

WELCOME

Tim Davis (Editor)

Despite what was an incredibly difficult and challenging year, with Lundy unattainable for many, whether as a staying visitor or day-tripper, the Annual Report for 2020 actually matches the 2019 report in length and diversity. In all, 91 people (77 visitors and 14 islanders) contributed records to the LFS logbook, either directly or via the recording sheets produced by Warden Dean Jones for use by visitors (no doubt fewer hands turned the pages of the logbook than in any year previously!). Thanks to those records and the many photographs taken (the vast majority by Dean), the pages that follow reveal yet again what an astounding place Lundy is for its breathtaking views, wide array of marine and terrestrial habitats, vibrant wildlife above and below the water, and human endeavour.

You will see in the table of contents on page 1 names that will be familiar to regular readers of these yearly compilations. Without their efforts there would be no report, certainly not in the level of detail provided, so once again grateful thanks to all for the hours spent producing the individual contributions that make this LFS publication possible.

There's no doubt that for those who go to Lundy primarily to watch and study birds, 2020 was a memorable year despite the restrictions, as the review of the birding year will attest. Whatever one's individual interest or interests may be, Lundy has a knack of providing memorable – 'hairs on the back of the neck' – moments. Over the course of 48 years I have experienced several, but none to match that which occurred for Tim Jones and myself on 16th October 2020. Given a good forecast, we had decided the evening before to make for North End, to which I added, jokingly, "to see a White-tailed Eagle". We never made it to North End because a juvenile of the said eagle species flew almost over our heads just minutes after we'd walked through High Street gate. It flew low northwards, harried at every wingbeat by two Ravens, which looked small by comparison, one behind each wing. We stood speechless for some seconds before the realisation hit that we were the first people in 140 years to witness a White-tailed Eagle over Lundy. For more details, including information on the bird's origin, turn to p.63.

Other wildlife highlights in 2020 included a number of moths new to Lundy (p.109), a Spiny Spider Crab extravaganza (p.99) and a new species of sea slug for Lundy (p.97).

Lundy Bird Observatory

Lundy is in process of rejoining the network of bird observatories, of which there are currently 20 located at prime migration points around the coasts of Britain and Ireland. Each observatory conducts long-term monitoring of migration and bird populations, carrying out ringing and a daily census in a defined recording area. Since taking on the role of Warden in February 2017, Dean Jones and his Conservation Team colleagues have entered bird data from the 2017–2020 LFS logbooks into Excel spreadsheets. Digitisation of earlier logbooks, dating back to 1988 (the year the current recording format was introduced) is also ongoing. The process involves photographing the pages of each logbook, sending the resulting images to Dean and his team for data-entry (usually carried out on wet or stormy days!), and subsequent verification of each year's data against the original logbook by two two-person LFS teams on the North Devon mainland.

Filling the void

Succession-planning is a modernism now adopted by the LFS, those of us filling particular roles encouraged to find their successor – in my case the next editor of the Annual Report. If this has appeal for you, please get in touch with Michael Williams at secretary@lundy.org.uk.