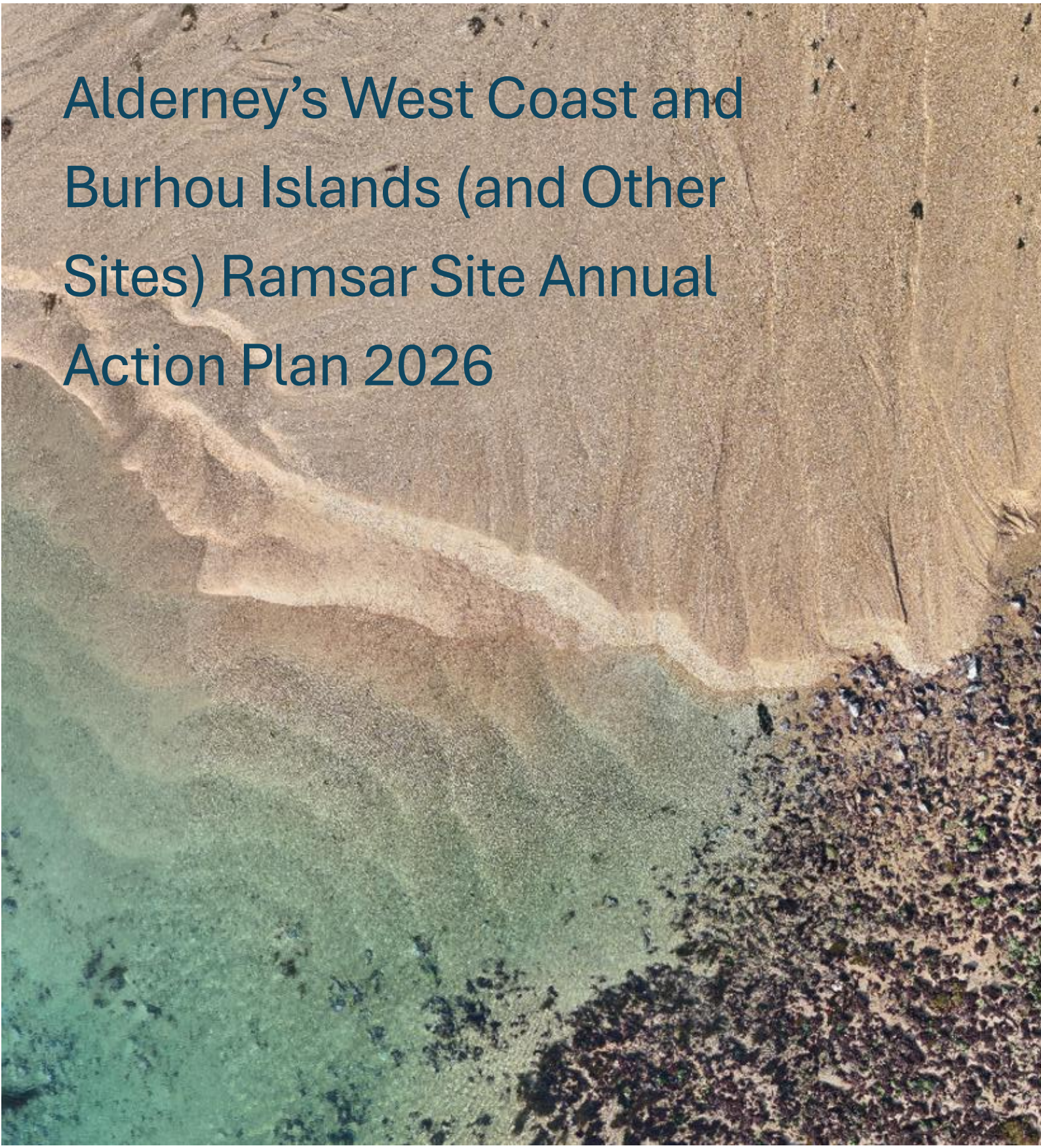
States of Alderney

Convention on Wetlands
Convention sur les zones humides
Convención sobre los Humedales

Alderney's West Coast and Burhou Islands (and Other Sites) Ramsar Site Annual Action Plan 2026



Alderney Wildlife Trust

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Alderney Animal Welfare Society

CIBRS

Alderney West Coast and Burhou Islands (and Other Sites) Ramsar Site Annual Action Plan 2026

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This action plan compiles six individual plans which represents the work to be conducted by four non-governmental organizations. These reports may be cited individually or as part of this document.

