

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATUTORY MARINE NATURE RESERVE AROUND LUNDY

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On November 21st 1986, the Minister for the Environment, William Waldegrave, announced the establishment of Britain's first statutory marine nature reserve around Lundy, thus culminating seventeen years of work towards that end. This contribution provides a brief review of the history leading to that announcement as well as a map of the area included in the reserve (Fig. 1) and a copy of the code of conduct which includes a note of activities subject to bye-laws. Specific references to published material are not given but are included in the full management policy.

1969.

Suggestion of a marine nature reserve around Lundy published in the Journal of the Devon Trust for Nature Conservation and discussed informally with the National Trust and Landmark Trust. Marine biologists visit Lundy and consider the island rich in southern species of marine life and find large numbers of *Leptopsammia pruvoti*, a cup coral only known from one other location outside of the Mediterranean but also notice damaging activities by divers. Proposals made in the newsletter of the Underwater Association for an expedition of marine biologists to Lundy.

1971.

Expedition of marine biologists to Lundy to assess the scientific interest of the area. They recommended the establishment of a voluntary marine nature reserve (report published by the Lundy Field Society). Marine reserve proposal reported in the journal of 'Nature'.

1973.

Advisory Committee on the voluntary marine nature reserve established which included representatives of the Landmark Trust, the Lundy Field Society, the Nature Conservancy, divers and marine biologists. Management policy drafted.

1974.

Management policy and code-of-conduct published in the Report of the Lundy Field Society for 1973. Waterproof leaflet produced for visiting divers.

1974-1980.

A wide range of marine biological studies undertaken around Lundy, mainly to list the marine fauna and describe the habitats and communities present on the shore and underwater.

1976.

Issue of Lundy marine reserve stamps.

1978.

Marine warden appointed for the summer season as a pilot project. Work includes the preparation of displays and leaflets.

1979.

Meeting with the Devon Sea Fisheries Committee to discuss the possibility of incorporating a ban on dredging (including trawling) off the east coast through new bye-laws being drafted. However, in the event, a "gentlemen's agreement" was made.

1981.

Wildlife and Countryside Act (including sections 36 and 37 enabling the establishment of statutory marine nature reserves) passed.

1982.

Nature Conservancy Council endorses the proposals in respect of scientific criteria, site selection process and the administrative and consultative processes for the establishment of marine nature reserves at six (later seven) sites. Later in the year, Council agrees that formal negotiations should proceed with respect to Lundy.

1983.

Marine Conservation Society Working Party visits Lundy to fill gaps in information on marine habitats and communities relevant to management of the area.

1983-84.

Consultation process started including the appointment of a Liaison Officer based for part of the time on Lundy. Management plan drafted.

1984.

Programmes of marine biological monitoring of communities and species of nature conservation importance initiated.

1984-85.

Numerous informal meetings to discuss proposals. First meeting of the Lundy Marine Consultation Group at Bideford on April 25th 1985. The Group now includes representatives of the Devon Sea Fisheries Committee, Devon Trust for Nature Conservation, Landmark Trust, Lundy Field Society, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Marine Conservation Society, National Trust, Nature Conservancy Council, Royal Yachting Association, World Wildlife Fund, fishermen, divers and marine biologists.

1986.

Formal consultative paper circulated by the Nature Conservancy Council to interested parties for comment in March. Paper included draft bye-laws, boundaries, code-of-conduct etc. Intensive negotiations in Autumn 1986 before formal advertisement of proposed bye-laws in mid-October. The Lundy (Bristol Channel) Marine Nature Reserve Order 1986 designated the reserve and was made and came into effect on 20th November. The Minister of State for the Environment (Mr William Waldegrave) announced the reserve on 21st November.

The declaration of a marine nature reserve should be seen as a beginning rather than an end. The marine nature reserve will offer opportunities for research and study, education and information.

Apart from protecting the rich and varied marine communities present around Lundy, the visitor will be able to seek advice and knowledge through the services of a marine warden. There will be displays and leaflets for those who wish to understand more of the fascinating world of the seashore and shallow seas around the island.

Research will aim to monitor the abundance of species of nature conservation importance and of the stability of the habitats they inhabit, as well as collecting environmental data to help interpret any changes which might occur.

This note provides an opportunity to acknowledge those organisations which have contributed in some way over the seventeen years to the work which has been carried out and which provided the information and facilities necessary to establish and manage a marine nature reserve.

