularly, with the aim of reviewing its invertebrate population since the first records were made over 70 years ago (1953). As in 2023, new records are continually being found in the freshwater habitats, which indicates migration from elsewhere in the UK, and particularly from SW England and Wales.

It is essential that staff and visitors to Lundy record in the Log Book any freshwater animals that have been seen near the water surface or at the edges of the ponds and streams. Common names such as **Water Boatman** or even **Black Beetle** will be helpful, as species determination is difficult without identification guides.

Alan would like to thank Rachel Mackay-Austin for the identification of *Limnephilus affinis/incisus* and the beetle *Noterus clavicornis*, and Kevin Rowley for confirming the identity of the bugs, *Hesperocorixa linnei* and *Notonecta maculata*.

GREAT NEWS! The Water Spider, *Argyroneta aquatica*, has been sighted. It was found in both the NE and SW areas of Pondsburry in early April 2025 by Kevin Rowley, and again in late April 2025 in the NE area among vegetation by Mark West.



▲ *Petrobius maritima*, Benson's Cave, October (photo: Mark West).

TERRESTRIAL INVERTEBRATES

The majority of these records have been extracted from the Bird Observatory/LFS Log book stored in the Marisco Tavern where those visiting Lundy have shared their findings. Some sightings were not used as the recorder left neither name nor contact information to enable us to verify them. These records are supplemented by observations submitted to iRecord by other visitors to Lundy. Additional records have been sent directly by those who left their properties on their last day and made observations but did not return to the Tavern to record them.

Not all records can be verified without descriptions or photographs and some require dissection. However, some photographed species have been shared with national or regional experts who have verified or determined them.

Unless stated, sections were compiled by Alan Rowland.

Nematomorpha (Horse-hair Worms)

A terrestrial sighting on 15th October was made by Ann and Tony Taylor adjacent to the Gothic Gate into Government House. Further Nematomorpha sightings will be found in the Freshwater Invertebrates section.

Thysanura (Silverfish)

Two sightings of **Silverfish** *Lepisma saccharina*, are recorded by A Rowland in the Tavern in March and Thomas Weston in The Old School in April. These are synanthropic and are to be found in domestic buildings.



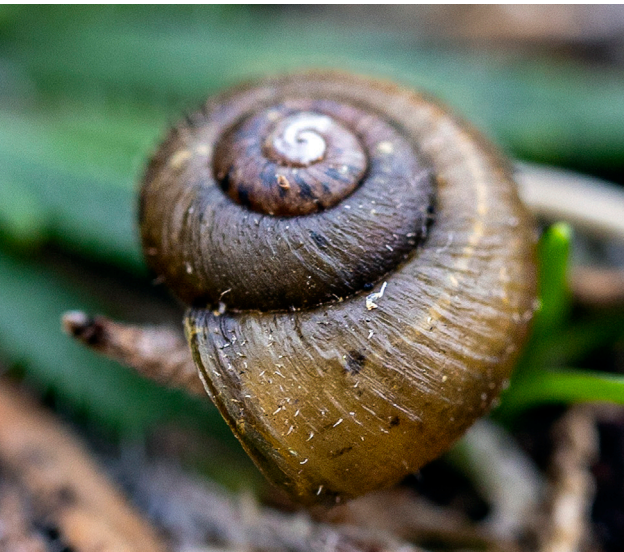
▲ Garden snail, the Casbah, October (photo: Mark West).

Archaeognatha (Bristletails)

Mark West had a **Sea Bristletail** *Petrobius maritimus* photobomb his sighting of a harvestman in Benson's Cave on 21st October.

Mollusca (Slugs and Snails)

All the usual species were reported ranging from **Black Slug** *Arion ater* agg, two sightings, and a further two of seven individual **Leopard Slugs** *Limax maximus*. These are difficult to separate from Keeled Slugs so photographs would have been preferable.



Brown-lipped Snails *Cepaea nemoralis* featured in seven sightings of 18 individuals, but only one **White-lipped Snail** *Cepaea hortensis* was reported. Mark West recorded a large hibernaculum of **25 Garden Snails** *Cornu aspersum* tucked snugly under the roof of the Casbah in October.

The find of the year was Mandy Dee's **Green Snail** *Ponentina subvirescens*. This is the first record since 1906 and we are indebted to Ben Rowson for his determination of it.

Further mollusc sightings can be found in the Freshwater Invertebrates section.

◀ Green snail, West Side, November (photo: Mandy Dee).

Arachnida (Spiders, Harvestmen, Mites and Ticks)

Compiled by Mark West

Mites

Mites are some of the smallest Arachnids, and **Red Velvet Mites** (Trombididae) can be found on Lundy from the Landing Bay at the south to the North Light. On warm days, these tiny invertebrates can often be seen racing around on rocks in quite large numbers. Alan and Sandra Rowland reported 50 at Barton's in June. Small and fast also means challenging to photograph in the field; however Mandy Dee achieved a great close-up shot near Castle, using a Canon EOS R6 camera with 35mm macro lens and adapter with built-in ring flash.



▲ 2mm Red Velvet Mite, near the Castle (photo: Mandy Dee).

Spiders

While identification of some species of Arachnid can be difficult if not impossible without the use of a microscope, cameras and mobile phones are now taken for granted as important tools for the recording and study of finds. It is quite fascinating to make some comparisons of 2024 records with those from a different era, when modern technology was not available. William Bristowe's 1929 paper 'The Spiders of Lundy' was submitted to the Zoological Society of London following his week-long visit to the island during a heatwave in July 1928. His paper discusses instances of spiders poaching on each other's territory, and in 2024 an occupied tube web of a *Segestria* species was found in Millcombe with only the legs of the spider visible making identification difficult. A later review of photographs suggested that rather than *Segestria* the occupant could be an imposter, either a **Long-jawed Orbweb** *Metellina* or an **Orbweb** *Zygiella* species, a behaviour that has been observed on Cornish cliffs (many thanks to Tylan Berry for the identification assistance).



▲ *Segestria* sp. tubeweb with unidentified occupant, Millcombe (photo: Mark West).

Bristowe appears to have concentrated his searches at the north and south of the island, observing: 'Puffins breed on Lundy in countless numbers' and that at the north western slopes he shook from dry sea-pink *Harpactea hombergi*, the **Stripe Legged** or **Sneak Spider**, which Steve Evans found in the completely different setting of the Old School in June 2024. Bristowe also found amongst the rocks, *Textrix denticulata*, the **Toothed Weaver**, which was recorded in the similar habitat of a stone wall north of the village by Andy McGeeney in May 2024.



▲ Pirate Otter Spider, Pondsburry (photo: Mark West).

Interestingly Bristowe does not mention visiting Pondsburry, only that there are 'only one or two little streams on the island'. Martin Harman purchased Lundy in 1925, and an aerial photograph taken early in his ownership does not show what is now the island's largest body of water, presumably because it had not been created by means of a dam at that time. (Many thanks to Michael Williams for the photograph and information.) While searching for freshwater invertebrates during the April 2024 Field Studies Course with Alan Rowland, **Wolf Spiders**, most likely *Pardosa nigriceps* and *Pardosa pullata*, were found, along with a **Pirate Otter Spider**, *Pirata piraticus*, rafting in the margins of Pondsburry. Bristowe recorded all three species amongst the marsh-plants of the streams in 1928.

A visit in July perhaps coupled with the heatwave could explain why no **Garden Spiders**, *Araneus diadematus* were recorded in 1928. These Orbweb Spiders are most abundant in late summer/early autumn and were reported by J & J Macbeth and T. Coldwell at Widow's Tenement and the Quarries in September 2024.