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Reports

Cover photo: Clonque Bay habitat map 2025 drone census imagery, Alderney Wildlife Trust

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Preface

Alex Purdie, Alderney Ramsar Secretariat

Alderney's West Coast and Burhou Islands Ramsar Site is a marine wetland of huge local and international significance. Since its designation in 2005, the States of Alderney has supported the work of organisations including the Alderney Wildlife Trust, Alderney Animal Welfare Society, Alderney Bird Observatory and the Channel Islands Ringing Scheme in helping to study and protect this incredible marine area. Since 2019, additional areas of importance for species within the Ramsar Site have also been reported in this review, with the title adapted to include "and other sites".

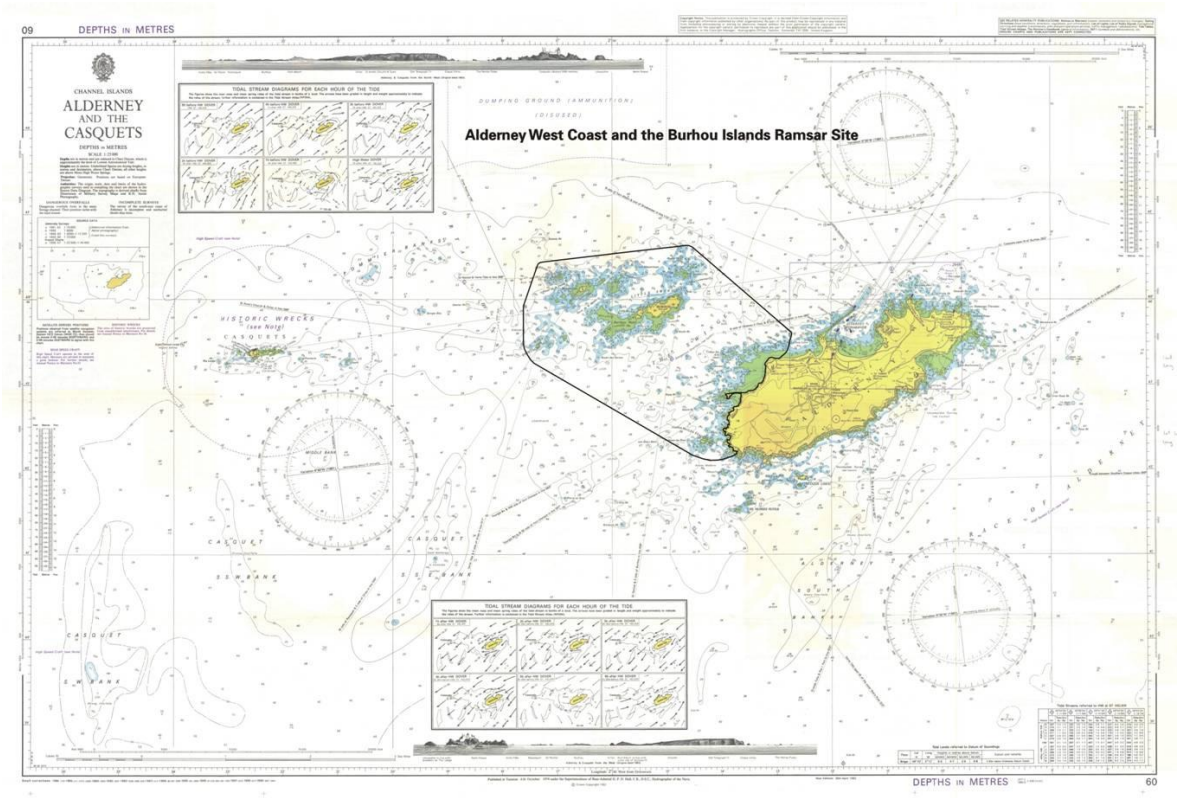

Figure 1. Alderney and its surrounding waters with the Alderney's West Coast and the Burhou Islands Ramsar Site boundary marked with a black line. Plotted on an Admiralty Chart.

