

# DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT



**- NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

# ANNUAL REPORT 2010

## Contents

Page no.

- Introduction ..... 4

### International Agreements & Obligations

- Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements ..... 6

### Legislation

- Sites of Special Interest (SSIs) ..... 6
- Licences..... 6

### Monitoring & Reporting on the Natural Environment

- Planning Applications..... 6
- Advice..... 6
- New Software—CMS ..... 7
- Agile Frog Monitoring and Resume..... 7
- Jersey Amphibian & Reptile Group Newsletter ..... 8
- Jersey National Amphibian & Reptile Recording Scheme ..... 9
- Jersey Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (JBMS) ..... 10
- Breeding Bird Survey/Bird Atlas/Farmland Bird Survey ..... 10
- Local Biological Records Centre ..... 11

### Managing the Natural Environment

- Work Completed on Sites ..... 12
- Portelet/Noirmont Holm oak management..... 13
- Contractors ..... 13
- Issues—Vandalism, fly tipping etc ..... 14
- Woodland Management at St Catherine’s pSSI..... 15
- Countryside Renewal Scheme (CRS)..... 15

## Contents (continued)

Page no.

- C atel de Lecq..... 16
- Management Planning ..... 16

### Access

- Footpaths and bridle paths ..... 16

### Education, Awareness and Volunteers

- Jersey Biodiversity Partnership..... 17
- Biodiversity Action Plans..... 17
- 2010 International Year of Biodiversity and the Eco-Active Biodiversity Championship Toolkit ..... 18
- International Year of Biodiversity 2010 Grant ..... 18
- Jersey Ecology Fund ..... 18
- School Groups..... 19
- Springwatch..... 19
- Volunteers..... 19

### Training and Personal Development

- Training..... 20



## Introduction

2010 saw the creation of the Natural Environment Team through the merger of the Countryside Management and the Ecology Teams, and through cuts in staffing, it has provided the States of Jersey with a more efficient means of delivering the Island's international responsibility towards the Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements to which the island is a signatory.

The Team has a wide remit in conserving the Island's landscape, habitats and species, providing Island-wide access, and educating the populace about the importance of and how to ensure that we are maintaining a biodiverse environment.

This task would not be possible without the enthusiastic help of many other Departments, organisations, and individuals who all contribute towards the conservation



of our Island's rich natural heritage. We, and the Island, should be immensely grateful to this body of people who give up their time freely in order to ensure that we are able to provide future generations with the rich biological heritage that we ourselves have inherited.

2010 was an exceptionally busy year for the Team, as the service we provide was reviewed on several levels to determine if the work that the team carry out was appropriate, proportionate, consistent and efficient. A number of procedures and our processes have been amended and we have entered 2011 with several newly developed and evolving procedures which will ensure that our work is more targeted and provides the public with value for money.

2010 was designated 'International Year of Biodiversity' by the United Nations. During the year the 10th international conference on the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio Convention or CBD) was held in Nagoya, Japan. The conference heard that targets set for biodiversity conservation by member countries world-wide have not been met and that the loss of biodiversity continues to be a problem of gigantic proportions all around the globe.

Sadly Jersey is no exception, and we continue to see a decline in the population of several species of birds which inhabit our shores, and we have lost several more to local extinction over the past 10 years. Animals such as amphibians and reptiles are not faring any better and we continue to see a decline in our native toad population, despite high numbers in occasional locations, island-wide, the population continues to contract and decline. We are happy to report higher numbers of frog spawn clumps in 2010, however we are a long way from recovering a sustainable population of this unusual British species. Our only native snake the



lovely, non-venomous grass snake continues to suffer and may well become extinct in the near future.

Only increased effort to conserve our native species and the habitats that they occupy will ensure that these animals continue to share our Island with us.

Jersey, as signatory to the convention has certain responsibilities and we have implemented these in a number of ways, including updating local legislation which resulted in our Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2000, ('Wildlife Law') created in order to protect our locally resident animals, insects and plants. We are also required to protect those animals which may not reside here, but use our shores for resting during migratory

Services we manage over 550 Hectares of Jersey's richest habitat areas. The work that is carried out is at times controversial as we need to remove trees from our coastal heathland and sand dune areas in order to protect and conserve the other flora and fauna that depend upon these specific habitats.

A number of complaints were received this year, mainly in relation to the work that was carried out at Noirmont Common SSI. It is always sad to see trees removed from an area of land, but left to their own devices, trees would eventually take over heathland turning the habitat from a rich, low growing flora into a species poor tall woody vegetation community. This would involve the loss of dozens, if not hundreds of small and easily



passages or spend time here during the winter before heading back north. Most of these animals are birds, but we also have marine mammals in our territorial waters. We are obliged to protect these creatures and to work with our neighbours to ensure that throughout their range they are greeted with measures which will protect and enhance them. The Wildlife Law has been in the forefront of protecting our local wildlife for 10 years, and, due to changes in EU and UK legislation we intend to review the legislation and to propose changes which will enhance this wildlife protection.

We would welcome comments and ideas from people who encounter the Law, and from those who are interested in protecting our local wildlife.

The management of natural habitats in Jersey continues to be one of the major areas of work for the team. With our partners at Transport and Technical

overlooked plants and insects, mosses and lichens, and a large number of other birds and animals which use the grasslands for feeding.

We look forward to continuing our work with several large projects in 2011, working with our partners to ensure that our Island continues to maintain the rich environment that we appreciate and care for.

**John Pinel**  
**Principal Ecologist**

## International Agreements and Obligations

### Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements

Jersey's obligations under biological and ecological conventions are primarily dealt with by the Environmental Management and Rural Economy (EMRE) section of the Department of the Environment. Much like other branches of the Department, EMRE has generally made progress with its commitments to MEAs since 2003 through applying the principals of conventions to more wide-ranging policy documents. For example, obligations are first integrated into the Departmental Business Plan to provide an overall goal, which is then met by specific strategies or policies.

The Island's contribution to the UK's Biennial Report (2007-2008) under the Berne Convention was submitted in 2010. The aims of this Convention are to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, especially those species and habitats whose conservation requires the co-operation of several States, and to promote such co-operation. Particular emphasis is given to endangered and vulnerable species, including endangered and vulnerable migratory species.

