

BIRD RINGING IN 2014

by

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In 2014, the long-term study of Manx Shearwaters and the colour-ringing of breeding Wheatears continued. Together with the mist-netting of spring and autumn migrants, they contributed to a total of 2,112 birds being ringed. This is lower than in the previous few years, for a number of reasons, but plenty of valuable information was gained from the ringing that took place.

Ten days of ringing in April and two-and-a-half weeks in late September and October provided less coverage for the ringing of migrants than usual, and there were few days with significant bird movements during these times. Groups primarily targeting shearwaters at night were also able to catch some migrants by day during their three weeks of coverage in late August and early September, but again the weather conditions did not produce big catches. The year's work also involved ten days at the end of May, when the main objectives were to continue the Wheatear and Manx Shearwater studies.

A table of the year's ringing totals is given below. For the first time, Blackcaps were top of the list, with 429 captured. This species is becoming increasingly common in Britain, and the high number ringed reflects this. The other species with three-figure totals were Manx Shearwater (356), Swallow (306), Chiffchaff (181), Willow Warbler (195) and Meadow Pipit (249). The scarcer species caught included four Yellow-browed Warblers and a Common Rosefinch, and while Merlins are seen regularly on Lundy, one caught in October 2014 was only the sixth to be ringed on the island. However, perhaps the most significant moment of the year's ringing was the discovery of a Storm Petrel chick in the main Manx Shearwater colony, providing the first proof that they are breeding on Lundy (see p.66 for a full account).

Manx Shearwaters

The shearwater work was very successful in terms of ringing and recapturing adult birds, with a record 235 new adults ringed. Seventy-six others that had been ringed on Lundy in previous years were recaptured, and one bird visited the island after originally being ringed on Bardsey. Of the recaptured shearwaters, 15 were particularly interesting because they had been ringed as chicks, so that their ages were known. These contribute towards an understanding of the recruitment of young birds into the breeding population. Since the number of chicks ringed has been high in recent years, returning Lundy-bred birds should become more numerous in the future, and the combined data from the next few seasons will be extremely informative.

In contrast to adults, the number of shearwater chicks ringed in 2014 dropped to just 121, the lowest total since 2008. This did not appear to be because of a population decline or poor chick survival, since large numbers of adults were delivering food into burrows in late August and early September. Instead, the breeding season seemed to be running late for a high proportion of pairs, with fewer chicks than usual ready to emerge from burrows in the weeks when ringers were looking for them.

Wheatears

The Wheatear Recapturing Adults for Survival (RAS) project is developing well, with 22 colour-ringed birds re-sighted from 2013 and 25 new birds marked. These provided valuable data for estimates of the size of the Lundy breeding population and of adult survival rates between the 2013 and 2014 seasons. See p.92 for further details and results of this project.

Recoveries and Controls

A list of the ringed birds found on Lundy or moving elsewhere is given below. Among them are some long-lived birds, including a Manx Shearwater and three Lesser Black-backed Gulls originally ringed in the 1990s. In contrast, a rapidly moving Blackcap, ringed at Land's End, reached Lundy the next day. Other migrants travelled longer distances, with Sedge Warblers moving to and from France, a Willow Warbler from Spain, a Blackbird found in Sweden and a Chaffinch recaptured in Norway. These four movements fit into the normal migration patterns of these species; but Wrens are not strong fliers and do not normally move far, so that one ringed on Lundy in September and found in south Dorset four weeks later was particularly noteworthy. It provides proof for the first time that Wrens move between Lundy and the mainland.

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Blackcap by Mike Langman, from 'The Birds of Lundy'

LUNDY RINGING TOTALS, 2014

Manx Shearwater	(121)	356	Redwing	46
Storm Petrel	(1)	1	Spotted Flycatcher	5
Sparrowhawk		1	Robin	35
Merlin		1	Pied Flycatcher	1
Goldcrest		61	Redstart	5
Firecrest		1	Stonechat	7
Swallow	(5)	306	Wheatear	(11) 44
House Martin		6	Dunnock	5
Yellow-browed Warbler		4	House Sparrow	5
Chiffchaff		181	Tree Pipit	1
Willow Warbler		195	Meadow Pipit	249
Blackcap		429	Chaffinch	33
Garden Warbler		6	Goldfinch	21
Lesser Whitethroat		3	Siskin	2
Whitethroat		12	Linnet	1
Grasshopper Warbler		4	Common Rosefinch	1
Sedge Warbler		13	Bullfinch	1
Reed Warbler		2		
Treecreeper		1	Total	2,112
Wren		41		
Blackbird		16	Number of species	39
Song Thrush		10		

Numbers in brackets indicate pulli ringed in 2014 (included in the main totals).