Although at least one of the Quarry cottages (South End Villa) was in use in the early 1920s (Langham, 1995), it is believed the Quarries may have been out of bounds during Bristowe's visit. The Timekeeper's Hut was also in a derelict state (again many thanks Michael Williams). Having been restored in 1983 as a memorial to Felix Gade with further work in more recent years, it is now a good place for spiders! Visiting student Navid Sharifi found a **Black Laceweb Spider**, *Amaurobius ferox*, next to the fireplace, and a male, female and juvenile were recorded in April and October 2024. An impressive Drassodes species **Ground Spider** – probably *D. lapidosus* – was photographed in the corner of the hut window in April 2024 along with several **Long-jawed Orbweb Spiders**, probably *Metellina merianae*. Bristowe comments on the apparent scarcity of Drassodes on Lundy but did not believe them to be rare, hypothesising: 'The soil was dried up and cracked with the heat, and the stones were hot through and through. This would probably make life impossible for them in their usual position under stones'.

In June 2024 Steve Evans found male and female **Missing Section Orbweavers**, *Zygiella x-notata* in the Timekeeper's Hut, a species which is almost exclusively associated with human habitation and buildings. *Metellina merianae* is frequently seen in huts and bird hides, but like many spiders may be found in a wide range of locations that offer a suitable environment of climate, structure, and prey. Bristowe comments: 'Their webs are extremely common in banks, cliff-faces, on houses, amongst shrubs in caves (near the entrance), across Puffin or Rabbit-holes etc'. In 2024, *M. merianae* were also recorded at the Earthquake and in Benson's Cave.

Moving to the south of the island, there is a great entry in the 2024 log: 'Daddy long legs spider **Pholcus** in loo at Castle Cottage eating woodlouse *Porcellio scaber* for breakfast'. The Cellar Spider, *Pholcus phalangioides* is subtropical in origin and found almost exclusively in houses. When opportunities arise, woodlice and other, often larger, spiders are regularly predated. In the 1930s it was only found in the south of England but has since continued to spread northward (Oxford & Smith, 2018). Bristowe reports them to be 'very abundant in the hotel' (now gone),



▲ ▼ Female and male Black Laceweb Spider, *Amaurobius ferox*, Timekeeper's Hut (note white patches on the pedipalps of the male). (photo: Mark West).



▲ *Drassodes* sp. Stone Spider, probably *D. lapidosus*, Timekeeper's Hut (photo: Mark West).



▲ *Metellina* sp Long-jawed Orb Weaver, Timekeeper's Hut (photo: Mark West).

and today this species is almost certainly in all of the heated accommodation on Lundy. Three were found in the shower/toilet area of Tibbets and the shed exoskeletons (exuviae) of spiderlings were seen in a web in the corner of Tibbets living room in October 2024.



▲ Juvenile *Eratigena* sp. House Spider, probably *E. saeva*, Camping Field (photo: Mark West).

Bristowe found **Nurseryweb Spiders**, *Pisaura mirabilis*, to be 'quite common up the southern end'. Jean Young and Alan Rowland recorded these spiders near the Ugly and in Millcombe in 2024. House spiders were also reported in Big Saint John's and a juvenile *Eratigena* sp., probably *E. saeva*, at the Camping Field. Bristowe found the **Common House Spider** *Tegenaria domestica* (Derhamii) at the entrance to Benson's cave, whereas in October 2024, several *Tegenaria*/*Eratigena* sp. Spiders, possibly *T. silvestris*, were found deeper inside.



► *Tegenaria* sp. House Spider, Benson's Cave (photo: Mark West).

Harvestmen

Close examination of the walls of Benson's Cave with torch and camera can yield many Arachnids and although it seems to have been previously reported as present on Lundy, *Nelima gothica*, a harvestman new to the LFS list was discovered in 2024. According to the British Arachnological Society the first British record of this species was not until 1934 on the island of Skokholm, 45 miles north west of Lundy. The finder...W.S Bristowe!



▲ Harvestman *Nelima Gothica*, Benson's Cave (photo: Mark West).

The current Lundy list of all Arachnids (157 spp.) can be found on the LFS Website. Of those, 93 spp. were first recorded by Bristowe. As Tony Parsons commented in the 2007 LFS Annual Report: 'W. S. Bristowe was one of the major arachnologists of the 20th century.' Indeed he was and as can be seen, his very significant contribution to the understanding of spider distribution on Lundy remains of great relevance.

Spider identification can be challenging and for some genera, for example the Pardosa Wolf Spiders and Clubiona Sac Spiders, confirmation of many of the species is not possible without microscopic examination. Needless to say, good photographs of body and leg conformation, showing shape, colouration and size are helpful, particularly if taken from above, as are macro shots showing the eye arrangement if the spider stays still for long enough! As always please do keep entering records in the logbook and sending in your photographs.

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▲ ► *Philoscia affinis*, Beach Road, April. *Philoscia affinis* showing 7th pereopod of male (photos: Jean Young).

▲ ► It is only recently that this species has been separated from the much more common and ubiquitous *P. muscorum*. Reliable identification requires microscopic examination of 7th pereopod of a male specimen which Jean supplied with her photographs.

Isopoda (Woodlice)

Three species were reported this year: **Common Rough Woodlouse** *Porcellio scaber* at the Castle in April by MW and two sightings of **Common Shiny Woodlouse** *Oniscus asellus* – LESP in September by Macbeth and Coldwell and in the Quarries in April by Jean Young. Of great interest is the first sighting on Lundy by Jean Young of ***Philoscia affinis*** on the Beach Road in April.

There were five sightings of the diminutive **Ant Woodlouse** *Platyarthus hoffmannseggii*

Selective turning of stones sheltering ant colonies will almost always reveal these 5mm long blind isopods with which they are closely associated. Reported by A Rowland at UESP, Bramble and St John's Valley and on the Beach Road by Jean Young in March and April.

Myriapoda (Centipedes and Millipedes)

Jean Young reported the **Common Banded Centipede** *Lithobius Variegatus* on the West Coast in April.



▲ *Platyarthus hoffmannseggii* (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Variegated centipede (photo: Janet Young).

Orthoptera (Grasshoppers and Crickets)

compiled by Malcolm Lee



▲ Speckled Bush Cricket nymph (photo: Alan Rowland).

Just three Orthoptera reports in the log book this year, all in known locations: 28th June, **Speckled Bush-cricket** *Leptophyes punctatissima* nymph on Lower East Side Path near Tibbetts.

On 16th September a **Field Grasshopper** *Chorthippus brunneus* was reported beside Battery Steps. This was entered in the log book as Common Green Grasshopper, which has never been recorded on Lundy, but the image confirmed it was the all green variety of the Field Grasshopper, which is very similar. The third record was another Field Grasshopper by the Felix Gade letter box on 15th October.

If anyone has taken an image of a species of Orthoptera about which they are not sure, you may email it to me at gullrockportgavenre@btinternet.com so I can take a look at it.

Hemiptera/Heteroptera (True Bugs)

Gorse Shieldbugs *Piezodorus lituratus* were recorded in March by Alan and Sandra Rowland: 11 were counted in the Gorse at the top of Millcombe, four around Rocket Pole (food for Common Lizards?), and six along the Upper East Side Path. Paula and John Holt saw one each at Rocket Pole Pond and at the Timekeeper's Hut.



▲ Spear Thistle Lacebug (photo: Jean Young).

On the 16th and 17th April Jean Young recorded a **Spear Thistle Lacebug** *Tingis cardui* on the Upper East Side Path and around Rocket Pole Pond.

