

# Warden's Report (October 2011 – April 2012)

## 1 Staff

- 1.1 Over the winter period, Derren Fox was appointed Warden and will be leading on the terrestrial side of the role. Sophie Wheatley has recently handed in her notice and will be leaving in early May. Thanks to her for all her hard work and enthusiasm. A replacement is currently being sourced and will hopefully be in place before too long.

Please note a change to the Warden e-mail addresses. You can contact both Wardens at the [warden@lundyisland.co.uk](mailto:warden@lundyisland.co.uk) e-mail. OR alternatively [wildlife.warden@lundyisland.co.uk](mailto:wildlife.warden@lundyisland.co.uk) will go directly to Derren while the [marine.warden@lundyisland.co.uk](mailto:marine.warden@lundyisland.co.uk) will go directly to the marine Warden.

- 1.2 Andy Robinson has been appointed the seasonal volunteer and joined the team on 29<sup>th</sup> March and works with Steve Pratt the Ranger.

## 2 Marine

- 2.1 RIB Work: The RIB is in good working order and has been used a couple of times this year with no major concerns. Only the radar reflector needs replacing. Derren is now qualified to RYA Power Boat level 2.
- 2.2 Cetaceans: One C-POD from the Robert wreck has been recovered and the data sent to Natalie Squires an MSc student at the University of Plymouth who will be analysing the data for us. The other C-POD has yet to be recovered and is still on the Ethel. Natalie will also be visiting Lundy to carry out land based cetacean research during the summer.

On two separate occasions this month (April), while on guided walks – a small group of common dolphin have been spotted. From the tavern log book so far this year visitor sightings include:

- 1<sup>st</sup> April - a pod of 15-20 common dolphin were spotted from Jenny's Cove;
- 16<sup>th</sup> April - a pod of 100+ common dolphins and one minke whale were observed for over 30 mins. from the Battery on the West coast;
- 22<sup>nd</sup> April - 2 Harbour porpoise seen off Rat Island;
- 23<sup>rd</sup> April - one harbour porpoise off the East coast.

- 2.3 Moorings: Mooring licences have been issued to the following boats for 2012/13 season:

- Appledore SAC
- Obsession II (Andrew Benguey)
- Jessica Hettie (Clive Pearson)
- Ilfracombe SAC (2 moorings)
- Ithcus (Ivan Bate)
- Willow (Jon Fanthorpe)
- Frolica (Roy Lancaster)

New applications pending:

- Obsession I
- Flute (James Wright)

- 2.4 Protected Wreck licences: As of 20<sup>th</sup> March 2012, access to the **Gull Rock** and **Iona II** sites is currently limited to visitor licences for: Nicola Saunders (Lundy Warden (as was)); Derek Green (Lundy General Manager); prospectively to charter boat (*Obsession*) skipper Andrew Benguey; and Fiona Hampton-Matthews of BSAC Club Bristol Channel Divers.

It is a requirement for any charter boat skippers and individuals who hold a licence to pass on names of all divers that accessed the sites to English Heritage and supply an annual report of the wreck's condition. The Wardens will be closely monitoring diving activity on the wrecks to make sure that only licence holders are diving on the wreck.

- 2.5 NTZ infringements: There have been no observed or reported infringements of the NTZ over the winter.

- 2.6 Entangled seals: We have had reports of 2 entangled seals this season. One in fishing net and one with a probable packing band injury. These are being recorded locally, but should they be reported elsewhere?

- 2.7 Oiled seabirds: We had an incidence of oiled seabirds (3 guillemots and 1 razorbill on 25/26<sup>th</sup> April), all seen around the Devil's Kitchen area.

### 3 Terrestrial

#### 3.1 Feral Stock

These are now to be carried out by Lundy staff and volunteers. A full island count was carried out in early March.

Rabbit culling has continued with ~5000 culled over the last 12 months. There has been a myxomatosis outbreak on the island, starting in late January that is still ongoing, and this has had a dramatic impact on the island's rabbit population.