LUNDY RECOVERIES AND CONTROLS 2014

Manx Shearwater EX74414 – ringed as an adult on Lundy, 3.6.13. Found freshly dead at Freshwater East, Pembrokeshire, 9.6.14. (371 days; 54 km; bearing: 346°).

Manx Shearwater EY39375 – ringed as a pullus on Lundy, 10.9.13. Found dead (not fresh) on Lundy, 16.2.14 (159 days).

Manx Shearwater FB35848 – ringed as an adult on Bardsey, Gwynedd, 18.5.12. Controlled on Lundy, 31.8.14 (835 days; 177 km; 178°).

Manx Shearwater FC37753 – ringed as an adult on Lundy, 2.5.1996. Found dead on Lundy, 18.9.14 (6,713 days).

Storm Petrel 2580637 – ringed as an adult on Lundy, 25.7.09. Controlled at Burhou, Alderney, Channel Islands, 19.7.14 (1,820 days; 235 km; 134°).

Guillemot colour-ring: red, numbered 510 – ringed as a pullus on Skomer, Pembrokeshire, June 2010. Seen on Lundy, 16 & 21.6.14 (c.1,465 days; 77km; 145°).

Lesser Black-backed Gull colour-ring: blue, with white L, on left leg; metal on right – ringed as a pullus on Lundy, 25-29.6.95. Seen at Courant de Mimizan, Landes, **FRANCE**, 5.11.13, 28.1.14 & 31.1.14 (c.6,706–c.6,793 days; 814 km; 162°).

Lesser Black-backed Gull colour-ring: blue, with white L, on right leg; metal on left – ringed as a pullus on Lundy, 23–26.6.96. Seen at Costa da Caparica, Lisbon, **PORTUGAL**, 14.10.14 (c.6,685 days; 1,439 km; 196°).

Lesser Black-backed Gull GN08667 – ringed as a pullus on Lundy, 28.6.1999. Found freshly dead at Draycote Water, Warwickshire, 6.9.14 (5,549 days; 263 km; 61°).

Chiffchaff EXX834 – ringed as a first-year bird on Skokholm, Pembrokeshire, 15.9.14. Controlled on Lundy, 29.9.14 (14 days; 74 km; 145°).

Willow Warbler PF5507 – ringed as a first-year bird at Fuentecantos, Soria, **SPAIN**, 25.8.12. Controlled on Lundy, 19.4.14. (602 days; 1,052 km; 351°).

Blackcap D354936 – ringed as a first-year male at Icklesham, East Sussex, 5.10.13. Controlled on Lundy, 5.9.14 (335 days; 374 km; 275°).

Blackcap Z350310 – ringed as a first-year female at Nanjizal, Lands End, Cornwall, 27.9.14. Controlled on Lundy, 28.9.14 (1 day; 144 km; 31°).

Reed Warbler Y752659 – ringed as a first-year bird at Gunwalloe, Cornwall, 22.8.12. Controlled on Lundy, 17.4.14 (603 days; 133 km; 19°).

Sedge Warbler Paris 6040074 – ringed as a first-year bird at Noyant, Soulaire-et-Bourg, Maine-et-Loire, **FRANCE**, 9.8.08. Controlled on Lundy, 25.4.14 (2,085 days; 501 km; 324°).

Sedge Warbler D184827 – ringed as a first-year bird on Lundy, 30.8.14. Controlled at Terril de Pinchonvalles, Avion, Pas-de-Calais, **FRANCE**, 11.9.14 (12 days; 533 km; 100°).

Wren HBP948 – ringed as a first-year bird on Lundy, 23.9.14. Found dead at Bothenhampton, Bridport, Dorset, 21.10.14 (28 days; 144 km; 111°).

Blackbird LB46284 – ringed as an adult female on Lundy, 16.11.13. Found dead (road casualty) at Getteron, Varberg, Halland, **SWEDEN**, 21.10.14 (348 days; 1,283 km; 59°).

Chaffinch D184049 – ringed as a first year female on Lundy, 20.10.12. Controlled at Mulvika, Holmestrand, Vestfold, **NORWAY**, 4.4.14 (531 days; 1,320 km; 46°).

Goldfinch D857603 – ringed as a second-year male at Oxwich marsh, Swansea, 12.4.14. Controlled on Lundy, 25.4.14 (13 days; 57 km; 218°).

Corrections

In the 2013 report, some of the details were wrong in two records. Corrected versions are given below.

Goldcrest DPP689 – ringed as a first-year male on Lundy, 19.9.12. Controlled at East Anstey, Devon, 4.11.13 (411 days; 76 km; 103°).

Goldcrest EPY554 – ringed as a first-year male on Lundy, 15.10.12. Found freshly dead at Ardfert, Kerry, EIRE, 3.4.13 (170 days; 375 km; 290°).