## Legislation

### Sites of Special Interest (SSIs)

In 2010 work commenced on the designation of the remaining coastal strips along St Ouen's Bay from Le Braye to Les Laveurs. St Catherine's Woods and Mont



Orgueil Castle were listed as proposed ecological SSIs.

### Licences under the Wildlife Law

The Wildlife Law protects all birds (apart from feral and wood pigeon, magpie, crow) and certain listed species of bats, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and plants. Offences include the killing, taking or disturbance of protected species and their dens, nests or dreys, and the use of certain methods of killing or trapping of all species.

The Planning and Environment Minister has authority to grant licences authorising activities which would otherwise constitute an offence under the Law, for specific purposes including:

- (a) science, research or education;
- (b) ringing or marking;
- (c) preserving public health or public or air safety;
- (d) conserving flora or fauna;
- (e) preventing the spread of disease;
- (f) preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, fisheries or other forms of property.

In all cases it must be shown that there is no other satisfactory solution to the problem and that the activity will not be detrimental to the population of the species concerned.

In 2010, 202 licences were issued to control pheasants, 2 were granted to remove birds from causing damage to property and one licence to shoot rabbits at night at a golf club. Ten licences were granted for scientific purposes and three for bird ringing, A licence for public health purposes was also issued to control noxious caterpillars on oak trees (*Quercus robur*).

## Monitoring & Reporting on the Natural Environment

### Planning Applications

In 2010 the Natural Environment Team viewed 1566 planning applications to assess their environmental impact. This checking covers a broad range of concerns from habitat damage or loss, maintaining the integrity of protected sites (SSI's) and conserving individual species eg bats, swallows, lizards etc. Of the applications viewed, 432 were called in for further examination resulting in individual responses made on 258 applications detailing environmental protection measures.

### Advice

The Team continues to offer professional advice and guidance, and work closely with, other stakeholders, both internally and externally from the States of Jersey. Stakeholders have included private land owners and user groups on the subject of land use, habitat





management and advice on compliance in relation to the Wildlife Law. Advice was also given to BBC Time Team when they came to Jersey in 2010 to undertake investigations at Mont Orgueil and Les Gelles (War



Tunnels) in order to ensure that they avoid potential conflicts under the Wildlife Law. One team member judged at The Insurance Corporation conservation awards in June 2010. Now in their 20<sup>th</sup> year, these awards recognise those who undertake projects that display their concern for the environment, and highlight the important conservation work that takes place throughout the Island of Jersey. There are two sections, one for schools and the other for other conservation projects, with £2000 awarded as prize money for the winner of each category.

## New Software—CMS

After a lengthy review the Natural Environment Team purchased a bespoke software package Countryside Management System (CMS), developed by the major UK conservation agencies. The system uses a database approach to provide a logical, proven means of implementing site management plans, recording the actions and allowing evaluation of the results. This will allow the Team to more accurately target plans on current and historic data. Training was run at the end of 2010 and the system integrated within the States network. The focus for 2011 / 2012 is to ensure that all relevant data currently held by the Team is transferred to the system.

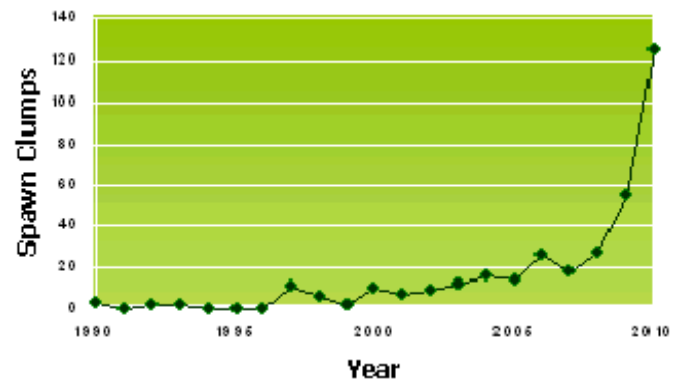
CMS is managed by a private company on behalf of a Consortium of all users who range in size from large conservation agencies to small wildlife trusts. All benefit from any system upgrades driven by the users, as well as from the experiences of other organisations. CMS should allow a more targeted approach to habitat management across Jersey.

## Agile Frog Monitoring & Resume

The 2010 monitoring season saw further success in the efforts to improve the status of the agile frog *Rana dalmatina* in Jersey.

Following a cold winter the breeding season started with good water levels at all sites. The first spawning date was consistent with 2009 figures (February 10th) and spawn numbers then increased steadily over the following 6-8 weeks.

Throughout the season the number of frogs seen was at record highs and the number of spawn clumps identified across the species known breeding range passed 120, a doubling of the 2009 total. Equally encouraging was the increasing distribution in the sightings of agile frogs and spawn clumps across sites. As amphibians are often cited as good environmental indicators this is encouraging for the status of the sites as a whole. It may also signify that the management activities across the sites are proving positive for the agile frog.



As in recent years a limited number of spawn clumps were taken off site for “head starting” at Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust. A re-release to the natural sites at the tadpole stage was then carried out in early summer. This element of the Biodiversity Action Plan for the species has proved very successful and the survival rate to tadpole appears extremely high. In a situation such as this, where numbers in the wild are relatively small and distribution is limited, it’s important to have the capability to secure and raise large numbers in captivity.

The threats to the sites from development, pollution and infection are always present and the unknown influence that climate change may bring is difficult to determine. The dry spring of 2010 seriously threatened the development of tadpoles to full term and if this phenomenon becomes more enhanced and prolonged then it could threaten the improving status of the agile frog in Jersey.

2010 also saw the end of one phase of the project to protect the agile frog in Jersey. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Perkins family for their long term commitment to this project, that saw them provide not only an enclosure location but also hours of their time in monitoring. The end of the enclosures program marks a pivotal stage in the project as it infers that the wild populations have increased in size and strength.