Mandy Dee found a **Masked Yarrow Aphid** *Macrosiphoniella usquertensis* at the Castle on 28th September: this is a first for Lundy and we are indebted to Omar Sanchez for identifying it.

Coleoptera (Beetles)

Carabidae (Ground beetles)

One sighting of two **Green Tiger beetles** *Cicindela campestris* was made by Lucy Pecosse at the Battery on the 12th May.

Silphidae (Carrion beetles)

Four **Black Sexton beetles**, *Nicrophorus humator*, were found when moth trapping by Elise O'Donnell on 15th May at the Old Light. Sam Bosanquet submitted a late record missed last year of a



▲ *Macrosiphoniella usquertensis* (photo: Mandy Dee).

Short Sexton beetle *Necrodes littoralis* found (herocically!) under a sheep carcass at Jenny's Cove on 18th August 2023.

Staphylinidae (Rove beetles)

Six **Devil's Coach Horse beetles**, *Ocyopus olens*, were reported on six separate occasions by Mark West on 19th April on the West Side, on the Lower East Side Path on 17th September by J&J Macbeth and T Coldwell, at Tibbets and the Timekeeper's Hut on 15th and 17th October by Paula and John Holt and on the 7th November by Chris Dee at the Old Light.

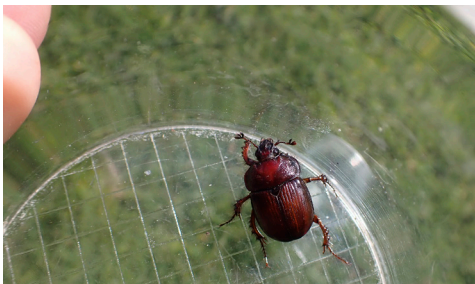
On 30th April Sue Waterfield recorded a **Rove beetle**, *Staphylinus dimidiaticornis*, at the Battery.

Geotrupidae (Dor beetles)

Unidentified to species Dor beetles *Geotrupidae* were as usual prolific all over the island with over a hundred being reported and as many as 50 at the North End and 30 on the Upper East Side Path seen by many recorders. These are most likely to have been the **Woodland Dor Beetle** *Anoplotrupes stercorosus*. A further two definite sightings of Woodland Dor Beetles *A. stercorosus* were made by Alan and Sandra Rowland, both on the Upper East Side Path on 25th and 28th June

A single ***Geotrupes spiniger*** was seen on the Upper East Side Path on 23rd Jun by Alan & Sandra Rowland.

Single sightings of a total of 16 **Minotaur beetles**, *Typhaeus typhoeus*, were made from February to November by many recorders at all locations on the island. However, thanks to Linda Losito, we were able to identify this unusual brown morph of a Minotaur beetle found by Mark West at the Old Light on 19th April.



▲ Minotaur, unusual brown morph (photo: Mark West).



▲ Devil's Coach Horse (photo: Mark West).



▲ *Staphylinus dimidiaticornis*, Rove beetle, Battery (photo: Sue Waterfield).



▲ Woodland Dor Beetle (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Rosechafer (photo: Alan Rowland).

Scarabaeidae (Scarab beetles)

Eighteen sightings of 26 individual **Rosechafers** *Cetonia aurata* were recorded in widely different areas of the island from the North End, where five individuals were seen, to Millcombe and both sides of the island.

Elateridae (Click beetles)

A **Click beetle**, *Agrypnus murinus* was seen by Jean Young on 18th April at the Battery.

Cantharidae (Soldier beetles)

Common **Red Soldier beetles** *Rhagonycha fulva* were not so common this year with only two sightings by Alan and Sandra Rowland on the Upper East Side Path. Five were counted on the 25th and 23 on the 28th June.

Tenebrionidae (Darkling beetles)

There was only a single record of a **Sulphur beetle** *Cteniopus sulphureus* by an anonymous recorder at the Castle on the 12th July.

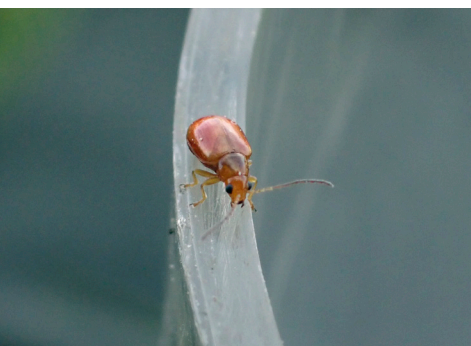
Coccinellidae (Ladybirds)

A **7-spot Ladybird** *Coccinella septempunctata* was recorded by Jean Young on 14th April on the West Side.

Chrysomelidae (Seed and leaf beetles)

Laura Larkin and Andrew Whitehouse of Buglife spend a few days on Lundy surveying Lundy Cabbage. A full report of their findings will be published in the LFS Journal 10. They worked the Lundy Cabbage patches in Millcombe, above the Landing Bay and along the East Side on 2nd and 3rd July and found six **Lundy Cabbage Flea beetles**, *Psylliodes luridipennis*.

Mark West recorded a **Ragwort or Tansy Flea beetle** *Longitarsus jacobaeae/Chrysolina graminis* at Quarry Cottages on 17th April. The two species can only be separate by genital dissection but either way, it is a new record for Lundy. Thanks to Michael Geiser for the identification.



▲ Tansy or Ragwort Flea Beetle (photo: Mark West).

P Holt recorded another sighting of the **Leaf beetle** *Chrysolina banksii* at Benjamin's Chair on 17th May, a species that is becoming more common recently.

Curculionidae (True Weevils)

Laura Larkin and Andrew Whitehouse found more than 25 **Lundy Cabbage Leaf Weevil** *Ceutorhynchus contractus* var. *pallipes* on the same dates and in the same areas as the Lundy Cabbage Flea Beetles noted above. Phyl England also recorded a sighting of two individuals in Millcombe on the 2nd June.

Two **Vine Weevils** *Otiorhynchus sulcatus* were recorded in Quarters on 18th and 19th March by Alan & Sandra Rowland.

Diptera (True Flies)

Compiled by Sam Bosanquet

There was very little Diptera recording on Lundy in 2024, with just three records of three species. These were:

St Mark's Fly *Bibio marci*: one recorded at North Light on 14th April by JY.

***Siphona* sp.** (Tachinidae): photographed on Castle Hill on 28th September by MD, but sadly not identifiable to species from the photo.

Volucella zonaria: this hornet mimic hoverfly was recorded on the Lower East Side Path by James and Jackie Macbeth on 17th September. Their note in the logbook was backed up by a photograph to confirm the identification. This species only colonised Britain in the 1940s and is expanding its range north-westwards at a rapid rate; this is the first Lundy sighting. The island Diptera total rises to 485 species following the addition of *V. zonaria*.



▲ *Siphona* sp., Castle Hill (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ *Volucella zonaria*, Lower East Side path (photo: J & J Macbeth).

Hymenoptera (Bees, Wasps & Ants)

Compiled by Sam Bosanquet

There was a notable increase in Hymenoptera records compared with the five records made in 2023, although most of the 50 records from 2024 are of common Bumblebees. There was also some confusion as to which species were involved, although **Buff-tailed Bumblebee** was clearly the commonest species and **Common Carder-bee** was seen regularly, along with three definite records of **White-tailed Bumblebee** and one of **Early Bumblebee**. There were four records of **Ruby-tailed Wasp**, although these cannot be assigned to any particular *Chrysis* species without detailed examination. The only really notable records made during the year were:

Colletes hederæ: One on ivy at the Battery on 20th September (TW). This is the first Lundy record of this colony-forming **Solitary Bee**, which was first recorded in Britain in 2001 and is spreading rapidly north-westwards. It flies late in the year and gathers nectar on ivy flowers, so searching for this species on flowering ivy in Millcombe in September and October might produce more records. The lack of Honeybees on Lundy will make identifying *C. hederæ* relatively easy here.