The Ramsar Site is highly important for birds, and range of breeding seabirds are present, including >1% of the global breeding population of northern gannet and the largest population of Atlantic puffin remaining in the English Channel. There are globally threatened marine species such as the pink sea fan and green ormer, a huge variety of algae and fish. These include species of both ecological importance (e.g. lesser sand eel) and commercial importance (e.g. European sea bass). There are also sizeable areas of habitat associated with various life stages of fin and shellfish. Key examples are sandbars, kelp forest and intertidal rocky shore, with numerous species using the site

for spawning and as a nursery. The site forms a regionally important breeding area and year-round refuge for grey seal.

More information regarding the sites designation, its key species and habitats, ecosystem services and other information can be found on the Alderney Ramsar Information Sheet which was updated in 2025.

The Alderney's West Coast and Burhou Islands (and Other Sites) Ramsar Site Annual Action Plan 2026 compiles six plans which describe the work objectives to carried out in 2026. Information has been provided by the activity organisations which carry out the work on the Alderney West Coast and Burhou Islands Ramsar Site. This includes Alderney Animal Welfare Society, Alderney Bird Observatory, Alderney Wildlife Trust, and the Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme. This document has been compiled by the Alderney Ramsar Secretariat, on behalf of the States of Alderney (SoA)). The Ramsar programme is overseen by the SoA, and is reviewed annually by their General Services Committee (GSC).

This document is the first annual action plan to be drafted since the publishing of the new Alderney Ramsar Five-Year Strategy (2026-2030). The objectives will be reported to the GSC against the six goals of the new Alderney Ramsar Strategy, and their outcomes will be reported against these in the 2026 Annual Review. These goals are:

1. *To ensure that the site complies with all supporting legislation and regulations and fulfils the obligations under the Ramsar Convention and other international agreements*.
2. *To continue to improve our knowledge and characterisation of the site's biodiversity, with all (non-sensitive) data being published publicly*.
3. *To monitor the characteristics of the site's flora and fauna to establish whether it is being maintained at a favourable conservation status*.
4. *To manage and promote the sustainable use of the natural resources of the site in a way that is compatible with the maintenance of its ecosystem functions*.
5. *To implement necessary conservation actions to protect and restore natural habitats as far as is reasonably practicable, including responding to emergencies and cooperating internationally regarding transboundary effects*.
6. *To promote and increase international and community awareness, education, and engagement with the Ramsar Site*.

Alderney Ramsar Seabird Population Action Plan 2026

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Abstract

This report details the seabird population monitoring and research which is scheduled as part of the 2026 Alderney Ramsar programme, as well as responses to seabird strandings.

This includes population and productivity monitoring of northern gannet, Atlantic puffin, northern fulmar, ringed plover, guillemot and common tern, and population monitoring for European shag, great cormorant, oystercatcher herring gull, lesser black-backed gull and great black-backed gull. Additionally, non-breeding waterbirds will be monitored through the BTO's Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS).

Methodologies are described in Appendix 2., and are generally based on Seabird Monitoring Project standard methodologies.

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Report 1

1.1 Atlantic puffin (*Fratercula arctica*)

The Puffins will be monitored from March to August using a variety of survey methodologies to establish productivity, breeding population size and rates of kleptoparasitism and predation. The PuffinCam will be essential for this work.

1.1.1 Productivity Monitoring Through PuffinCam

Active burrows will continue to be identified using hourly observations using the same protocol conducted since 2019 (Clifford et al. 2020). If resources allow, conducting full or peak-activity period watches (e.g. early morning and late afternoon/early evening) during the early season instead of, or alongside, hourly watches will be considered. In the late season, productivity will be assessed by reviewing video footage recorded remotely via PuffinCam, following one method: full day dusk-till-dawn observations (see Appendix 2). Hourly observations will also be collected, but data will only be processed if there are sufficient resources. This will allow for comparison between the full-day observation and hourly observation methods in future, if necessary.

A review of the methods for monitoring puffin productivity should be conducted in 2026 to consider ways to reduce effort whilst still maintaining a comparable quality of productivity data.