<http://groups.arguk.org/jarg/>

### Jersey Amphibian and Reptile Group (JARG) newsletter

JARG is affiliated to ARG UK. and the local group's fourth newsletter JARGON, was published in autumn 2010 and distributed to over a hundred households, States members and Non Governmental Organisations. Articles included 'The Main Development Stages of an Agile Frog'; a resume of the JARG day (see page 14); a report on Grass Snake Champion **Ernst and Young's** great effort clay lining a new pond at Les Creux Country Park; a summary of Toadwatch 2010 and news that as of February 2010, a licence is required to import amphibians into Jersey (please contact the States Vet at The Department of the Environment). Amphibians are the latest group to be added to the schedule of animals, such as foxes, grey squirrels and reptiles which require a licence for importation into the Island under the the Diseases of Animals (Importation of Miscellaneous Goods) (Jersey) Order 1958. One problem with bringing non-native amphibians into the island is the risk that the individuals may be carrying diseases. If the natural amphibians of Jersey, such as the agile frog, contract these foreign infections their survival rate could potentially be reduced. A prominent worry is that the fatal fungal disease chytridomycosis will be introduced. The island is currently free from the disease which is sweeping many other parts of the world, including the UK.. Under the new legislation it will become easier to monitor the importation of all amphibians. There will obviously be particular interest in keeping out the chytrid fungus as well as other harmful diseases.

Foreign species can not only bring disease, but if

released into the wild, intentionally or otherwise, can interfere with the survival of native species. This might be by competing with them for already limited habitat resources, for example.

In addition to controlling amphibians entering the island, it is therefore of utmost importance that amphibian pets are not released into the wild. If these pets can no longer be cared for, the animal shelter should be called, rather than anything being released. Please be vigilant, and if you spot any creatures which you suspect might be alien, please get in touch with the Department of the Environment.

In a Grouville pond last year, several clumps of common frog spawn were found. This species is not native to the island. Thankfully, this incident was spotted and reported by an observant member of the public and the spawn was subsequently removed. It is thanks to vigilance such as this that our local amphibians remain relatively safe from threats from alien invasive species.

Towards the middle of 2010, ARG UK kindly offered to create websites for all the local groups associated with it, and JARG decided to take full advantage of the opportunity. It had been noted that the previous JARG website appeared tired and in need of a revamp. The new site will be a place to advertise forthcoming events as well as share news and impart information on the Island's amphibians and reptiles, the new website can be found at <http://groups.arguk.org/jarg/>



## National Amphibian and Reptile Recording Scheme (NARRS)

The National Amphibian and Reptile Recording Scheme (NARRS) began in 2007. It is the first scheme of its kind designed to produce robust, repeatable, baseline data on the status of amphibians and reptiles throughout Britain in such a way that trends can be detected. Jersey's NARRS scheme is a partnership project with the Amphibian and Reptile Groups of the United Kingdom (ARG-UK), Jersey Amphibian and Reptile Group (JARG) in Jersey and a host of other partners including the Department of the Environment.

Central to NARRS is the use of trained volunteers to collect the data. During February 2010 JARG held an all day event 'JARG DAY' on local, national and international Amphibian and Reptile research. The afternoon involved training for interested volunteers to be trained in NARRS species identification, survey methodologies, bio-security and health and safety, given survey forms to fill in and other materials (e.g. identification sheets) facilitating the completion of their survey/s.

The NARRS survey cycle currently runs over a six-year period (2007 – 2012 inclusive) in order to fit in with EU reporting responsibilities for the UK, but this is also a realistic time-frame over which changes might occur and thus be detected. At the end of each survey cycle, the data can be analysed and the cycle begins again with the same rules and conditions. During 2010 we

developed an interim report to determine how the scheme was going. This scheme relies on volunteers and is covered in more detail below.

To date a total of 32 unique NARRS squares were surveyed between 2007 – 2010, including 22 unique amphibian squares and 19 unique reptile squares (both taxa were surveyed for in 9 squares). By the end of the six-year survey period (2012) 40 squares for both amphibians and reptiles need to be surveyed (more - e.g. 50 - would be beneficial). The scheme will continue to run annually until this time. Current recommendations for additional NARRS survey squares for 2011 and 2012 should include the following;

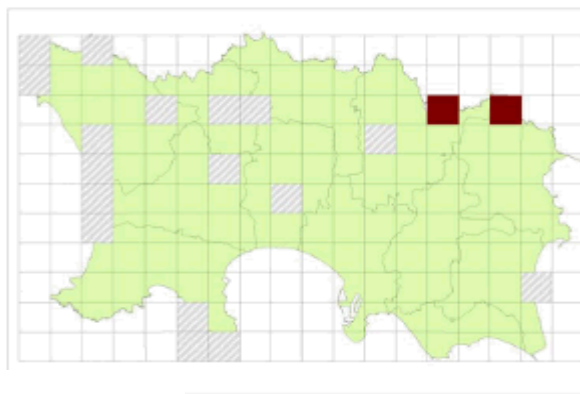
- squares into which agile frog populations are likely to expand in future,
- squares (including inland and/or urban) in which slow-worm populations are likely to be found,
- known wall lizard squares and
- squares from which grass snakes have been previously recorded. The inclusion of any additional NARRS squares should generate further useful data on toads, palmate newts and green lizards.

It is hoped that the production of this first Jersey NARRS report will serve to promote the scheme in Jersey, increase participation, and further the goals of herpetofauna conservation in the Island for the future. If you would like to become involved with this exciting project please contact the Department of the Environment.