Diastrophus rubi: galls seen on bramble in Millcombe on 17th May (PH).

The island Hymenoptera total rises to 256 species, following the addition of *C. hederæ*.



▲ Emperor Dragonfly ovipositing, Quarry Pond
(photo: Daniel George Burbidge).



▲ Emperor Dragonfly, Quarter Wall Pond (photo: Amanda Yates).

Odonata (Dragonflies and Damselflies)

compiled by Mandy Yates

There was a decrease in the number of Odonata species recorded on Lundy this year with only two species of Dragonfly, **Emperor** *Anax imperator* and **Black-tailed Skimmer** *Orthetrum cancellatum* identified, plus two unidentified hawkers. However both of the usual two species of Damselfly were recorded, the **Common Blue Damselfly** *Enallagma cyathigerum* and the **Blue-tailed Damselfly** *Ischnura elegans*. The summer of 2024 had more than the usual number of days of rain, cloudy conditions and cold winds and this may have had an impact on Odonata sightings this year, it certainly was the case when I went over in June to conduct Odonata surveys.

Anisoptera (Dragonflies)

Emperor *Anax imperator*

The earliest record for the **Emperor** is the 2nd of June and the latest was 4th September. There were 18 records of Emperor sightings with a maximum of three being seen at any one time. Emperors were sighted near Ponsbury and Quarter Wall Ponds with one female seen laying eggs (ovipositing) in Quarter Wall Pond during my June survey and another record of ovipositing in the same pond entered in the log book anonymously as being seen on 21st July. Daniel George Burbidge photographed

an Emperor ovipositing in Quarry Pond on the 4th of August. This is an interesting sighting as none have been reported as ovipositing in that location in the last 10 years. It will be interesting to see if Emperors are spotted emerging from this pond in two or three year's time or if any pond surveys brings up Emperor Larvae. Emperors were also seen hawking along the main track at Tibbets Hill and along Quarries Terrace.

Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*

This first sighting was recorded on the 16th June and the last recorded sighting was 18th August, with a maximum of two seen at any one time. Of the eight records of **Black-tailed Skimmers** in the log book all occurred at Ponsbury apart from one that turned up at Quarry Pond during my surveys in June. Eleanor Hams recorded seeing a freshly emerged individual at Ponsbury on the 11th July.

Unidentified Dragonflies

There was one report of a Dragonfly at Ponsbury for the 16th August; on contacting the observer we decided it was quite possibly an Emperor. Another sighting of an unidentified Hawker was recorded anonymously as being seen along with an Emperor at Ponsbury on the 6th June.

Zygotera (Damselflies)

Newly emerged (teneral) Damselflies

Approximately 20 newly emerged **Common Blue/Blue-tailed Damselflies** were seen around Pondsbury on the 24th June.

Common Blue Damselflies *Enallagma cyathigerum*

The only recording for adults of this species was of 10 Common Blue Damselflies at Pondsbury on the 18th July.

Blue-tailed Damselflies *Ischnura elegans*

There were nine records for this species, with the first being seen between 17th and 21st May and the last recorded on 18th July. The maximum number seen was estimated to be between 20 and 50 individuals around Pondsbury in June. This species have been sighted at both Quarry pond and Pondsbury. I saw one pair copulating at Quarry Pond during my survey.

Unidentified Damselflies

Two Blue Damselflies were seen at Quarry Pond on the 11th June. These were likely to be Blue-tailed Damselflies.

Records of Odonata nymphs can be found in the Freshwater Invertebrates section.

Trichoptera (Caddisflies)

There were no reports of moth trap intruders this year, but records of caddis larvae can be found in the Freshwater Invertebrates section.

Lepidoptera – Butterflies

compiled by Kristin Reed

Sixteen species of butterfly were seen on Lundy in 2024. Absent were Speckled Wood, Comma, Holly Blue, Wall Brown and Clouded Yellow - species that have been recorded in previous years.

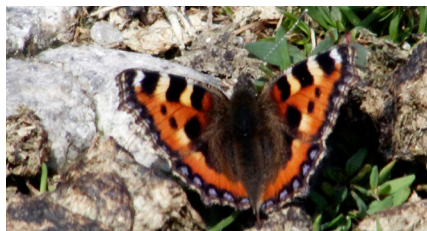
The first sighting for Lundy this year was one **Small Tortoiseshell** on the 5th March followed by **Red Admiral** and a **Large White**.

Small Heath were abundant with a peak daily count of 60 on 19th June. **Meadow Brown** peaked at a count of 34 on 27th June.

Happily the **Grayling** colony was still present though with fewer sightings noted. One Grayling was seen on 19th July, the highest count of



▲ Blue-tailed Damselflies copulating, Quarry Pond (photo: Amanda Yates)..



▲ Small tortoiseshell (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Small Heath (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Painted Lady (photo: Alan Rowland).

four individuals on 14th July, and the last on 16th August. The numbers are down on last year when 13 individuals were noted on the 13th July.

As last year there was a Southern migration of **Red Admiral** on the Island. On the 6th September there was a recording of over a thousand over the Island dropping to 235 the next day.

The last sighting of the year was one **Painted Lady** on 3rd December.

Lepidoptera – Moths

compiled by David Rowe

During 2024 a total of 96 moths (132 in 2023) were recorded on Lundy – 72 macro moths and 24 micros. This was lower than 2023 due to the poor season that affected all insect populations throughout the UK; the moth trap was also deployed on fewer occasions than usual, just nine sessions: seven by Lundy staff and twice by keen visitors. A new lithium battery has been purchased for the moth trap so it should be more reliable and productive in 2025.



▲ Fox Moth caterpillar, above Earthquake, December (photo: Gavin Rudge).

The first record for 2024 was a **Garden Tiger** *Arctia caja* caterpillar on the Upper East Side path on 14th March. The first adult reported was an **Early Grey** *Xylocampa areola* by Bramble villas. The last adult of the season was an **Olive-tree Pearl** *Palpita vitrealis* on the terrace and the last larva observed was a **Fox moth** *Macrothylacia rubi* caterpillar on New Year's Eve above the Earthquake.



▲ Six Spot Burnet Moth (photo: David Rowe).

The highlight of the year was a **Convolvulus Hawk-moth** *Agrius convolvuli* found by Heather Whittaker in the cemetery on 18th August. Another feature was the high number of Fox moth caterpillars observed throughout the year: 443 in total (compared to 154 in 2023) with 49 reported on 24th September alone. Thankfully there was at least one species of moth that thrived in our strange summer.

Day-flying Moths

The most notable scarcity in 2024, obviously affected by the weather, were the **Burnet moths** *Zygaena* ssp. Usually in June/ July they create quite a spectacle as they emerge on the fields between the church and the castle. These colourful moths are in

a group termed 'day-flying moths'. Around 15% of macro-moth species fly openly during daytime. On Lundy along with the Burnet moths, **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** *Macroglossum stellatarum*, **Emperor moth** *Saturnia pavonia*, **Silver Y** *Autographa gamma*, **Yellow Shell** *Camptogramma bilineata*, **Brown Silver-line** *Petrophora chlorosata* and **Carpet** moths among others are also seen on sunny days.

