
News

At-Sea Surveys

Two of our staff members, Andy Webb (Knowledge Manager) and Mark Lewis (Marine Surveyor) are participating in at-sea surveys during July as part of the [Critical Marine Habitats \(CMarHab\) project](#). This NERC funded project is investigating oceanographic characteristics and predator-prey behaviours to define critical marine habitats and is a collaboration which includes the [University of Aberdeen](#), [Proudman Oceanographic Laboratories](#), [FRS](#), [CEFAS](#) and ourselves. See the [cruise diary](#) for up-to-date information.



SPA seabird colony extensions

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) is carrying out a [consultation](#) on behalf of Scottish Government on proposals to extend 31 existing seabird colony SPAs into the marine environment. This proposal is based on [research](#) carried out by the JNCC's Marine SPA team. The consultation will run 27 June - 22 September.

Marine SPAs for breeding terns

Work is now underway to investigate which marine areas are used regularly by terns during the breeding season, and as such should be considered as marine SPAs. This work will comprise analyses of aerial survey data and boat-based survey data as well as a review of the existing literature on foraging behaviour of breeding terns. As part of this, an MSc placement student, Pippa Susskind is carrying out analysis of [Seabirds-at-Sea](#) data over the summer.

Publications

[New Red-throated Diver wintering population estimate](#)

A new paper updating the red-throated diver wintering GB population estimate has just been published in Bird Study. The new wintering population estimate is 17,000 (compared to the previous estimate of 5,000) and this more accurate estimate will help with the process of identifying inshore SPAs for this species during the non-breeding season. Copies of the paper are available on request from lead author, and Marine SPA team member, [Sue O'Brien](#).



[Scottish aerial surveys 2006/07](#)

This report summarises our winter aerial surveys around Scottish inshore waters for 2006/07. This work forms part of our annual [seaduck survey programme](#).

[Assessment of Tay Bay for qualification as a marine SPA](#)

This report describes and analyses data from boat and aerial surveys of Tay Bay from 1997-2005 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.

[SOC newsletter features JNCC aerial survey work](#)

An article on our aerial survey work, written by our Marine Surveyor, Mark Lewis, has been published in June's issue of [Scottish Bird News](#), the Scottish Ornithologist Club's newsletter.

Recent meetings

Marine Natura Project Group

The work of JNCC in progressing marine SPA issues is steered by the [Marine Natura Project Group](#), chaired by independent JNCC Committee member Professor Lynda Warren. [Minutes](#) from the February 2008 meeting include updates on the Marine SPA work programme.

Marine Protected Areas Policy Group

JNCC's Marine SPA team have been in recent regular discussions with Defra and the Country Agencies, with specific attention to Red-throated Diver, Common Scoter and Tern marine SPAs.

Photos: Mark Lewis surveying during CMarHab project on RSS James Cook (A Webb); Winter plumage red-throated diver (M Lewis)

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