The Nature Conservancy provided advice from the earliest days of establishing the voluntary marine nature reserve as well as funds for the first leaflet. Its successor, the *Nature Conservancy Council*, provided funds for research and commissioned the studies most relevant to the establishment of a marine nature reserve. Upon the NCC has fallen the task of negotiating for the establishment of a statutory marine nature reserve with many interested parties — a difficult job, but undertaken successfully.

The Lundy Field Society has provided funds for field work and, in the form of their Annual Report, an important vehicle for publications. Also, more recently, the Society has provided the Secretariat for the Lundy Consultation Group.

The Royal Society granted monies from the Browne fund for expeditions to undertake fieldwork over several years.

The Natural Environment Research Council provided grants for some of the surveys and sampling carried out underwater around the island.

The World Wildlife Fund supported (with 'Diver' magazine) the employment of a marine warden in 1978 as a pilot scheme and gave grants towards various expeditions aimed at surveying the marine life present around Lundy. They have always supported and encouraged the work towards the establishment of a statutory reserve.

The Landmark Trust and their Agents on Lundy have given much support over the years to the voluntary marine reserve and have provided laboratory and other facilities on the island.

The Marine Conservation Society provided a working party to undertake important studies in 1983 and their behind-the-scenes lobbying has done much to ensure the establishment of the reserve.

Devon County Council provided funds for the production of an interpretive display in 1983.

Bristol Channel Divers and their successor *Aquaserve Diving* who ran the diving facilities on Lundy, have provided scientists working around Lundy with a suitable operations base.

LUNDY MARINE NATURE RESERVE

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VISITORS

The marine habitats and marine life present around Lundy are outstanding, but vulnerable to wilful or accidental damage. The Nature Conservancy Council and Devon Sea Fisheries Committee have introduced byelaws to protect them. Respect for the following code of conduct by those visiting the area will further help to ensure that these special features remain as undisturbed as possible, thereby helping to conserve the present interest for all to enjoy. Please follow any instructions given to you by the Warden or the Lundy Agent for your own safety and the protection of the reserve.

Points for shore visitors

1. Every time a boulder is overturned the associated plant and animal communities are damaged, so please limit this activity and always replace boulders to their original positions.
2. In order to minimise the impact of collecting and to ensure the protection of species and communities, collection of marine wildlife specimens is prohibited by byelaw within the Reserve and must not be undertaken except with the prior agreement of the Nature Conservancy Council.

Fig. 1. Area included within the Lundy Marine Nature Reserve (continuous line). The broken line is the area within which no person shall fish by trawling; using tangle, moored or fixed nets; or using gill nets except with written permission. The area around the Knoll Pins where potting is prohibited is shaded. The area between Sugar Loaf and Quarry Beach where fixed gill netting is permitted is shaded. Crown Copyright. Based on British Admiralty chart No. 1164 with the permission of the Controller of HM Stationary Office. Map produced by the Nature Conservancy Council.