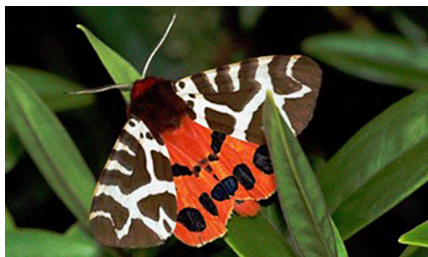
Even more numerous during the day are the micro-moths. The tiny **grass moths** *Crambus* sp. and *Agriphila* sp. scatter as one walks through long grass and on landing are disguised by aligning themselves with the stem. Another group from the same family, collectively named **Pearls**, on landing scurry to the underside of leaves, away from predators and my camera! The micro **Tortix** family are also often seen flying amongst Bramble, *Rubus fruticosus*, Gorse *Ulex* spp. and Heather *Calluna* spp. and rely on devious colour schemes such as resembling bird droppings. The Burnet moths don't need to hide, since the red spots warn predators that they produce hydrogen cyanide, which gives a bad taste and can ultimately be fatal.

Moth Migration and the Silver Y

It is common knowledge that birds migrate, but not many people realise that some moths do too. Lundy is visited every summer by several visitors from the continent including three macros: **Dark Sword Grass** *Agrotis ipsilon*, **Silver Y** *Autographa gamma*, **Vestal** *Rhodometra sacraria* and three micros: **Diamond Back** *Plutella xylostella*, **Rufous Pearl** *Udea fulvalis* and **Rush Veneer** *Nomophila noctuella*. With most moth species it is a one-way trip, but Chapman *et al* (2012), using VLR (Vertical Looking Radar) and mark-release techniques have shown that for the Silver Y, one of Lundy's most common moths, this is not the case. In some years numbers increase up to fourfold ready for their mass migration south. Not only that, they have a magnetic compass that resets at sunset enabling them to fly in overcast conditions, so neither moon nor stars are needed for navigation. They also ascend to select the most suitable jet-stream and, providing the air flow is within 20 degrees of their desired direction,



▲ Rusty-dot Pearl (photo: David Rowe).



▲ Garden Tiger (photo: David Rowe).



▲ Grass Moth aligning itself on a stem (photo: David Rowe).



▲ Yellow Shell, Earthquake (photo: David Rowe)..



▲ Brown Silver-line (photo: David Rowe).



▲ Silver Y (photo: David Rowe).

they finely adjust their bearing to reach their destination at speeds of more than 50km/hr. This enables them to travel between 300km and 400km per night and to travel from the UK to perhaps southern Africa in a matter of days, leaving Cuckoos and Swallows well behind!

Thanks

The species compilers wish to thank the submitters of records for their observations, in particular:

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Reference

Chapman, JW et al (2012) *Seasonal migration to high latitudes results in major reproductive benefits in an insect.* Proc Nat Acad Sci USA 109:14924-14929)

2024 Day-flying moth data from LFS Log Book Check List

Moth Species	Recorded on (Days)	First Date	Last Date	Maximum and Date	Total
6 Spot Burnet	5	16 July	30 July	10 on 18 July	25
5 Spot Burnet	2	30 July	30 July	5 on 30 July	7
Fox (Caterpillar)	58	2 April	31 December	49 on 24 Sept.	443
Emperor	6	9 May	21 May	6 on 16 May	18
Hummingbird Hawk-moth	21	28 August	23 Oct	3 on 7 October	25
Silver Y	46	12 April	31 October	30 on 9 August	136

PLANTS AND FERNS

Andrew Cleave

Some long lists provided this year have included a few potential new plant species for the island and the rediscovery of some which have not been seen for many years. The lists also include some non-native species and garden escapes which have become established in a few spots.

Eye-catching flowers like the **African Corn-lily** *Ixia maculata* cannot be overlooked when in flower, but its slender stems and grass-like leaves make it very inconspicuous for most of the year. A few specimens can be found near the path above Millcombe House, but it does not seem to have spread elsewhere. The shrubby **Red Escallonia** *Escallonia rubra* is a native of mountain slopes in the Andes in Chile and Argentina and is a very tough plant. It is popular for hedging because of its robust nature and can be invasive in places but it seems not to be spreading on Lundy. Much more common and well-established in the shelter of Millcombe is the **Hardy Fuchsia** *Fuchsia magellanica* whose flowers are a huge attraction to bees in the late summer. **Creeping Yellow Sorrel** *Oxalis corniculata* is found among the cobble stones around Millcombe House where it has been established for many years, but a second alien species, **Upright Yellow Sorrel** *Oxalis stricta*, seems to have found its way to Lundy. In greenhouses and very sheltered areas on the mainland this can be an invasive species so the presence of this plant will need to be monitored.

One of the earliest native species recorded in flower was **Early Scurvy-grass** *Cochlearia danica* which can be found in many rocky places, including on walls and paths in the village areas. Early in the season the plants are very low-growing and compact, but as the season advances they become larger and more obvious with elongated flower stalks. The heart-shaped lower leaves are glossy and slightly fleshy.

Many of the island's native species are small and inconspicuous but some keen



▲ African Corn-lily *Ixia maculata* (photo: Sam Pitt Miller).



▲ Upright Yellow Sorrel *Oxalis stricta* (photo: Andrew Cleave).



▲ Sea Storksbill *Erodium maritimum* (photo: Sam Pitt Miller).



▲ Bird's-foot *Ornithopus perpusillus* (photo: Sam Pitt Miller).



▲ Buck's Horn plantain *Plantago coronopus* (photo: Andrew Cleave).

photographers managed to find and photograph a number of these in 2024. One of the most overlooked species is **Sea Storksbill** *Erodium maritimum* which has tiny flowers, sometimes without petals. It is actually very common on Lundy, but quite scarce in many mainland coastal areas. Its preferred habitat is open, gravelly areas, and the tops of walls, where it does not have to compete with more vigorous species.

Bird's-foot *Ornithopus perpusillus*, a very small and creeping member of the pea family, is often overlooked but occasionally vigorous specimens are found, especially in areas newly colonised where there is no competition with other species. Usually entirely prostrate, this year some very large specimens were found with dense masses of flowers.

Buck's-horn Plantain *Plantago coronopus* is a very common plant on Lundy, but most specimens are really small, forming tiny rosettes on bare ground. Occasionally specimens grow on rock faces where there is no risk of trampling or grazing and then the plant can be much larger, with its leaves looking more like the 'Buck's Horn' – i.e. the antlers of the Fallow Deer – which give the plant its English name. The scientific species name of '*coronopus*' refers to the crown-shaped arrangement of the flowers.

A very familiar plant on the walls of Lundy is **Pennywort** *Umbilicus rupestris* but less common is the unrelated **Marsh Pennywort** *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* which grows in damp flushes, pond margins and streams. The leaves bear a superficial resemblance to the Pennywort which grows on the walls, but the

plants are from separate families. Marsh Pennywort is more closely related to members of the Carrot family. It produces tiny flowers on slender stalks which require a hands-and-knees search to find them. Another very small species found in the same damp habitats is **Blinks** *Montia fontana* which forms bright green patches of foliage. The small white 5-petalled flowers sit among the slightly fleshy, spoon-shaped leaves and appear in early spring. **Allseed** *Linum radiola* which has minute white flowers on thread-like stems, usually at their best in late spring and early summer, is also found in wet areas of close-cropped turf. It often forms small dense cushions and is tricky to spot when not in flower. However, it is often a good indicator of where to look for Lundy's smallest fern **Small Adder's-tongue** *Ophioglossum azoricum* which was reported from many sites on the west side in 2024. A more conspicuous species of wetter areas is **Round-leaved Crowfoot** *Ranunculus omiophyllum*, a member of the buttercup family with white flowers. It grows well in

the ditches near Quarter Wall gate, but can be found in many wet flushes and streams. One of the more obvious plants of wetter areas is **Lousewort** *Pedicularis sylvatica* with short spikes of pink-purple flowers and joined sepals which inflate around the flower after pollination. At the south end, on the exposed slopes below Rocket Pole Pond, many of the specimens were only a few centimetres tall, but in more sheltered spots some taller plants were found, including some pale-flowered examples.