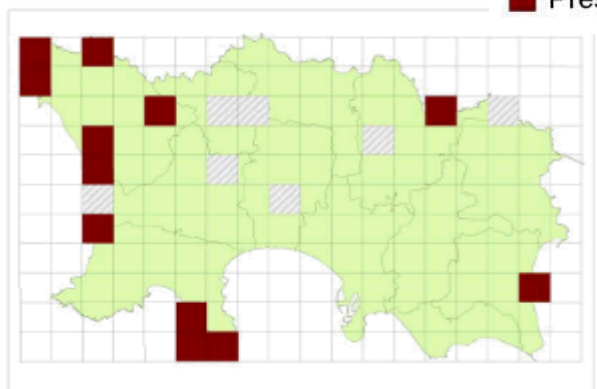
Slow worm *Anguis fragilis*



Wall lizard *Podarcis muralis*



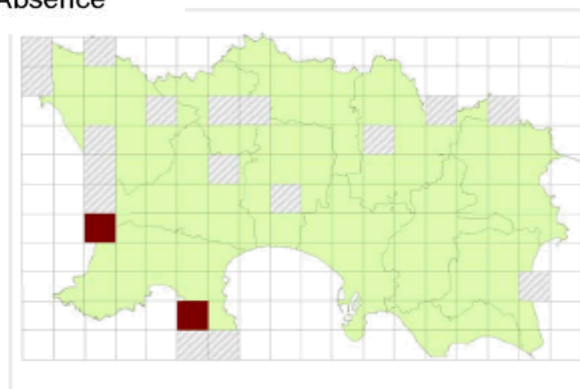
Green lizard *Lacerta bilineata*



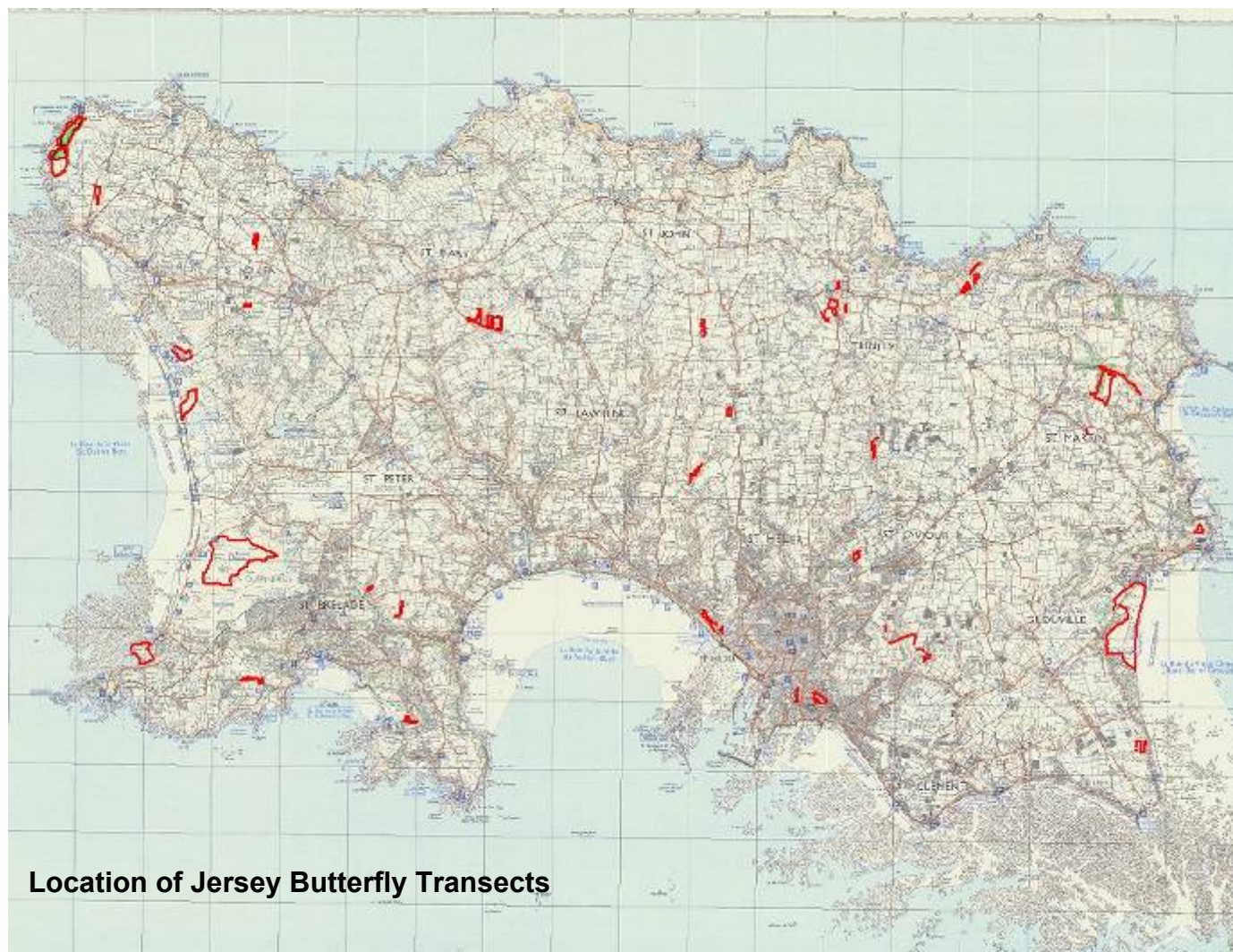
Reptile survey squares

■ Presence    □ Absence

Grass snake *Natrix natrix*



Occupied squares for Jersey reptiles (from NARRS surveys 2007 – 2010)



**Location of Jersey Butterfly Transects**

### **Jersey Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (JBMS)**

The Jersey Butterfly Monitoring Scheme has now been running for six years and forms part of the Department of the Environment's (DoE) integrated programme to carry out 'State of the Environment Monitoring'. One of the scheme's main objectives is monitoring specific components of the Countryside Renewal Scheme (CRS).

The JBMS enables DoE to monitor changes in butterfly abundance and diversity at individual sites. This can be compared with results elsewhere, to assess the impact of local factors such as habitat change caused by management and land-use changes especially in relation to CRS. Butterflies are recognised as important indicator species for general invertebrate population health and are indicators of environmental and habitat quality.

A training event on Saturday 10th April 2010 at Howard Davis Farm in Trinity was organised to give existing volunteer recorders feedback on previous year's results as well as inviting new volunteer recorders to join the scheme. The training was provided by Dr Susan Clarke from Essex Associates in conjunction with Butterfly Conservation.

In total, 30 butterfly transects were walked out of a possible 32 transects. An approximate total of 9400 butterflies were counted during the season.



### **Breeding Bird Survey/ Bird Atlas/ Farmland Bird Survey**

Monitoring is carried out during the year for these three projects to gather data on the health of the Island's bird populations. These surveys are administered nationwide by the Joint Nature Conservancy Council, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the British Trust for Ornithology. Locally they are carried out by the Société Jersiaise Ornithology Section, Durrell Wildlife and the DoE. The data is submitted both to national figures and to 'The State of Jersey', a report which outlines the health of Jersey's natural resources and environment and which is published every five years.



