

# CHANNEL ISLANDS BIRD-RINGING SCHEME



## **Report of the Channel Islands Bird-Ringing Scheme 2013**

### **Organisation**

The Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme was founded in 1936. The scheme was, until 2004, administered by volunteers as part of the Ornithological Section of Société Jersiaise the local history/natural history society. Ringing did not start in the Guernsey Bailiwick until 1946.

The Scheme operates within two separate self-governing areas; the Bailiwick of Jersey which includes Les Minquiers and Les Ecrehous and other off islets and the Bailiwick of Guernsey which includes Guernsey, Alderney, Sark, Herm and other off islets.

All ringers must be members of either La Société Jersiaise or La Société Guernesiaise

### **Staff**

Since 2004 the scheme has been administered from Guernsey and is being run by two non-academic volunteers (Margaret & Rich Austin) who only claim out of pocket expenses.

### **Ringers**

The scheme closely follows the requirements set by the British Trust for Ornithology except where local laws differ from the United Kingdom and all ringers must own and have read the Ringers' Manual.

There are three qualified and three trainee ringers in Jersey and six qualified and two trainees in Guernsey.

### **Rings**

Since 2004 rings have been purchased by monies from La Société Guernesiaise and the Environmental Services Department in Jersey. The ringers now purchase rings at just above cost price to try to reduce the dependency on hand outs from other sources.

The rings are purchased from Porzana.

## **Finance**

The Scheme receives no financial assistance from either the States of Jersey or the States of Guernsey. In the past the natural history societies of both islands have assisted with running costs and purchase of rings.

In 2011 the Scheme received a donation of £1,500 from towards the cost of computerisation and La Société Guernesiaise covered the cost of the new computer to run RingAccess the ringing program developed by Vidar Bakken.

## **Data Management**

Since adopting the RingAccess program work has been progressing steadily with the transfer of data from the old paper records. At the time of writing this report (early August) approximately 470,000 of the 520,000 original ringing data have been entered and totals from 2006 – 2012 have been checked and balanced against published totals. In addition to the original ringing details work is also progressing entering both historic and current retrap, control and recovery details.

There is still some fine tuning required to the program but it is now being used to record all current ringing data. The Scheme would like to take this opportunity to thank Vidar for his help and patience in sorting out the inevitable teething problems.

## **Ringling Projects**

Colour ringing of Herring Gulls started back in 1998 in both islands. For the last few years there has been greatly increased effort and the project has been extended to include Lesser Black-backed Gulls and Great Black-back Gulls in the Guernsey Bailiwick. For many years the island has disposed of its household waste in old quarries but this will almost certainly change, probably to a waste to energy plant, in the next five to ten years. The aim is to colour ring as many gulls as possible to follow their fortunes once this easy source of food is no longer available. For the last five years the North Thames Gull Group have visited the Guernsey in spring for five or six days of cannon netting on the local landfill site and this has considerably increased the numbers of birds marked which has added greatly to the value of the study. The scheme would like to thank Paul Roper and his team for all their help.

To date a good number of gulls have been ringed and this has generated an enormously increased number of recoveries and controls.

## **Marsh Harrier Project**

Over the past five years there has been a fairly rapid increase in the number of Marsh Harrier breeding in both Guernsey and Jersey. This year (2013) a project has been started to colour ring both adult and pullus with white colour rings with a letter and two numbers in black and with a plain colour ring over the metal ring as a year code. Because of the relatively small size of both islands there is a limit on the number of nesting sites and so it will be interesting to record the dispersal of juveniles.

### Margaret Long

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Margaret Long at the end of last year. For over forty years Margaret, very ably assisted by her husband Roger, ran the Channel Islands Bird-ringing Scheme and it is very doubtful it would have survived to become what it is today with out their dedication and hard work. Our sympathy is extended to Roger.

### Ringling and Recoveries

<b>Year</b>	<b>Ringed</b>	<b>No. of Species</b>	<b>Grand Total Ringed</b>	<b>Recoveries/ Controls</b>	<b>Total Recoveries</b>	<b>Foreign-ringed birds recovered in C.I's</b>
2002	7,731	92	419,656	162	7,050	26
2003	9,584	100	429,240			
2004	9,639	96	438,879	306	7,356	33
2005	13,416	99	452,295	379	7,735	43
2006	13,786	96	466,081	196	7,931	19
2007	7,515	95	473,596	196	8,127	44
2008	8,637	98	482,233	262	8,389	43
2009	9,010	95	491,243	502	8,891	79
2010	8,356	97	499,599	690	9,581	85
2011	8862	105	508,461	910	10,491	170
2012	8841	96	517,302	1633	12,124	115

The large increase in the number of Recoveries/controls between 2009 and 2012 is a result of sighting of colour ringed Gulls.

### Address

The scheme is at present being run from a private residence.

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