A plant which has not been seen for a few years is **Wild Madder** *Rubia peregrina* but some photographs revealed this to be present on the east side. It is a scrambling, evergreen perennial and can be a bit tricky to spot among brambles or Honeysuckle, but it does produce clusters of black berries in the autumn and may be more obvious then.

There are old records for both **Hard Shield-fern** *Polystichum aculeatum* and **Soft Shield-fern** *P. setiferum*, but neither species has been verified for many years. Both species are quite common along lanes and hedgerows in north Devon so it is possible that one or both could still be present on Lundy. There are unverified reports from 2024 of Soft Shield-fern amongst the trees below Brambles Villa so this needs to be checked in 2025. During the seabird season many visitors made their way down to the Battery to watch the Puffins and a



▲ Blinks *Montia fontana* (photo: Sam Pitt Miller).



▲ Allseed *Linum radiola* (photo: Andrew Cleave)



▲ Small Adder's-tongue *Ophiglossum azoricum* (photo: Andrew Cleave)



▲ Marsh pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (photo: Sam Pitt Miller).



▲ Round-leaved Crowfoot *Ranunculum omiophyllum* (photo: Sam Pitt Miller)



▲ Wild Madder *Rubia peregrina* (photo: Andrew Cleave).



▲ Sea Spleenwort *Asplenium maritimum*
(photo: Andrew Cleave).

number of them remarked on the fine display of **Sea Spleenwort** *Asplenium maritimum*, seemingly growing out of solid rock. It is one of our hardiest ferns and is tolerant of salt spray so is often found on exposed coastal rocks where few other plants could survive.

For entries in the LFS Logbook it is helpful to have your name and contact details so we can follow up any queries. Please leave as much indication as possible of where you found things. Photographs and enquiries can be sent to botany@lundy.org.uk



▲ *Heterodermia leucomelos* growing among *Teloschistes flavicans* (photo: Lindsay Mahon).

LICHENS

Sam Bosanquet

There is no doubt about the Lundy lichen highlight of 2024: Lindsay Mahon found *Heterodermia leucomelos* growing among *Teloschistes flavicans* on a horizontal granite outcrop above Constable Rock at the north end of the island. This is the first Lundy record of this rare lichen, which has fewer than 15 recorded British sites since 2000 and has only been seen at one other Devon site since the 1950s. Although its long, black 'whiskers' are distinctive, *Heterodermia* is quite easily overlooked when growing in maritime turf and should be looked for elsewhere on the island. Lindsay recorded 15 lichen species on her visit in March. *Teloschistes flavicans* was also noted by the Battery Steps on 3rd July by Thomas Weston.

There is no Bryophytes report this year because nobody recorded any mosses, liverworts or hornworts on Lundy in 2024.



▲ Deformed podetia of an Antler lichen, *Cladonia* sp., caused by an infection by *Zyzygomyces bachmanii* (photo: Jenny Seawright).

FUNGI AND SLIME MOULDS

Mandy Dee & John Hedger

Introduction

We made three recording visits to Lundy in 2024, in the first week of April (MD) the last week in September (MD) and the first week of November (MD and JH). In addition, there were other sightings of fungi recorded in the Logbook which extended the coverage to some of the Spring and Summer months. In total 108 species of fungi were found, of which 29 were new records and 14 were second records. These are shown in the table at the end of this report. The current list to be found on the LFS website has 833 species of fungi so once the 2024 new records have been added the total will be 862. One difference this year is that we have included five species detected by extraction of DNA from soil and root samples and identified from DNA data bases ('metabarcoding') by Ruben Mole as part of his study of the Grey Waxcap on Lundy which was funded by a grant from the LFS. This means the new records total of 'seen and found' fungi is in fact 24 for the year, not 29, still pretty impressive. No new Slime Moulds this year, so the total stays at 23.

More studies of Lundy grassland via DNA barcoding are planned for 2025, again funded by the LFS, so we will have to decide whether to accept any records they generate. A problem. Ideally finding fruit bodies of these fungi would resolve this issue but their often small size makes it a challenge. One example might be *Zyzygomyces bachmanii*, whose DNA Ruben found in Antler lichens

(*Cladonia* species) of which it is a parasite. Infected lichen can be spotted in the field by discoloured flattened plates on the 'antlers' on which the tiny fruit bodies of the fungus form. The photo shows an example from the Dorset Nature website. Surely it can be found on Lundy by someone with good eyesight, a hand lens and patience?

Field Records

One of the earliest records was an odd one; in March Alan Rowland found a white shelf-like gill fungus sprouting out of the wood of one of the cargo boxes used on the Oldenburg. It proved to be *Pleurotus pulmonarius* the **White Oyster Mushroom**, which is common on the mainland on dead Elms but never seen before on Lundy.



▲ White Oyster Mushroom *Pleurotus pulmonarius* fruit bodies on a cargo box on the Jetty, March (photo: Alan Rowland).

April saw more records, including that by Thomas Weston of the hard black **Cramp Balls** or **King Alfred's Cakes** (*Daldinia concentrica*) on the Ashes at the bottom of Millcombe. It has been recorded here for many years and will only disappear if the Ashes themselves are killed by the **Ash Dieback** fungus (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) – a new record we do not wish to have. Moving into May, Mandy Dee found a true Spring fungus: **St George's Mushroom** (*Calocybe gambosa*), an attractive chunky white gill fungus which appears around St George's Day (23rd April) and into May. It was in long grass in the Village. Other Spring records were of grassland and dung fungi which also occurred right through into late autumn on Lundy, for example the **Fairy Ring Champignon** (*Marasmius oreades*) and the **Egg Head Mottlegill** (*Panaeolus semi-ovatus*), both found by Richard Penny in grass on Ackland's Moor in April. By June the dry conditions meant few records – just two, another Egg Head Mottle Gill on dung in Middlepark by Sophie Williams and an **Ochre Britlegill** (*Russula ochroleuca*), usually a harbinger of autumn, under the Pines in Millcombe by Alan Rowland.

The main autumn crop of fungi was well under way when Mandy Dee was on the island at the end of September into the first week in October, with many of the grassland fungi, including the iconic **Waxcaps**, **Pinkgills**, **Earthtongues** and **Club Fungi** fruiting in their usual sites in turf

around the Old Hospital, Quarter Wall Cottages, the Airfield and Southwest Field, especially around the Rocket Pole. One notable Waxcap find was of the bright yellow pointed caps of the **Persistent Waxcap** (*Hygrocybe acutoconica*) which is only found occasionally on Lundy, always around the Old Hospital and Quarter Wall Cottages. Apart from the usual species of **Yellow Clubs** (*Clavulinopsis*) Mandy also found the short pink **Skinny Club** (*Clavariopsis incarnata*) in short turf at Quarter Wall Cottages, a new record bringing the Lundy total of Club Fungi to 18. Nearby was the **Beige Coral** (*Clavulinopsis umbrinella*), the third record. Although well studied these areas continue to produce exciting new finds, including a 'true' **Mushroom** (*Agaricus porphyrocephalus*) on the



▲ *Agaricus porphyrocephalus* fruiting on the Airfield, October (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ Skinny Club *Clavariopsis incarnata* in turf at Quarter Wall Cottages, October (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ Beige Coral *Clavulinopsis umbrinella* in short turf near Rocket Pole, October (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ Persistent Waxcap *Hygrocybe acutoconica* in short turf at Quarter Wall Cottages, October (photo: Mandy Dee).