1.1.2 Population Assessment Through Raft Count and AOB Survey

The size of Burhou's Atlantic puffin population will be estimated using data from two surveys: early season raft counts and an apparently occupied burrow (AOB) survey. The maximum early season raft count, obtained from counts undertaken through April to mid-May, can be used as an approximation of the number of breeding pairs. This is because during this time, each puffin pair will be incubating their egg with one member of the pair within its burrow and the other at sea. Therefore, the maximum number of puffins seen 'rafting' on the water near the colony in this period represents the best approximation of the total number of pairs present (Wieckowski & Ferrar, 2016). Only the raft counts made early in the season can be used as, later in the season both members of the pair may be absent from the colony searching for food to feed their hatched chick and non-breeding birds arrive, thus boosting the number of birds present. The raft counts can be recorded via 'PuffinCam', or during boat-based operations.

The post-season AOB survey will be undertaken in early August when adults have finished breeding, unless there is evidence that there are still puffins occupying burrows. Surveyors will check the entrances of all burrows for recent signs of occupation in areas known to be occupied across the island, following the same methodology as in previous years. The accuracy and precision of the post-season AOB survey will be validated following the same methodology used since 2024 (Purdie et al.

2025). Chance encounters with storm petrels still nesting within any examined burrows will be recorded. If an appropriately licensed handler is present, the adult may also be temporarily extracted to look for the presence of a ring.

An additional camera will be placed on Burhou overlooking the north-west of the island, to understand and record puffin burrow activity in this area of the island (see Report 05 Alderney Ramsar Community Action Plan 2026 "Wilidlife Webcams" section).

1.1.3 Kleptoparasitism, Avian Interactions and Predation Monitoring Through PuffinCam

Instances of kleptoparasitism, avian interactions and predation will be recorded when observed during productivity observations. The use of citizen scientists to review these interactions may be tested in 2026, which will enable a greater volume of video data to be analysed in a timely manner.

1.2 Northern gannet (*Morus bassanus*)

Northern gannets will be monitored from their arrival to their departure. Productivity monitoring and impact of entanglements will be conducted on both Les Etacs and Ortac. A full census of the gannetries will not be carried out in 2026, however a drone survey during the usual census timeframe will be taken, and data stored, for future analysis if necessary. Geolocators may be recovered from northern gannets on Ortac if resources allow.

1.2.1 Overall Productivity Monitoring

Northern gannet productivity will be assessed on Les Etacs by observing a representative sample of nests from a vantage point on the adjacent Alderney coastline. The proportion of nests fledged from the sample will be used as a proxy for the productivity of the whole colony. Observations will be conducted following JNCC guidelines (Walsh et al., 1995). They will be conducted weekly and commence early enough in the season so that sufficient data can be collected to ensure outcomes are not misinterpreted or lost. Sufficient observations should be made to identify non-laying birds so that the proportion of non-breeders and single birds can be established and accounted for in the final productivity estimate and inform analysis of census data.

1.2.2 Ortac Productivity Monitoring

As in 2025, northern gannet productivity will be assessed on Ortac by using monthly drone surveys between March-October. If resources allow, drone surveys will increase to biweekly from mid-August to improve accuracy of fledging assessments. Additionally, survey methods will be updated to include a minimum of two individuals (Pilot and Observer).

1.2.3 The 'Track-a-Gannet' (TAG) project – Review and Potentially Retrieve Geolocators

There is a need for up-to-date information on the movements of Alderney's northern gannets to understand the potential impact of offshore windfarm developments on the colonies. The foraging ranges of northern gannets vary annually and the impact of HPAI in 2022 on their movements is unknown.

The AWT will consult with other relevant stakeholders, including the ABO and AAWS, to identify if recovery of geolocators is possible during 2026, following the same methods as used in previous years (Purdie et al., 2022).

It is also recommended that in 2026, a strategy for the monitoring of foraging activities of northern gannets should be developed, with the Alderney Bird Observatory, and be put to ARAG before, if timing allows for implementation, in 2026. The AWT hopes to work with the SoA to secure funding from developers to support this work, but it may be necessary for the SoA to find additional funding for this effort or allow use of any unallocated Ramsar funding to enable this work. Any programme will need to be developed and agreed by all relevant stakeholders.