## Local Biological Records Centre (LRC)

During the Biodiversity Partnership meeting (see page 17) a scoping consultation in regard to a local biological records centre (LRC) was started.

Biological recording involves documenting the occurrence of wild species or habitats at a place and at a particular time by an individual. A LRC is a local facility for the storage, validation and usage of biological data. It collects, collates, manages and disseminates information of known quality relating to the wildlife, wildlife sites and habitats of a defined geographical area.

By bringing a variety of environmental information together and interpreting it, an overall picture of the status and distribution of different habitats and species becomes apparent. If this information is collected systematically over time, real changes in the health of Jersey's biodiversity can be monitored and accurately assessed. The JBP were keen to know the view of local recorders, local environmental organisations and the general public on this resource required to help protect and conserve Jersey's species and habitats.

The scope's goals were as follows;

- To determine the potential for a Local Biological Record Centre (LRC) by assessing the opinions of Island recorders.
- To investigate the current state of local biological recording.
- To hold a workshop for islanders & recorders to discuss issues arising from the proposed LRC and to produce a questionnaire.
- To identify the range of issues that need to be considered in establishing or developing a LRC.

The above questions were answered and implemented through the workshop, together with a public questionnaire and the Rural Economy Strategy (RES) review 2011-2015 (green and white paper) as part of a consultation to explore the idea further and consider in more detail the opportunities and challenges of a LRC. The results of the workshop, public questionnaire and RES review will influence whether the States of Jersey



will pursue the feasibility of a LRC and whether relevant stakeholder groups will support and contribute to setting up a LRC for the Channel Islands or for Jersey.

There is a lot of information available on the diversity of species and habitats in Jersey, but it needs organisation to improve its accessibility by centralising all biological records to assist both data providers and users.

The participants of this consultation included local biological recorders, the general public and people with a stake in the Jersey's rural environment. The results have indicated that there is general support for a LRC.

The main concern apparent across this consultation was the cost of setting up and running a LRC. Special concern was expressed with regards to timing, due the current financial climate and whether the project should be given priority at this time. When participants were asked if they had any further comments several suggested ease of access, the use of sensitive data and sharing data were important factors that need to be established and agreed with all relevant parties before the setting up a LRC.

When questioned where a LRC should be held, slightly more respondents (62.7%) were in favour of a Channel Island centre rather than one specific to Jersey (53.8%). During the workshop there was no consensual outcome as to where the LRC should be based however it was clear there is support for a joint Channel Island LRC.



## Managing the Natural Environment

### Work Completed on Sites

The Annual Work Schedule which the Natural Environment Team (NET) provides to our main contractor, Transport and Technical Services, each month, details the work that must be carried out on public land across Jersey.

In any one year there are numerous tasks to be carried out across the various sites, all of which have written specifications prepared for them. The specifications describe in detail why, where, when and how any particular job should be carried out.

During 2010, the Ranger team have successfully completed in excess of 100 specified tasks from the Annual Work Schedule (268 individual site visits from the Ranger Team, tractors and Forestry Team) and over 200 unspecified tasks, all of which have been overseen by the Natural Environment Team.

In 2010, approximately 28 hectares of bracken were managed representing an increase of 5 hectares from 2009. The main sites are at Les Landes de l'Est Site of Special (Ecological) Interest (SSI), La Lande De L'Ouest SSI, Les Creux Millennium Park, Noirmont Common SSI, Portelet Common SSI and Ouaisne Common SSI.

Also, more than 15 hectares of rough grassland were mown to create a more species rich short sward – one of Jersey's most threatened habitats which, in turn, contain rare species of plants and invertebrates.

The year 2010 also saw a number of successful projects, carried out both by internal and external contractors, reach completion on various sites across the Island.

Some of the major projects were as follows;

- Willow coppicing at Ouaisne Common SSI.
- Woodland management at St Catherine's woods proposed SSI. Plans were prepared to make holes in the woodland canopy in order to increase the sunlight reaching the woodland floor and increase germination of tree saplings.
- Bracken management areas were extended. Also, for the first year, a glyphosate based herbicide was used to treat bracken plants. This is a much more efficient process than cutting bracken and will increase success in encouraging the return of desirable vegetation communities in its place.
- Scrub control on Les Blanchés Banques SSI. The natural process of habitat succession is constantly affecting habitats Island wide. Scrub clearance is an important management tool by which to maintain species rich grassland.



## Portelet /Noirmont - Holm oak Management



Winter 2009/2010 saw the continuation of management work on key coastal maritime heath and coastal grassland areas of Les Blanchés Banques SSI, Portelet Common SSI and Noirmont Common SSI by external contractors. One aspect of this work, aimed at improving the condition status of the sites, as detailed in the management plans, is to reduce the encroachment of Holm oak *Quercus ilex* and planted pine *Pinus spp.* which, if left unchecked, reproduce prolifically.

Individual seed bearing trees and groups of encroaching Holm oaks were felled and stumps were treated with herbicide during the first phase of this work. Limited resources mean that areas where work was targeted is limited to those identified as being most likely to see successful habitat restoration. Moving forward, we are and will continue to work with the Probation and Community Services Program and the National Trust Conservation Volunteers to remove the historic build up of “leaf mulch” that should enable an underlying seed bank to emerge. It is also hoped that it may be possible to graze some of the areas under management at Noirmont using pigs (in conjunction with the tenant farmer on site). This work forms an integrated approach to management of these sites and complements the other habitat management activities.

### Contractors

In addition to the work carried out for the Team by private contractors as part of the footpath maintenance contracts and by TTS Parks & Gardens, a number of additional habitat management projects were completed

by private contractors.

The partnership project with the Island Insurance Company saw the continuation of work at C atel de Lecq (see page 16). This work, carried out by approved contractors, involved scrub clearance and grassland management work.

The Team also engaged specialist contractors to undertake woodland management at St Catherine’s proposed SSI. This management activity was identified as a way to improve habitat condition and meet the aims of the management plan.