Airfield, a rare purple-brown capped species about the same size as a Field Mushroom. This brings the total number of Mushroom species recorded for Lundy up to 13.

Early autumn is the best time to look for the fungi associated with the stands of **Creeping Willow** (*Salix repens*) in the Punchbowl Valley and around Pondsby. In all cases they have a symbiotic, mycorrhizal association with the roots of the shrub. Mandy got a good list including fruitings of the **Cep** or **Penny Bun Mushroom** (*Boletus edulis*), dwarfing the associated willow plants, as well as the colourful orange fruit bodies of the **Marsh Webcap** (*Cortinarius uliginosus*) and the aptly named **Cinnamon Webcap** (*Cortinarius cinnamomeus*), the latter a new record for Lundy. An even more exciting find was a **Poison Pie** (*Hebeloma*), *H. theobrominum* – the species name reflects the cocoa (*Theobroma cacao*) brown colour of its chunky caps. Another new find, and nationally uncommon.



▲ Penny Bun Mushroom *Boletus edulis* among Creeping Willow, Punchbowl Valley, October (photo: Mandy Dee).

By the time Mandy was on the island for her second survey week with John Hedger in early November most of the fungi associated with the Creeping Willow had disappeared. However the grassland fungi were present in much larger numbers, especially on Southwest Field and around Rocket Pole where the short turf was covered in colourful orange red and yellow **Waxcap** species, some spectacular blue-capped **Pinkgills** and many **Apricot**, **Golden** and **Yellow Clubs**. The latter included a very odd form of the **Golden Spindles** (*Clavulinopsis fusiformis*) with a rounded cauliflower shape rather than the usual pointed clubs. Louise Tranter, an expert on these fungi, considers it may be a new variety or even species of Club and she will be carrying out a DNA based study of all Club Fungi next November funded by the LFS, seeking to determine if new varieties or species do occur on Lundy.

Another puzzling find was a group of slimy-capped orange brown **Waxcaps** which we thought at first were *Gliophorus europerplexus* – a new record for Lundy. On checking specimens though, it appears to be an undescribed variety of the **Heath Waxcap** *Gliophorus laetus*. We await DNA sequencing of dried material sent to Aberystwyth University to solve the puzzle. We also await sequence confirmation of another Waxcap which if correct will be new to Lundy: the **Dingy Waxcap** (*Neohygrocybe ingrata*) – an apt name for the single rather dull



▲ Marsh Waxcap *Cortinarius uliginosus* in Creeping Willow Punchbowl Valley, October (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ *Hebeloma theobrominum* in Creeping Willow Punchbowl Valley, September (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ Heath Waxcap *Gliophorus laetus* a novel form found near Rocket Pole in medium height grass, November (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ A novel form of Golden Spindles *Clavulinopsis fusiformis* in short turf near the Punchbowl, November (photo: John Hedger).



▲ Sepia Pinkgill *Entoloma jubatum* in short grass near Rocket Pole, November (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ Navy Pinkgill *Entoloma atrocoeruleum* in short grass Southwest Field November, (photo: Mandy Dee)..



brown and partly broken fruit body we found in the short turf near the Quarter Wall Cottage foundations which nevertheless had the right change to pink in the gills and stem when bruised. Microcopy confirmed the spore size and shape were correct. If right, this addition brings the Lundy total of Waxcap species to 40!

We also found many fruit bodies of **Pinkgills**, *Entoloma* species, at the Quarter Wall Cottages site and around the Old Hospital. Two were new records: **Clandestine Pinkgill** (*Entoloma clandestinum*) and the **Clubbed Pinkgill** (*Entoloma inusitatum*). There were second records for the flat brown caps of *Entoloma infula*, the **Chaste Pinkgill**, and the purplish brown pointed caps of *Entoloma jubatum* – the **Sepia Pinkgill**, only the second record for this fungus on Lundy; it can be confused with the commoner but larger **Lilac Pinkgill** (*Entoloma porphyrophaeum*) which we did also find on the Airfield. Blue-capped species of Pinkgill occurred here but these were even commoner on Southwest Field and around Rocket Pole, including the dark blue species like the **Crow Pinkgill** (*Entoloma corvinum*) and Navy Pinkgill (*Entoloma atrocoeruleum*) though all were less common than in the late September/October survey by Mandy.

The 2024 autumn on Lundy will stand out mycologically for the exceptional numbers of **Earthtongues** everywhere in the grassland, much greater than in all previous years. The most local was the previously known colony of **Hairy Earthtongues** (*Trichoglossum hirsutum*) in the grass between the Radio Room and Old House which was there from September to November; it was also present in new sites around the Old Hospital and Quarter Wall Cottage foundations. In a lot of other places we found colonies of five species of **Black Earthtongues** (*Geoglossum* spp.) including a new Lundy record, the **Elongate Earthtongue** (*Geoglossum elongatum*). All look identical in the field and can only be sorted out by microscopy. The colony of the **Slimy Earthtongue** (*Glutinoglossum glutinosum*)

◀ Hairy Earthtongue *Trichoglossum hirsutum* in the lawn in front of the Radio Room, November (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ Lavender Waxcap Mould *Marquandomyces marquandii* on fruit bodies of Snowy Waxcap *Hygrocybe virginia* Lighthouse Field, November (photo: Mandy Dee)..

beside the Central Path east of Pondsbury was there as in previous years and once again was associated with the orange-brown pointed caps of the **Blackening Waxcap** (*Hygrocybe conica*): is there a relationship between the two species? However, the oddest find was a Black Earthtongue covered in a white mould collected near Old Hospital. This covering proved to be a parasite of Earthtongues, *Hypomyces papulasporae*, and a Lundy first.

The numbers of species of Clubs (9), Waxcaps (22), Pinkgills (19) Earthtongues (7) and Crazy Caps (1) found during the September/October and November visits was very impressive. Summed up they give a very high 'CHEGD' score of 58 (Clavariaceae, Hygrophoraceae, Entolomataceae, Geoglossaceae and Dermoloma) for the visits, once again underlining the high conservation status of Lundy grassland.

The annual public fungus foray led by Mandy and me once again happened, on November 5th, and was attended by 32 enthusiastic participants including Joe the Warden. The route took in the cliff top grassland from Benjamin's Chair to Rocket Pole, and then into SW Field and the Lighthouse Fields. Sixty eight species were found including two new records. The first was rather serendipitous – an undistinguished white toadstool was picked up by a forayer and initially almost discarded by us as yet another **Fool's Funnel** (*Clitocybe rivulosa*) but its somewhat odd appearance led to a microscope check and the finding that it was the **Mealy Domecap** (*Tricholomella constricta*), which had never been seen on Lundy before and is uncommon in the UK. The second new record was also almost not collected – a rather undistinguished 'brown job' plucked up by another forayer as a possible **Magic Mushroom** (*Psilocybe semilanceata*), but whose stem displayed exciting blue-green hues at the base, which placed it in another *Psilocybe* species, *P. strictipes*. A new record made on the 2022 foray was also re-found in Lighthouse Field: the **Lavender Waxcap Mould** *Marquandomyces marquandii*, showing up as a pink colour on the gills of the **Snowy Waxcap** (*Hygrocybe virginia*), which it parasitises. Finally, the oddest record of the foray was of a



▲ Orange Peel Fungus, *Aleuria aurantia* in short Sea Plantain turf above Pilot's Quay, November (photo: Mandy Dee).

sheet of minute bat-shaped fruit bodies of the **Orange Porcup** *Favolaschia claudopus*, covering the surface of some discarded plywood near to Rocket Pole Pond. This is a recent Lundy arrival (first record 2018) and up to now found only in Millcombe on twigs so its spread to Rocket Pole on manmade timber shows it is an unexpectedly opportunistic fungus.