1.2.4 Monitor the impact of anthropogenic materials

Entanglements of gannets on Les Etacs will be recorded during weekly productivity monitoring following the same methods as previous years. Any entanglements seen during the monthly productivity drone surveys of Ortac will also be recorded. A more detailed search of Les Etacs and Ortac will be carried out using 3D models and drone imagery taken after the gannet breeding season has ended to pick up any dead gannets that may have been missed.

1.2.5 Gannet Census - using aircraft and drone surveys

A full census of Les Etacs and Ortac will not be carried out in 2026. The next census will take place in 2027, following previous methods (Purdie et al. 2025). If resources allow, a drone survey of Les Etacs and Ortac will be conducted in 2026 and data stored to allow for future census counts or other analysis.

1.2.6 Gannet Tissue Sampling

Tissue samples from Gannets which strand dead and have 'black-eyes' will be taken by Activity Organisations and sent on by AAWS RVN's or the States of Guernsey Veterinary Officer to investigate the physiological impact of this condition on the birds.

1.3 Northern fulmar (*Fulmaris glacialis*)

1.3.1 Productivity and Population Monitoring

The number of sites occupied by breeding pairs of northern fulmar around Alderney's coastline and inshore islets will be assessed by observing apparently occupied sites from the sea cliffs and during boat-based surveys. Productivity will be assessed by

recording the contents and outcome of these sites. Recording protocols will follow JNCC guidelines.

1.4 Common tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

4.1.4.1 Productivity and Population Monitoring

If a new or existing common tern colony is occupied in 2026, estimates of common tern productivity and colony size will be monitored from vantage points on shore.

1.4.2 Protection against disturbance and predation

In 2026, rodent control on common tern breeding sites will commence four weeks prior to the common tern breeding season (mid-April), see Report 03 Alderney Ramsar Terrestrial Action Plan 2026 "Biosecurity on Common Tern Nesting Sites" section. A schedule of pulse baiting will take place to suppress rodent presence on primary and secondary common tern breeding sites before they begin nesting. The AWT have the capacity, training and qualifications to carry out this work and it will be coordinated with the SoA's Public Works Department who conduct rodent control across Alderney.

The SoA's Manager of Estates, Infrastructure and Environment will be asked to erect temporary signage warning people of the presence of the tern colony, with the permission of relevant landowners (see Report 06 "Sensitive Wildlife Signage" section). This will include the deployment of temporary signage at the entrance of Fort Houmet Herbé to prevent the public from entering prior to the arrival of the terns. In addition, temporary signage informing the public of tern breeding activity at onshore areas will be deployed once the terns have arrived.

1.5 Ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)

1.5.1 Productivity and Population Monitoring

The number of nesting pairs and their productivity will be monitored on Alderney's beaches throughout the breeding season using vantage point observation and remote camera traps around nest sites. Saye was not occupied in 2025 so will not be actively monitored in 2026. Platte Saline and Clonque will continue to be monitored (resource dependent). Infrequent checks will be made on Saye, Longis, Braye, Crabby and other potential bays to check for occupancy early in the season.

1.5.2 Beach Cordons and Signage

Temporary cordons and signs will be set up around ringed plover nests and nesting areas on Platte Saline in 2026. If ringed plovers attempt to nest on Saye beach in an area accessible to the public, cordons and signs will be deployed around the nest.

Permission was granted under a Building and Development Control Committee planning application for these cordons provided erection commenced prior to March 2025. As the cordons have been erected annually since permission was granted, the

planning department of the SoA have advised the AWT that the permission is extant and does not need renewal.

Permission to erect other temporary signage warning the public of other sensitive breeding birds may also be sought from the SoA where disturbance may occur (see section 4.5.5), using a SoA approved format. The signage will inform people of the birds' presence, encourage them to avoid the vicinity and keep their dogs under control. The signage will be removed once the birds have finished nesting.

1.6 Other seabird surveys

1.6.1 Round Island Surveys

Three boat-based round island surveys in combination with vantage point counts will be used to estimate the numbers of breeding great cormorants, European shags, fulmars, gulls, guillemots and razorbills, as well as any other species observed nesting around the coast of Alderney and its other islets. The surveys will be scheduled to take into account the breeding ecology for each species and will take place between late April and mid-June. Additional surveys will be scheduled if necessary.