The Team is responsible (or in a number of cases have shared responsibility with T&TS ) for 15 car parks and their associated access tracks and roads. In order to ensure that public access to all site car parks is maintained in a satisfactory condition, a number of re-surfacing jobs were undertaken in 2010. In addition, works were also carried out to restrict the movement of vehicles on land with conservation value. The Jersey Probation and Community Services Program has also played an integral part in this.

2010 also saw the continuation of the sowing of conservation crops for farmland birds. Spring barley was sown once again by contractors. The success of conservation crops is well documented but their extent in Jersey is likely to be threatened with increasing pressures on land use and availability.



Portelet Common SSI—before.....



.....and after invasive tree control





recent habitat losses to fire, 2010 was a good year with few incidents (in 2009, 193,686 m<sup>2</sup> or 19 hectares were burnt).

Over the year there was an average of 1.5 cubic metres of waste being removed from sites each month. Amongst the list of appliances and objects collected were 2 stepladders, a Hoover, a microwave, a television and eight tents.





### Woodland Management at St Catherine's proposed SSI

Careful, considered management is vital in order to promote healthy biodiversity in woodlands. Selected thinning of 'weed' species such as Holm oak *Quercus ilex* allows for regeneration of more appropriate trees such as English oak *Quercus robur* in the canopy gaps created, it also creates an uneven age structure to the woodland ensuring its longevity. It has been a number of years since any such work has been undertaken at St Catherine's Woods, proposed Site of Special Interest so it was decided to focus on one compartment of the woodland in particular need of woodland management. The more invasive spe-

cies were targeted, especially evergreens such as Holm oak, holly and yew as well as Turkey oak. Most mature trees were left, unless threatening to particularly good specimens of favourable species e.g. English oak. All felled timber and brush wood was piled on site as dead hedging in order to provide wildlife habitats, and where safe, standing dead wood was left as valuable habitat for species such as bats, woodpeckers and fungi. An extent of approximately 2 hectares, or roughly 10% of the entire site was managed in this instance, however it is hoped to phase further woodland management at St Catherine's over the next few years.



### Countryside Renewal Scheme (CRS)

During 2010 the CRS was closed to all new applications due to budgetary constraints. In 2010-2011 the Countryside Renewal Scheme (CRS) is undergoing a thorough review, covering all aspects of design, content, delivery and monitoring. A review of the Rural Economy Strategy 2005 has recently been completed and the new Rural Economy Strategy 2011-2015 was published in January 2011. The CRS review will investigate ways in which the CRS could be improved or redesigned, whilst being made simpler to administer and achieving best possible value for money. The aim of the CRS Review is to identify any necessary adjustments to the scheme to ensure increased value for money and to maximise environmental benefits.

During the review, the scheme's environmental and compliance monitoring will also be re-developed and will be adapted for the new proposed scheme e.g. grants will be allocated to targeted activities that will benefit Jersey's

Countryside.

The 2009 CRS Awards were held on Friday 18th June 2010 at Samarès Manor. An independent CRS Judging Panel viewed six short listed projects on Friday 21st May 2010. Judges were, Professor John Fa, Chief Conservation Officer of Durrell, James Godfrey the C.E.O. of the Royal Jersey Agricultural & Horticultural Society, Hugh Forshaw of the Société Jersiaise Zoology Section and, Tim Liddiard Senior Natural Environment Officer for the States of Jersey.

The 2009 Countryside Renewal Scheme award winner is Aaron Le Couteur of C.S. Conservation in conjunction with The National Trust for Jersey in recognition of his heathland management and restoration work. The project has seen a flock of Manx Loaghtan sheep introduced to the coastal heathland landscape, with a view to restoring the habitat by controlling the scrub and bracken.



Manx Loaghtan sheep



**Câtel de Lecq**

Management work at Câtel de Lecq continued with the generous funding of the Insurance Corporation of the Channel Islands. In addition much needed volunteer support was given by the Jersey Probation and Aftercare Service and the Jersey Conservation Volunteers. The main management efforts continued to focus on bracken and scrub control. The very nature of the site, it's size, aspect and archaeological heritage will continue to make this task the predominant management activity for some years.

The Natural Environment Team continues to consult the stakeholders who have been involved since the inception of this project. The views of the Société Jersiaise, Jersey Heritage, The National Trust for Jersey and the Department of the Environment are all taken into account on any management proposals.

With the proposed works entering a new phase of habitat management it is prudent to ensure that the Team continue to work with the support of all the principle conservation agencies. Going forward the Team continue to use best practice methodology in improving ecological diversity and maintaining archaeological heritage.

**Management Planning**

Management plan summaries have been completed for all States of Jersey administered Sites of Special Ecological Interest. However, these plans are at present being updated so that they sit well within the Countryside Management System (explained on page 7)

These plans are the blueprint to site management and describe the past, present and proposed future management of these important protected areas.

**Access**

**Footpaths and Bridle Paths**

The Department of the Environment is responsible for the provision of access to over 600 hectares of environmentally sensitive land with more than 70 km of footpath and bridle path.

The paths are maintained by external contractors to a high standard with full consideration for the safety and health of everyone and everything that uses them in-

cluding; people of varying ages, abilities and disabilities, dogs and horses and a variety of sponsored events. It is also vital that they are cut in an environmentally sensitive manner, with a fine balance needed between preventing vegetation impeding access, whilst at the same time allowing wild flowers to flourish. The majority of Jersey's coastal footpath was constructed approximately 25 - 30 years ago (early 1980's) by the then Committee of Public Works. During recent years, budgetary restraints have meant that hazards and dangers have been fixed on a priority basis, but as time passes more work needs to be carried out as the entire length of path reaches maturity at the same time.



**North coast improvements**



There are more than 5,000 items of infrastructure, such as bridges and steps on the access network much of which is well past its expected lifespan, and therefore is overdue for replacement in order to provide continuing safe public access. Responsibility for the north coast footpaths (and bridle paths) transferred to the then Planning and Environment Department from Transport and Technical Services in 2005.

