

WELCOME

Kathy Weston (Editor)

This year's report has some real gems in it, and I hope you will enjoy reading about all the sightings logged by experts and amateurs alike. As usual, they've induced me to reflect on my many defects as a hopeful naturalist. Mortifyingly, I was visiting the island at the same time as the Booted Eagle, but (s)he and I did not meet, even briefly. On a recent trip I missed a pod of dolphins in the Landing Bay because I was in the Tavern eating a sausage sandwich, and almost every bird I have tried to observe flies away in horror, except for my beloved puffins, whose cuteness is matched by their facility for blessed immobility. It's just as well that many others are far better at capturing Lundy's amazing flora and fauna than I. My only triumphs have been fleeting glimpses of rabbits at dusk on the West Side, and spotting the last butterfly of the year in December, both of which I proudly noted in the logbook.

Our cover star this year is the Hawthorn Shield Bug, a most handsome creature featured in the section on terrestrial invertebrates. We have the first report from the Lundy Bird Observatory following its full accreditation – in which you can see some photos of the aforementioned Booted Eagle – and it's also been a particularly good year for fungi. In the spring, we were lucky enough to get a visit from Kevin Rowley, the national recorder for the Aquatic Heteroptera (water bugs) Recording Scheme for Britain and Ireland, and his report features on p36; we sincerely hope he's got over his first encounter with the Oldenberg on a bumpy crossing, and that he will return soon.

Looking back through the archive of Lundy Field Society Annual Reports is always a treat, and one article from 50 years ago particularly caught my eye – an account of the first Working Party to tackle the rhododendron problem. It's reproduced on p35. I had some nice email exchanges with Chris Baillie and Tony Taylor, two of the participants, who are presumably excused rhododendron duties nowadays. Sadly, neither could remember much about it, even the fact they sailed through a blizzard to get to the island!

Lundy's Managing Director Derek Green found fame this year as the subject of Episode Three of the Landmark Trust's 60th birthday series, Landmark Chronicles – well worth a listen if you've not heard it already. Fortunately, Derek has still managed to find time to write the Island Report, which has further details of the Renewable Energy Project among many other things. There have been a fair few arrivals and departures this year, including three Dexter cows, who are helping farmer Tom Carr with his grazing plans. We also have a new Warden, Simon Parker (no relative to his predecessor Joe, who is now looking after the birds of Poole Harbour). Simon has kindly written a short piece to introduce himself on p20.

Very sadly, this year we lost a fundamentally important member of the Lundy Field Society with the death of Jenny George. John Hedger writes her obituary on p31, and we send condolences to her family and many friends. She will be hugely missed.

I'd like to end by thanking all of the contributors to this report for their diligence, patience and good nature in helping me put it together, the many people who contributed their sightings to the logbook, and Robin Padian, our report designer, who has done a great job as always. To note, 2026 is the 80th anniversary of the Lundy Field Society, so let's make it a bumper year for sightings. And if you have any comments, or ideas for future editions of this report, please get in touch with me at report.editor@lundy.org.uk – I will be delighted to hear from you!