1.6.2 Gull Census on Burhou

The populations of lesser black-backed (*Larus fuscus*), great black-backed (*Larus marinus*) and herring gulls (*Larus argentatus*) will not be censused on Burhou in 2026. The lesser black-backed gull colony will continue to be censused on a three-yearly basis, with the next census taking place in 2028.

If resources allow, a review of the factors impacting Burhou's lesser black-backed gull population should be carried out in early 2026 to determine the causes of the dramatic declines the population has seen since 2014. The review will aim to inform potential conservation actions.

1.6.3 Guillemot (Uria aalge) and Razorbill (Alca torda) Population and Productivity Monitoring

Estimates of guillemot population size, distribution and breeding success at selected sites will be measured through a combination of round island seabird surveys and vantage point surveys. Resource dependent, additional work, e.g. the deployment of camera traps to monitor the causes of nest loss may be conducted. Razorbill nesting sites will be recorded on an ad hoc basis, and during the round island surveys.

1.6.4 Wetland Bird Survey Core Counts

Core counts of all waterbirds present in Clonque Bay, Hanaine bay and on Platte Saline will be carried out each month for the national Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS), BTO, RSPB and JNCC, (https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/wetland-bird survey/taking-part/core-counts). Counts will be carried out following the standard WeBS protocols.

Additional counts at other designated sites may also be conducted if time and personnel allow.

1.6.5 Eurasian Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus) Census

The next census of Eurasian oystercatcher breeding on the mainland between Hanaine Stack and Fort Tourgis will be conducted in 2027 as agreed in the 2024 Ramsar Action Plan (Purdie 2024).

1.6.6 Manx Shearwater (Puffinus puffinus) Monitoring

An acoustic recorder will be deployed on Burhou and configured to record between late February and September, following the methods used in 2025 but extended to record in the early season. Recordings will be processed using a machine learning classifier and manually verified after the season to estimate the consistency of occupancy of Manx Shearwater throughout the breeding season and especially in the early season.

Alderney Ramsar Seabird Ringing Action Plan 2026

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Abstract

This report details the seabird ringing programme scheduled as part of the 2026 Alderney Ramsar programme. Ringing work is conducted by the Alderney Bird Observatory licensed ringers from the Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme

Seabird ringing expeditions scheduled for 2026 include trips to Little Burhou to colour ring great cormorant, Coque Lihou to ring guillemot and razorbill, Ortac to ring northern gannet and Burhou to colour ring lesser black-backed gulls and ring European storm petrel. In addition to this, several species will be targeted on mainland Alderney, including European storm petrel, ringed plover, oystercatcher, and herring, lesser-black backed and great black-backed gulls.

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Report 2

2.1 Great Cormorant Ringing on Little Burhou

The focus of this expedition is to apply metal ring and colour ring on the tarsus of great cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) (other species may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated ringing expeditions). The data from these rings will be used monitor dispersal and longevity from colour ring re-sighting and ring recoveries. In addition, nest productivity will be recorded while in the colony. The visit date for 2026 has not yet been confirmed, but will occur once between 25th April - 21st May, subject to tide and suitable weather.

2.2 Guillemot, Razorbill and Shag Ringing on Coque Lihou

The focus of this expedition is to apply metal rings to razorbill (*Alca torda*), common guillemot (*Uria aalge*) and European shag (*Gulosus aristotelis*). Other species may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated bird ringing expeditions. This will aim to increase the marked (metal ring) population of seabirds to generate more local and international recoveries, to improve the knowledge of population estimates, survival and movements. In addition, nest productivity will be recorded where possible while in the colony. The colony on Coque Lihou will be visited once between 1st and 30th June, subject to tide and suitable weather. The specific visit date for June 2026 has not yet been confirmed.

Potential for colour ringing of European shag will be reviewed in 2026.

2.3 Northern Gannet Ringing on Ortac

The focus of this expedition is to apply a metal ring on the tarsus of Northern Gannet chicks. Other species (and adult gannets) may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated bird ringing expeditions. This will aim to increase the marked (metal ring) population of seabirds to generate more local and international recoveries, to improve the knowledge of population estimates, survival and movements. The nesting colony on Ortac will be visited once between 1st and 30th July, subject to tide and suitable weather. The specific visit date for July 2026 has not yet been confirmed.