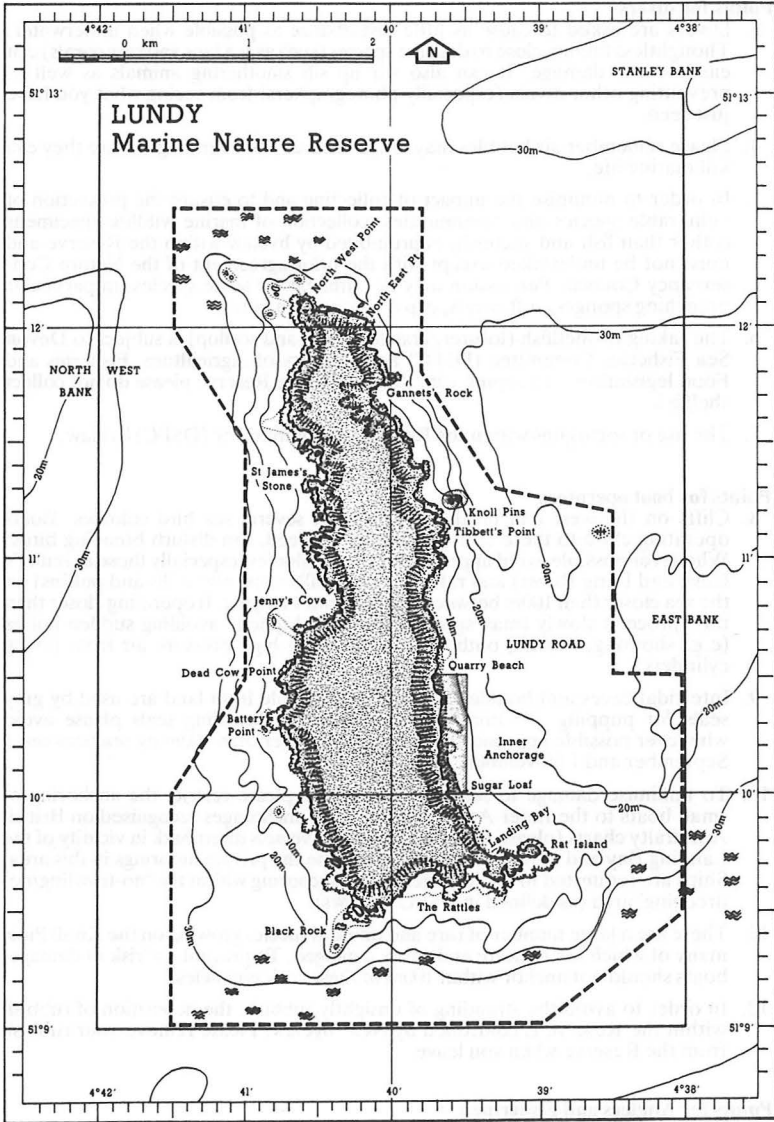


FIGURE 1

Points for divers

3. Divers are asked to cause as little disturbance as possible when underwater. Thoughtless finning close to delicate species (such as sea fans and ross corals) can easily cause damage. It can also stir up silt smothering animals as well as preventing other divers (especially photographers) from seeing what you have just seen.
4. Please remember air bubbles may lodge in caves and overhangs where they can kill marine life.
5. In order to minimise the impact of collecting and to ensure the protection of vulnerable species and communities, collection of marine wildlife specimens (other than fish and shellfish) is prohibited by byelaw within the Reserve and must not be undertaken except with the prior agreement of the Nature Conservancy Council. Permission may be withheld for some species, in particular branching sponges, soft corals, cup corals and sea fans.
6. The taking of shellfish (lobster, crawfish, crab and scallop) is subject to Devon Sea Fisheries Committee (DSFC) and Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food legislation. In keeping with the spirit of the Reserve please do not collect shellfish.
7. The use of spearguns within the Reserve is prohibited by (DSFC) byelaw.

Points for boat operators

8. Cliffs on the west and north coast support several sea bird colonies. Boats operating close to these cliffs, especially at speed, can disturb breeding birds. Whenever possible avoid approaching these colonies (especially those at Jenny's Cove and Long Roost) and rafts of auks (guillemots, razorbills and puffins) on the sea closer than 100m between 1 March and 1 August. If operating closer than this, proceed slowly (max speed 8 knots) and quietly avoiding sudden noises (e.g. shouting, revving outboards or releasing high pressure air from diving cylinders).
9. Intertidal caves and boulder beaches, inaccessible from land are used by grey seals for pupping. To minimise disturbance to breeding seals please avoid whenever possible approaching these areas nearer than 100m by sea between 1 September and 1 November.
10. To minimise damage to seabed communities please restrict the anchoring of small boats to the Inner Anchorage or other anchorages recognised on British Admiralty charts (please note that passenger vessels disembark in vicinity of the Landing Bay and other vessels should not use the private moorings in this area. Ships are requested to avoid unnecessary anchoring within the 'no-trawling/no-dredging' area (as defined in DSFC byelaws).
11. There are a large number of rare and unusual species growing on the Knoll Pins, many of which are delicate and easily damaged. To prevent the risk of damage, boats should not anchor within 100m of these rock pinnacles.
12. In order to avoid the stranding of unsightly rubbish, the deposition of rubbish within the Reserve is controlled by NCC byelaw. Please remove your rubbish from the Reserve when you leave.

Points for Anglers and Fishermen

13. In order to protect territorial fish (many of which are long-lived and form an interesting part of the Reserve) anglers and fishermen are asked to immediately return alive to the sea any they may catch, in particular all species of wrasse.
14. To protect marine wildlife within the Reserve the Devon Sea Fisheries Committee has introduced byelaws to control certain fishing activities including trawling, dredging, tangle and moored netting. Fishermen are asked to refer to these byelaws before fishing within the Reserve.

15. In order to avoid damage to delicate species growing on the Knoll Pins, fishermen must not use pots to catch or store Crustacea within 100m of these rock pinnacles.

Points for salvage operators and underwater archaeologists

16. Owners of wrecks or anyone else planning to use explosives within the Reserve should consult the Nature Conservancy Council so that adverse effects on marine life can be minimised.
17. Persons intending to use underwater excavation equipment for archaeological or other purposes should likewise consult the Nature Conservancy Council before such equipment is used.