



ISLES OF SCILLY SEABIRD RECOVERY PROJECT

'Working with the local community and visitors on the Isles of Scilly to enhance their seabird heritage'

'RAT ON A RAT' UPDATE: JANUARY 2015

Volunteers; Tom Bassett, Rebecca Etheridge, Ros, Steve and Tristan Fletcher, Vickie Heaney, Randolph Hessing, Ed Marshall, Amy Horn-Norris, Abbie Pailing, Rihanna Pearce, Will Stubbs, Lydia Titterton, Amie Wheeldon.

Happy New Year! The project is looking forward to the year ahead, the nights are getting lighter and the Manx shearwaters will start making their return journey soon. In the run up to Christmas we were busy with activities such as the St Agnes Bonfire night. Thanks to all the community members who are continuing to remove potential rat-harbours material and what better way to do it than as part of a community bonfire, with fireworks and sparklers. We also visited the schools for creative Christmas crafts and composed a 'Manx Shearwater Christmas song' for Year 7's music class at Five Islands Secondary school, as we did not want to forget our Manxies at Christmas! No-one deserves to hear my dulcet tones singing on Radio Scilly, so the young people took to the task and did a fantastic job.



Sparklers at Community Bonfire Night



Christmas card made by Five Islands school Yellow and Green Primary Classes



Five Islands School Music class sing the Manx shearwater Christmas song for Radio Scilly

We also successfully appointed Gemma Bowcock as **'Access and Engagement officer'**. Gemma started on Monday 5th January, employed by the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust, working part time on the project. Her role is to coordinate incursion response, biosecurity training and uninhabited island monitoring and baiting work to ensure they also remain rat-free. Gemma has previous experience of biosecurity work in New Zealand and has carried out community work for the Wildlife Trust's. Last week we introduced her to many of you on St Agnes, but for those of you who did not meet her, she looks forward to seeing you soon. For the next couple of months the uninhabited island work is priority for her and the IOSWT team. If you are interested in assisting the baiting work on the St Helen's group of islands, please do get in touch. We need a much help as we can in order to monitor these islands weekly until the end of March when all the bait will be brought back in, and only chocolate wax monitoring blocks will remain in the tunnels for the rest of the year.



Gemma Bowcock and IOSWT team



IOSWT Rangers and volunteer Rangers bait and place monitoring tools in stations on St Helen's



Note for your diary! - Producer Jo from BBC's 'Inside Out' emailed to say the footage of the Scilly shrew activity at St Agnes School looks great and should be on air on BBC1 Southwest, 7:30pm sometime this February. I will let you know when, so keep an eye on the notice board. Finally, thanks to all the following who are checking permanent stations on your boat/potential hot spots: John, Trish, Mark, Rosie, Ross, Mike, Rick, Fran, Johann, Mark and Tristan, Tim and Sam.

Jaclyn

Comments and queries welcome: Jaclyn.pearson@rspb.org.uk or 07881517047. This partnership project is supported by LIFE, The EU's programme for financing key environmental schemes across the continent, and the UK's Heritage Lottery Fund.