Potential for ringing expeditions on Les Etacs will be reviewed in 2026. These were suspended previously due to safety concerns, however, with reduced population there may now be accessible routes for ringing on the colony.

2.4. Storm Petrel and Lesser Black-Backed Gull Ringing on Burhou

The focus of this expedition is the continuation of long-term monitoring of storm petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*) and lesser black-backed gull (*Larus fuscus*) through metal and colour ringing respectively. Other species may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated ringing expeditions. To increase the marked (metal ring)

population of seabirds to generate more local and international recoveries, to improve the knowledge of population estimates, survival and movements. The aim of the colour ringing project is to monitor dispersal from the breeding colonies in the Channel Islands through colour ring resightings and long term survival from ring recoveries. To provide an opportunity to train people to ring and monitor seabirds, which will improve the number of ringers available to continue seabird studies into the long term future.

The focus will be storm petrel and lesser black-backed gull. Historically during July other incidental species ringed have included, oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*), herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), great black-backed gull (*Larus marinus*), European shag (*Gulosus aristotelis*), peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) and rock pipit (*Anthus petrosus*).

The expedition will occur within a window from 1st July to 31st July. The 2026 expedition is proposed for 12th – 15th July, to coincide with the new moon, arriving and departing on suitable tides and weather conditions.

2.5. Seabird Ringing on Alderney's Coast

In addition to Ramsar Seabird ringing, the Alderney Bird Observatory undertakes coastal ringing outside of the Ramsar Site which has historically fallen outside of the Ramsar Programme but has recently been reported in Ramsar Plans, improving the knowledge base for species associated with the Ramsar Site. This includes mist netting storm petrel on Alderney's north coast, ringing of gull species and of oystercatchers. Ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) chicks are also ringed when successful nesting attempts occur within the Alderney Bird Obervatorie's census area, or resources are available and there are suitable conditions to ring chicks on Platte Saline and Clonque, which may include ringing within the Ramsar Site. As with seabird expedition, there may also be 'incidentally' ringed species.

Potential for colour ringing of ringed plover and oystercatcher will be reviewed in 2026.

Alderney Ramsar Terrestrial Action Plan 2026

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Abstract

This report details the terrestrial monitoring, research and conservation action which is scheduled to be conducted by the Alderney Wildlife Trust as part of the 2026 Alderney Ramsar programme. The core of this workstream is ongoing biosecurity work to protect seabird breeding habitats from invasive rodents and plants.

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Report 3

3.1 Biosecurity and terrestrial invasive species management

3.1.1 Rodent Biosecurity on Burhou and Coque Lihou

In 2026, rodent presence will continue to be monitored on Burhou and Coque Lihou using non-toxic wax chew blocks in tamper proof bait stations and camera traps. Should a rodent incursion occur, rodent control could rapidly be deployed, protecting nesting seabirds and other native wildlife. If resources allow, rodent presence will also be monitored on La Nache.

3.1.2 Biosecurity on Common Tern Nesting Sites

In 2026, rodent control on the primary common tern nesting site (Fort Houmet Herbé) will commence four weeks prior to the common tern breeding season. This aims to suppress the presence of rodents before the terns arrive to promote breeding success. A pulse baiting schedule at these breeding sites using bromadiolone (2nd generation anticoagulant) bait will be followed, as outlined in Appendix 2. All rodent control will be carried out by licensed and trained individuals. Should common terns settle on secondary sites (Houmet des Pies and Houmet de Agneaux) or new alternative sites, a rapid deployment of pulse baiting or A24 traps will be considered.

As in 2025, a close watching brief will be maintained on any species sensitive to rat predation with particular attention paid to the any return of nesting common terns. Deployment of new control measures may be required at short notice should the terns select a site not under the current control plan.

3.1.3 Invasive plant species management on Burhou

Sour fig will be removed where possible from Burhou during scheduled survey and maintenance visits. Patch locations will be recorded with patch area size estimated. Patches will be removed carefully and bagged at the site of removal to prevent spread. All bags will be removed from Burhou and disposed of on mainland Alderney.

