
News

New Marine Director

We are pleased to announce the appointment of JNCC's new Marine Director, John Goold, who started on 1st October 2008 and is based in our Aberdeen office.

Possible marine SPAs in Liverpool Bay and the Greater Thames

Following the September meeting of the Marine Protected Areas Policy Group (see below), the Natural England board will shortly be considering a paper on options for possible marine SPAs in Liverpool Bay (for Common Scoter and Red-throated Divers) and the Greater Thames (for Red-throated divers). Directors of the Countryside Council for Wales will be considering the options for Liverpool Bay early in 2009.

Forthcoming Tern Workshop

As part of our work to identify possible marine SPAs for breeding terns, we will be holding a workshop in Aberdeen on the 17 December which will bring together JNCC and country agency staff with tern experts from research organisations, academia and consultancies. The aim of this workshop is to explore potential approaches to identifying tern hotspots at sea, which may be applied to SPA identification over the next couple of years.



Winter Survey Programme

Our winter survey season, which includes aerial, boat and land based surveys, is now underway. This winter, we will be surveying inshore areas in Shetland, Orkney, Outer Hebrides, Wester Ross, Islay, Inner Clyde, Belfast Lough, Dundrum Bay, South Cornwall, South Kent and mid Dorset.

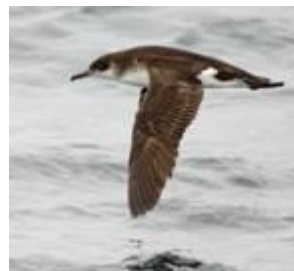
Publications

[Assessment of the Firth of Forth for qualification as a marine SPA](#)

This report describes the analysis of data from aerial and boat-based surveys of the Firth of Forth carried out between 1998 and 2005, to aid the assessment of the area as a possible marine SPA, as part of our work looking at important [inshore aggregations](#) of wintering seaduck.

[Recommendations for extending Manx Shearwater colony SPAs](#)

This report describes JNCC's radio-tracking work on Manx Shearwaters at the world's three largest colonies (Skomer, Rum and Bardsey) and presents recommendations in support of setting site-specific seaward boundary extensions to existing Manx shearwater colony SPAs.



Nature News article on at-sea surveys

December's issue of JNCC's Nature News features an article by our Marine Surveyor, Mark Lewis, describing his experiences conducting at-sea surveys this summer in the Celtic Sea. This work was carried out as part of the NERC funded 'Critical Marine Habitats' project. This issue (Winter 2009) should be available [online](#) soon.

Website update

We are currently working to make all of the marine protected sites webpages on the JNCC website more informative and user-friendly. Please keep an eye on the [marine webpages](#) for new updates in the New Year!

Recent meetings / conferences

Scottish Inshore SPAs

On 20 November, we met with representatives from the Scottish Government and SNH to discuss how best to take forward a suite of possible Scottish inshore SPAs. We will be spending the next few months exploring various options proposed and will present our findings at a meeting with the Scottish Government and SNH in late winter.

Scottish Ornithologists' Club Annual Conference

Ilka Win, one of our Seabird Ecologists, presented a summary of our SPA work at the Annual Conference of the Scottish Ornithologists Club, held at Kinross on 26 October. Her talk focussed in particular on our aerial and boat surveys carried out on the east coast of Scotland.

Marine Natura Project Group

[Minutes](#) from the May 2008 meeting of the [Marine Natura Project Group](#) are now available and include updates on the Marine SPA work programme. Minutes from the September 2008 meeting will be available after the next meeting, which is scheduled for 12 February 2009.

Marine Protected Areas Policy Group

Substantial progress was made in the consideration of possible marine SPAs within Liverpool Bay and the Greater Thames, at the most recent September meeting of this group, which includes representatives from JNCC, Defra and the Country Agencies.

And finally...

The Marine SPA team would like to send [season's greetings](#) to you all and best wishes for 2009!

Photos: Arctic tern (D Franke); Manx shearwater (M Jones)

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The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) is the statutory adviser to Government on UK and international nature conservation, on behalf of the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, the Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage. Its work contributes to maintaining and enriching biological diversity, conserving geological features and sustaining natural systems. **For more information visit www.jncc.gov.uk**