In winter 2010, as part of a phased plan designed to upgrade the Island's footpath and bridle path network, the section from Grève de Lecq to Plemont, one of the areas of the north coast footpath considered most in need of renovation, was targeted for major repair work by external contractors. Rutted and eroded areas were re-graded, encroaching woody plants were cut hard back, drainage channels added and whole flights of rotten steps were replaced. It is hoped that this investment will provide safe public access along this 2.5 km section for many years to come.

Towards the end of 2010 expressions of interest were invited from suitable contractors able to provide a footpath maintenance service to the States of Jersey from 2011-2014. 25 new separate comprehensive specifications were written by the Natural Environment team for each of the 70 km of footpaths and bridle paths under the Department's care. As well as existing, experienced suppliers, a lot of interest was also received from contractors new to this type of work. Contracts will be awarded in spring 2011 to those contractors who are able to demonstrate good knowledge of the requirements of people wishing to access the routes, and of the natural history of such species as are likely to benefit from the specified management, as well as providing good value for money.



**New bridle path Jardin d'Olivet**

In a joint venture with the Jersey Drag Hunt and several local horse riders, a half km of bridle path was opened at Jardin d'Olivet, Trinity. This now provides continuity to an old existing bridle path, thereby doubling the amount of off road provision for horses in this area.

## Education, Awareness and Volunteers

### Jersey Biodiversity Partnership (JBP)

The Jersey Biodiversity Partnership (JBP) was set up in 2006 for the purpose of implementing Jersey's Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP), which currently cover 51 species and 1 habitat in the Island. These were formed following Jersey's ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) [www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int), the publication 'Biodiversity – a strategy for Jersey' and the need for action to conserve biodiversity at a local level.

The JBP is an informal partnership of more than 30 organisations and individuals committed to conserving and enhancing biodiversity in Jersey (see appendix 1). Partners support the JBP in a variety of ways; with time, expertise, funding or other resources.

The overall aim of the JBP is:

"To protect, conserve and enhance the variety of wildlife species and habitats in Jersey through the successful implementation of the Jersey Biodiversity Action Plans"

This aim will be achieved by focusing its work on the following goals:

- To facilitate an integrated approach to conservation by improving the flow of information and communication.
- To encourage participation by all sectors of society.
- To promote awareness of the importance of biodiversity.
- To support partner organisations in their legal and other responsibilities towards biodiversity.

During 2010 the fifth partnership meeting for all partners, volunteers and all other stakeholders was held to discuss what the Jersey Biodiversity Partnership has achieved and what is planned for 2010 and beyond.

### Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPS)

During 2010 five new Biodiversity Action Plans were drafted and made available for public consultation.

These are;

- European shag
- Jersey buttercup
- Slow worm
- Rural habitat statement
- Hedgerow and boundary features

The plans will be edited and printed in 2011.





European shag

### International Year of Biodiversity 2010 and the Eco-Active Biodiversity Championship Toolkit

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2010 to be the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB), in order to help raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity all over the world. Partners of the IYB included governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), universities, art organisations, community interest companies, commercial organisations, conservation charities and wildlife trusts.

The States of Jersey Biodiversity Partnership signed up to the UK partnership for the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB-UK). The IYB-UK was a diverse, informal network of organisations that came together to promote the understanding of biodiversity during International Year of Biodiversity.

To achieve the aims and goals of IYB UK-2010 and States of Jersey Biodiversity Partnership (SOJBP), the States of Jersey launched ECO-ACTIVE BIODIVERSITY. ECO-ACTIVE BIODIVERSITY aims to provide the public with an increased chance to learn more about the rich tapestry of life in Jersey through a targeted programme.

The ECO-ACTIVE BIODIVERSITY 'Championship' scheme provides an opportunity for businesses, community groups and schools to get involved in monitoring and conserving local wildlife through Jersey's Biodiversity Action Plans. As champions of individual habitats or species there is a task for everybody who can help, whatever their skills and knowledge and however much time they have available.

### International Year of Biodiversity 2010 Grant

To participate in this landmark year and to accompany

the ECO-ACTIVE BIODIVERSITY championship scheme, the JBP supported the following projects during 2010;

- Red Squirrel Disease Monitoring Project - JSPCA
- Jersey Hedgerow Campaign - Jersey Trees for Life
- Coastal Restoration 'Birds on the Edge' - National Trust for Jersey & Durrell
- Val de la Mare Arboretum - Working Group

All the projects are schemes that are currently running in partnership with SOJ or JBP

### Jersey Ecology Fund

The Jersey Ecology Fund is available to applicants who are seeking funding for an environmental project which benefits Jersey.

The Fund was established in March 1991 by the States of Jersey with a sum of money received as an insurance settlement from the *Amoco Cadiz* oil tanker disaster of 1978. The Fund is invested by the States Treasury to generate an income that can be used in whole or partial support of local environmental projects.

There are five Trustees of the Fund who meet on a regular basis to decide on support for applications received.