Goats continue to encroach south of Quarter Wall. The fencing and wall will be reassessed to see if they can be made more stock proof and the culling of some of the goats is under consideration.

*Figures from March 2012 count:*

Soay	170	Goats	66	Sika	80
Rams	29	Billies	15	Stags	4
Ewes	141	Nannies	30	Prickets	6
		Kids	21	Hinds	70

Soay Lamb count on 22<sup>nd</sup> April – 33 lambs and 2 corpses

#### 3.2 Vegetation monitoring:

The stock enclosures around the island have been expanded to allow a comparison of the grazing regime during the 10 year HLS scheme. The enclosures keep all stock out of the vegetation in one half and all but rabbits in the other, and have been in place for ~10 years already.

The NT vegetation monitoring that is being set-up at the moment (Janet Lister) and to be carried out in July will allow us to better coordinate the feral stock culls with habitat targets to achieve the favourable SSSI condition and fulfil our HLS targets.

#### 3.3 Rhododendron:

Several working parties have been over during the winter period. Tasks included burning some of the accumulated brash and clearing some regrowth and accessible areas. The conservation team have been spraying and treating areas of regrowth. Removal and control work goes well.

An invitation to tender is currently being drawn up for the next phase of the roped access work on the cliffs, with a mind to the work being carried out in October.

#### 3.4 Slow worm sighting by visitor staying on the island.

### 4 Survey & monitoring

#### 4.1 Grey seals: The first seal survey has been completed for this year, and the aim is carry out twice monthly counts by RIB. The most recent April count was of 177 seals.

The Wardens will be assisting in collecting seal scat samples for Kimberley Bennett at Plymouth Uni. in effect to start a data source for potential future honours projects at the University to do with diets of seals on Lundy and ingestion of plastics by grey seals. MP (Natural England) is leading the contact with Kimberley.

#### 4.2 Seabirds:

The first puffin of the year was seen by Grant on 25<sup>th</sup> March, on the water at Jenny's Cove. Population counts will commence shortly to assess the number of AOBs on the island.

Tim Guilford's team are returning to continue the tracking work in August (10<sup>th</sup>) and the usual chick ringing by Tony Taylor will follow on after.

Annual productivity surveys will be carried out this year on kittiwakes, guillemots and fulmars, with a view to doing less intensive surveys than in previous years, to allow time to cover a wider range of seabird and some key terrestrial species that have been under recorded in the recent past.

#### 4.3 Rats:

There have been no rat related incidents or sightings in the period from October to April. The current rat boxes around the south of the island are checked monthly.

A single house mouse was found in a box of apples delivered to the island on 27<sup>th</sup> Jan. It was trapped dealt with and the rest of the stock thoroughly checked.

#### 4.4 Temperature loggers:

These will shortly be retrieved and redeployed on the jetty and MV Robert. DG to help with this April/May. We now have a complete temperature log from August 2007 to present and incomplete data back to 1998.

## 5 Interpretation & Events

- 5.1 The 2012 Lundy Splash-IN has been scheduled for 7<sup>th</sup> July. We have once again received generous sponsorship. This year there will be an independent panel of judges deciding the winning images.
- 5.2 The 2013 Calendar is now out and available to purchase.

## 6 Media

- 6.1 Lundy recently appeared in the spring 2012 issue of Exmoor magazine, as well as a short piece on marine conservation on BBC Newsround. Coast have been in contact about coming to Lundy again, to look more at the archaeological aspects of the island.
- 6.2 The University of Glamorgan are planning a visit on April 28<sup>th</sup> to produce a series of short films on different aspects of Lundy life including:

**Lundy Marine Conservation Zone:** The history, monitoring programme and results, leading the way in the U.K.;

**A day in the life of a Volunteer:** Fly-on-the-wall featuring the new building, seasonal and short term 'vollies';

**Day trip to Lundy:** Boat trip from Ilfracombe, dolphins, seabirds, arrival, Millcombe, Castle, Tavern, Shop, Old Light, Church.;

**Holiday cottages to let:** Portfolio of all the Landmark properties on the island.

Derren Fox and Sophie Wheatley  
Lundy Wardens