

REPTILES, LAND MAMMALS AND BATS

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LFS Logbook Section 3 “All Other Wildlife”

2025 was unfortunately notable for the fewer number of recordings in Section 3 of the LFS Logbook with only 77 pages completed as opposed to 120 in 2024. This is reflected in the reduced numbers of recorded species from 2024. Please do record all your sightings in the logbook as it's important that we're able to monitor the wildlife on our favourite island. This also applies to the feral stock: your sightings add to the information gained from the formal stock counts.

Higher Level Stewardship

With regard to the higher level stewardship scheme in preparation for the next five years, the grazing regime for the domestic sheep flock has necessitated a large reduction in the number of stock. This reduction has also included the numbers of sika, soay sheep and feral goats and has already resulted in more grass and wildflowers and less damage to stone walls. During our annual fortnight in Castle Cottage in July 2025 we were really surprised to see and smell a huge carpet of flowering clover on Castle Parade, something we'd never seen before. The lack of sheep around the Castle was also noticeable although we did miss seeing them at sunrise just outside the picture window!

Introduced Reptiles

There were eight sightings of **Slow-Worms** *Anguis fragilis* reported in 2025 with a total of 11 recorded. Most were seen around Millcombe but other sightings were on the Lower East Side Path, Government House and Benjamin's Chair with one deceased..

Native Land Mammals

Lundy's only native terrestrial mammal, the delightful **Pygmy Shrew** *Sorex minutus* continues to be recorded throughout the island and in many of the properties. In 2025 there were 27 recorded sightings with a total of 30 animals. Sightings included one being almost stepped on by Doug Hobbs in Felix Gade's Hut, two at the Battery, one in the church and Sarah Goddard rescued one from the sink in Old House South! An anonymous entry in the logbook recorded a raven pellet being given to warden Joe Parker who dissected it to discover the skeletal remains of a pygmy shrew, so no matter what you see please record it!

Bats

Increasing use of Echometers and other acoustic devices has meant that individual bat species are now being identified more frequently although accurate numbers of animals cannot be ascertained. Andrea May recorded **Noctule Bats** *Nyctalus noctula* which were mapped and routed between the Tavern, Black Shed, Old House South and down to Millcombe in April. Using the same methods Andrea also GPS tracked **Common Pipistrelle** *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* in Millcombe in June.

In September, Stuart Evans, using an Echometer, recorded **Nathusius's Pipistrelle** *Pipistrellus nathusii* at Big St John's and Millcombe. During the same period he also recorded **Common Pipistrelle** *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* at Big St John's and Millcombe.

Also in September, with no acoustic equipment, Tom Coldwell and Jackie and James Macbeth recorded unidentified bat species at Brazen Ward and The Battery.

Feral Land Mammals

The feral ungulates are monitored and controlled according to the terrestrial management plan. After a feral stock count in March 2025, culls took place in September and October.



▲ Sika doe and calf (photo: Chris Blackmore)

Sika *Cervus Nippon*

The stock count in March recorded 181 animals. These deer, previously shy and elusive before the COVID shutdown, continue to be seen in various locations around the island, with daytime sightings now commonplace: even a doe and calf in the company of other does were recorded in St Helen's Field. A group from Kingston Maurward College and University recorded 23, including a stag in May.

Soay Sheep *Ovis aries*

The stock count in March recorded 285 animals. Most sightings recorded animals north of Halfway Wall but on New Year's Day warden Joe Parker spotted a ram in Devil's Kitchen that, 'Made a break for it up the Beach Road!' A group from Kingston Maurward College and University recorded 32 soays, ewes and lambs in May.

Goat *Capra aegagrus*

The stock count in March recorded 22 animals. Three nannies were seen daily around the Castle and South Light regularly in July and August.

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Just two decades ago rabbits were prolific on Lundy but Myxomatosis and Rabbit Viral Haemorrhagic Disease decimated the population and they have struggled to recover in numbers. In 2025 only nine rabbits were recorded, one deceased. Tom Coldwell and Jackie and James Macbeth filmed four or more on a walk back to Millcombe and Old Light from the Battery in September. A very rare sighting of a black rabbit was recorded by an anonymous entry in the logbook. It was seen at Millcombe in October.