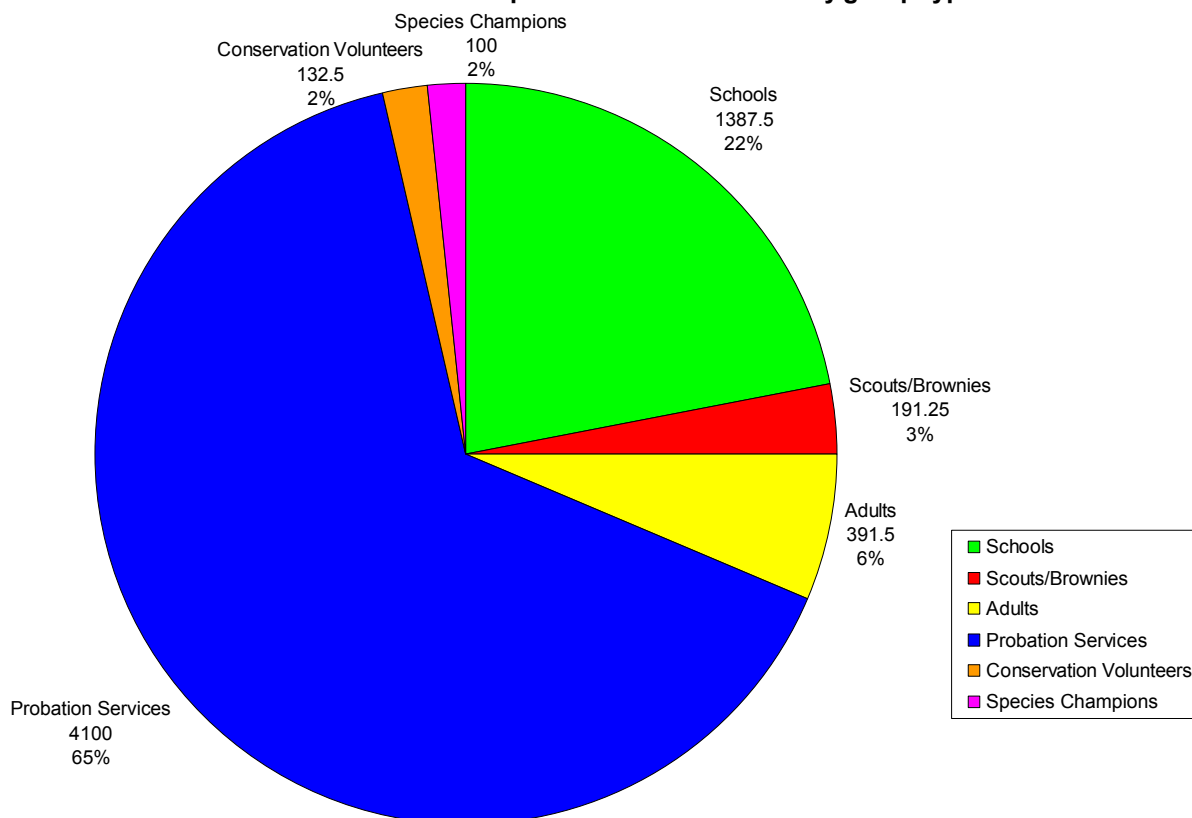
In 2010 the Trustees agreed to support two new applications to the total amount of £1230; funding to assist with the scanning of bird ringing data and the creation of a wildlife pond. Long term projects supported by the Fund and successfully completed in 2010 include an Msc study of wall lizards in Jersey and the development of a nature area by Mencap.



### Springwatch

International Biodiversity Day 2010 (22<sup>nd</sup> May 2010) was celebrated with 'Springwatch Wild Day Out', a festival of local conservation activities, organised in partnership with the BBC's Springwatch programme. There was an opportunity for members of the public to join in with the following activities;

**Breakdown of man hours spent on volunteer tasks by group type**



- A special trail to learn about delicate wildflower species
- A butterfly survey
- Hands on habitat management with the Jersey Conservation Volunteers who were clearing invasive plant species on the dunes
- Learning about local species of frogs and toads with Durrell
- Learning to identify local bird species with Action for Wildlife
- Discovering the secret world of Jersey's bats
- Helping to build a bug hotel
- Taking part in a big bay and beach clean

## School Groups

Despite the fact that Environment Week ceased to be held in 2010, a total of 924 school children attended nature walks and talks in partial fulfilment of the local curriculum, and there is still a great demand for this service. Groups ranged from primary schools to graduate students on subject matter from mini-beasts to pressures and threats to local habitats

Again the Team has had the assistance of 3 Project Trident Students from local schools, as well as several university students gaining work experience. This included two students on the Jersey Undergraduate Internship Programme who spent eight weeks working on projects with the Team.

## Volunteers

We continue to be grateful to the many Islanders, young and old, who are willing to give their time freely to undertake vital habitat management tasks. Their efforts provide a virtually cost free resource to the public of Jersey, and without their enthusiasm, it would not be possible to deliver the strategic objectives of habitat and species management.

In addition to school groups, scouts and brownies, Territorial Army groups and corporate organisations, the Jersey Conservation Volunteers continue to meet monthly during the winter months in order to undertake habitat management. Their time is spent working in some of the most beautiful areas of the Island for a few hours on a Sunday morning followed by homemade tea and cakes, and tasks are supervised by either the States of Jersey or the National Trust for Jersey, depending on where they are working.

In April representatives from the States and the Trust spent a very productive day in Guernsey meeting with the supervisor of the Guernsey Conservation Volunteers discussing their projects and looking at the Island's areas of nature conservation. It is hoped that the two Islands will be able to work more closely in the future, including some reciprocal visits.

The Probation & Aftercare Service have provided an impressive 4,100 man hours managing habitat throughout 2010, an increase of 480 man hours on 2009's total.



## Training and Personal Development

### Training

Staff members continue with their professional development and during 2010 attended various courses and workshops. As well as attending short courses, including first aid at work qualifications, two members of the team attended enforcement training. Several staff members attended off Island events and training including:

*“Bats and Bat Surveys” Bat Conservation Trust, Somerset*

This was a 3 day course covering topics including survey techniques, legislation, planning and guidance, the assessment of impacts of development on bats, and species identification.

*“Maintaining your Paths” Losehill Hall, Peak District.*

This course was a chance to review techniques and management options for maintaining and promoting access in the countryside. It was also an excellent chance to meet professionals who share the same re-

sponsibilities in the UK, as we do in Jersey, albeit that the legislation that governs their remit is far tighter than that in Jersey.

*“6<sup>th</sup> International Butterfly Symposium”, Reading*

As an environmental indicator butterflies and moths allow the scientific community to record and evaluate changes to populations caused by a variety of external factors such as management activities, climate change and invasive species. Through these changes direct links can be made to the environmental impact of these issues. The Symposium presented current findings in relation to targets reached (2010) and those being set for Lepidoptera in the future.

In Jersey we contribute to the collection and evaluation of data at the UK and European level through the Jersey Butterfly and Monitoring Scheme (JBMS) and as such the message coming out from the Symposium is one that we need to promote; Lepidoptera numbers are in general decline globally. Fragmentation of habitat, agri-intensification, abandonment of traditional farm holdings and techniques and climate change are all seen as the greatest threat.



### Natural Environment Team

Department of the Environment  
Howard Davis Farm  
La Route de la Trinité  
Trinity  
Jersey  
JE3 5JP  
Telephone: 01534 441600  
Fax: 01534 441699