A later visit to the cliff top above Pilot's Quay found a strange assemblage of fungi in the very short heavily grazed Sea Plantain/Red Fescue, including the **Mini Mushroom**, *Agaricus comtulus*, the young fruit bodies of the **Grey Puffball** *Bovista plumbea* and, most bizarrely, one fruit body of the **Orange Peel Fungus** *Aleuria aurantia*, a large cup fungus which has only previously been seen in disturbed soil around the Village. Perhaps the eroding soil on the cliff top offers a similar habitat.

Less time was spent collecting in the woodland and scrub on Lundy. However, Mandy Dee was able to add the **Clustered Toughshank** (*Gymnopus confluens*) growing in characteristic clumps on Pine litter in Millcombe in October. This is a common decomposer fungus in autumn in UK woodlands and it is surprising that it has taken so long to add it to the Lundy list.

Finally the collections of 'microfungi' such as Rusts and Powdery Mildews that parasitise plants once again produced some new records in November: the area next to the Beer Garden in the village that used to be occupied by the pigs proved to be a treasure trove of microfungi on the invading 'weeds' like Teasel, Wild Oats and Sow Thistles. Even the Staff Garden produced a new record of **Beet White Mould** *Ramularia beticola* on the leaves of Beetroot; we thank Rob and Sue for planting it. Finally even as we waited for the helicopter, a grey covering on the leaves of Ground Ivy proved to be a Powdery Mildew new to Lundy, **Mint Powdery Mildew** *Neoverysiphe galeopsidis*.

We end by thanking everyone who took the trouble to enter their records of fungi seen on Lundy in the Logbook. All records are very welcome: just put them in, but if you need reassurance on identities please email photographs to johnnhedger2@gmail.com. Happy to help – those summer months remain stubbornly under-recorded.

▼ Table 1 New Records of Fungi on Lundy 2024

Latin Name	Common Name	Where found	Lundy Locality	Date	Found by*
<i>Agaricus porphyrocephalus</i>		Medium height grass	Airfield	09/10/2024	M.D.
<i>Botrytis cinerea</i>	Grey Mould	Dead stems of Teasel	Old Pig pen ,Village	03/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Clavariopsis incarnata</i>	Skinny Club	Very short turf	Quarter Wall cottages	11/10/2024	M.D.
<i>Coccomyces australis</i>		DNA only from heather roots	North End	07/04/2024	R.M.
<i>Coleosporium tussilaginis</i>	Coltsfoot Rust	Leaves of Sow Thistle	Old Pig pen ,Village	04/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Coleroa potentillae</i>		Living leaves of Cinquefoil	Millcombe	01/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Cortinarius cinnamomeus</i>	Cinnamon Webcap	Heath	Punchbowl Valley	30/09/2024	M.D.
<i>Entoloma clandestinum</i>	Clandestine Pinkgill	Very short turf	Near Old Hospital	04/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Entoloma inusitatum</i>	Clubbed Pinkgill	Very short turf	Quarter Wall cottages	04/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Entoloma nitidum</i>	Pine Pinkgill	Short grass & bracken	W. end of Quarter Wall	02/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Galerina pseudomniophila</i>	Cinnamon Bell	Very short Sea Plantain turf	Above Pilots Quay	07/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Geoglossum elongatum</i>	Elongated Earthtongue	Short turf	W.end Punchbowl Valley	02/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Geoglossum elongatum</i>	Elongate Earthtongue	Very short turf	Near Old Hospital	04/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Gymnopus confluens</i>	Clustered Toughshank	Pine litter	Millcombe	07/10/2024	M.D.
<i>Hebeloma theobrominum</i>		Creeping Willow	Punchbowl Valley	30/09/2024	M.D.
<i>Hyaloscypha hepaticicola</i>		DNA only from soil and heather roots	North End	07/04/2024	R.M.
<i>Hypomyces papulasporae</i>		Covering a <i>Geoglossum</i> fruit body	Near Old Hospital	07/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Monodictys levis</i>		Old pods of Sweet Pea	Staff Gardens	03/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Mycena abramsii</i>		Short turf	Near Rocket Pole	03/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Mycena galopus var leucogala</i>	Milking Bonnet	Very short turf	Near Old Hospital	04/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Neoerysiphe galeopsidis</i>	Mint Mildew	Leaves of Ground Ivy	Wall by Govt. House	08/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Neohygrocybe ingrata</i>	Dingy Waxcap	Very short turf	Near Old Hospital	04/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Pezizula rhizophila</i>		DNA only from heather roots	North End	07/04/2024	R.M.
<i>Pleurotus pulmonarius</i>	White Oyster Mushroom	Inside cargo box	Jetty	20/03/2024	A.R.
<i>Podilia humilis</i>		DNA only from soil samples	North End	07/04/2024	R.M.
<i>Psilocybe strictipes</i>		medium height grass	SW Field by Old Light	05/11/2024	Foray
<i>Puccinia ssp. graminicola</i>	Oat Rust	Leaves of Wild Oats	Old Pig pen,Village	03/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Ramularia beticola</i>	Beet White Mould	Leaves of Beetroot	Staff Gardens	03/11/2024	J.H. M.D.
<i>Tricholomella constricta</i>	Mealy Domecap	medium height grass	SW Field	05/11/2024	Foray
<i>Zyzygomycetes bachmanii</i>		DNA only from <i>Cladonia</i> lichen	North End	07/04/2024	R.M.

*Key to finders: A.R. = Alan Rowland, R.M. = Ruben Mole, M.D. = Mandy Dee, J.H. M.D. = John Hedger & Mandy Dee

Lundy South



Number key

- | | | |
|---|--|----------------------|
| 1 Marisco Castle | 10 Black Shed | 18 Quarter Wall Pond |
| 2 Hanmers | 11 Campsite, Quarters (Pig's Paradise) & Quarters Pond | 19 Quarry Pond |
| 3 St John's Valley, Old School & Big & Little St John's | 12 Shop, Museum & High Street | 20 Terrace Trap |
| 4 Brambles Villa | 13 Barton Cottages | 21 Old Hospital |
| 5 The Ugly | 14 Rocket Pole, Rocket Pole Pond & Kistvaen Pond/Rocket Pole Marsh | 22 VC Quarry |
| 6 Millcombe House | 15 Stoneycroft & Cemetery | 23 North Quarry |
| 7 Government House | 16 Water Tanks | 24 Punchbowl Valley |
| 8 St Helen's Centre/Church | 17 Quarter Wall Cottages | 25 Logan Stone |
| 9 Old House & Marisco Tavern | | 26 Brick Field Pond |

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Lundy North



SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- For information about the Lundy Field Society, our work (including conservation breaks) and about the island itself (including a virtual tour), visit lundy.org.uk
- For information about Lundy's birds visit: lundybirdobs.org.uk
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- For information about buying Lundy Field Society publications, including current Annual Reports, Bulletins or the Journal, as well as books published by the LFS and a range of out-of-print publications, contact:
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Beadlet anemone, Landing Bay (photo: Andrea May).



Back cover:

Yellow Dung Fly, the Castle, September (photo: Mandy Dee).
Knot Grass moth caterpillar, Acklands, October (photo: Mandy Dee).

Front cover:

Lundy's first Common Lizard since the millennium, Rocket Pole Pond (photo: Andrea May).

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