

News

Launch of informal dialogue on marine pSPAs in Liverpool Bay and the Outer Thames Estuary

Natural England, the Countryside Council for Wales and the JNCC have now formally advised an additional two marine potential SPAs to Defra and the Welsh Assembly Government; Outer Thames Estuary pSPA and Liverpool Bay/ Bae Lerpwl pSPA. The Outer Thames pSPA has been proposed because it holds up to 38% of the GB red-throated diver population in winter. The Outer Thames Estuary pSPA crosses the 12 nautical mile boundary, but because more than 90% of it lies within the 12 nautical mile boundary, Natural England will be taking the lead in progressing this site, rather than JNCC. Liverpool Bay/Bae Lerpwl pSPA holds up to 3.4% of north-west Europe's wintering common scoters and 5.4% of GB's wintering red-throated divers. The Liverpool Bay pSPA is a cross-border site, with elements within both English and Welsh territorial waters. Natural England and CCW will jointly progress this site. Details of both sites are available from <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/marine/sacconsultation/default.aspx>



Tern Fieldwork underway

As part of our work to identify possible marine SPAs for breeding terns, we have been carrying out fieldwork at several colonies around the UK this summer. This involves visually tracking breeding birds from a boat, following them from their colony to their foraging grounds and back, and recording their foraging locations. In addition, sample surveys of each area have been carried out using boat-based line transects. The data will be integrated, along with various oceanographic variables, into a model to assess which marine

habitat features are important for terns, with a view to informing the identification of possible marine SPAs. This work follows on from our Tern Workshop, held in December 08 (see below).

Balearic shearwater surveys

This summer, we will be carrying out boat surveys off the south coast of England to assess numbers and distribution of Balearic shearwaters in an area where the species is known to regularly aggregate, to investigate whether it may be suitable for identification as a possible marine SPA.

Seabird Colony SPA Extensions

The report on the public [consultation](#) on the 31 proposed colony extensions in Scotland is to be submitted imminently to Scottish Government by SNH.

Publications

Manx Shearwater radio-tracking work

- Wilson, L.J., McSorley, C.A., Gray, C.M., Dean, B. J., Dunn, T. E., Webb, A. and Reid, J. B. (2009). [Radio-telemetry as a tool to define protected areas for seabirds in the marine environment](#). *Biological Conservation* 142: 1808-1817
- Wilson, L.J., McSorley, C.A., Gray, C.M., Dean, B. J., Dunn, T. E., Webb, A. and Reid, J. B. (2008). Rafting behaviour of Manx Shearwaters *Puffinus puffinus*. *Seabird* Vol 21: 85-93

Both are available on request from [Linda Wilson](#)



Nature News article on Tern Workshop

The Spring 2009 issue of Nature News featured an [article on JNCC's tern workshop](#), held in December 2008.

Recent meetings / conferences

Scottish Government / SNH liaison meetings

On 21 April we met with SNH and Scottish Government representatives from Marine Scotland to discuss our progress with spatial analysis of inshore waterbird distribution data for selected inshore sites which could form the basis of a suite of possible Scottish inshore SPAs. Another meeting was held on 3 July where our work in support of identifying offshore SPAs for seabirds was discussed.

Marine Natura Project Group

Minutes from the [February 2009](#) meeting of the [Marine Natura Project Group](#) are now available. Minutes from the May 2009 meeting will be available after the next meeting, which is scheduled for September 2009.

SPA Ramsar Scientific Working Group

The Marine SPA team presented an update of current work strands at the recent SPARSWG meeting, held at JNCC Peterborough on 3 June 2009.

Seabird Group International Conference

Several members of the marine SPA team attended this conference in Brugge, Belgium 27-29 March 2009 <http://www.vliz.be/events/seabirdconference2009/>.

Photos: Red-throated diver (A Cutts); Sandwich tern (C Scott); Manx shearwater (M Jones).

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