If any other invasive plant species, e.g. Japanese knotweed, are identified on Burhou then appropriate measures may be taken to remove these species. Intensive measures, e.g. use of herbicides, will only be carried out following consultation with ARAG and GSC.

Alderney Ramsar Marine Action Plan 2026

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Abstract

This document summarises the marine survey workstream objectives for the 'Alderney's West Coast and Burhou Islands Ramsar Site (and Other Sites) Annual Action Plan 2026'.

This comprises of 15 on-going marine surveys for 2026, including; Phase I intertidal survey; Shoresearch; Climate change driver assessment; Green ormer (Haliotis tuberculata) survey; Crab surveying; Marine invasive non-native species assessments; Seasearch; BRUV; Inshore plankton; Fish-Intel Project; Seawater quality testing; Marine mammal surveying; Marine mammal strandings; Marine Conservation Society beach cleans; European eel (elver stage) survey.

Information related to each survey is provided below, including the general recommendations for 2026.

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Report 4

4.1. Phase I intertidal survey

4.1.1. Phase I intertidal habitat biotope survey: Burhou

Phase I intertidal habitat biotope surveys of Burhou have been previously completed in 2016 and 2021, by the AWT. This follows recommendations (AWT, 2021; AWT, 2016) to repetitively survey marine intertidal habitat biotopes every five years; to help identify and monitor ecological changes, such as habitat biotope loss. As such, a Phase I intertidal habitat survey is recommended for 2026, for further temporal ecological comparisons of intertidal habitat biotope presence, location/distribution, frequency and condition.

Recommendations

1. To undertake a Phase I marine habitat biotope survey of Burhou for 2026, following similar survey techniques implemented in 2016 and 2021.
2. To consider the use of drone aerial photography survey method as an additional survey technique for future Phase I intertidal habitat biotope surveys. This includes sites that are inaccessible, such as offshore rocks. For example, in 2025, a drone was used to collate aerial photographs of areas within Clonque Bay for intertidal habitat assessment, that were inaccessible by foot.

4.2. Shoresearch

4.2.2. Shoresearch walkover survey

These surveys are completed with members of the public as an outreach citizen science project initiated by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (UK). Surveys are completed across several rocky-shore bays on Alderney (including several within the Ramsar Site), with information such as intertidal habitat description and species presence recorded by citizen scientists.

Recommendations:

1. To continue to implement Shoresearch walkover surveys within the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay, Platte Saline Bay and Hanaine Bay) and other sites across Alderney in 2026.

4.3. Climate change driver assessment

4.3.1. Coastal erosion survey

Coastal erosion has been monitored at Braye Bay, Clonque Bay and Corblets Bay, since 2023. The aim of these surveys is to measure the length of erosion of cliff/path edges at graduated distances away at each selected coastline.

Recommendations

1. To continue to undertake coastal erosion monitoring assessment annually at selected monitoring stations within Clonque Bay and other sites across Alderney in 2026.
2. To inform SWD of any significant coastal erosion, which may need associated works.

- To potentially consider and/or trial additional survey techniques to help record coastal erosion along inaccessible locations, such as the use of drones/aerial photography.

4.4. Green ormer (*Haliotis tuberculata*) survey

4.4.1. Green ormer tagging and abundance surveys

Over the last three years, citizen science surveys have been implemented by the AWT, to record the abundance, distribution, population structure and movement patterns of green ormer (*H. tuberculata*) individuals across several rocky-shore bays.

Recommendations

1. To continue to undertake green ormer surveys across the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay) and other sites on Alderney, for 2026.

4.5. Crab surveying

4.5.1. Intertidal crab abundance and population dynamic surveys

4.5.2. Intertidal crab photo bank

Two intertidal crab surveys have been implemented by the AWT over the last three years at selected rocky-shore bays on Alderney: intertidal crab abundance and population dynamics surveys and, an intertidal crab photo bank. Collectively, these surveys will provide key ecological information of Alderney's intertidal crab species.

Recommendations

1. To continue intertidal crab abundance and population dynamics surveys within the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay) and other sites in 2026.
2. To continue to further develop the intertidal crab photo bank within the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay) and other sites for 2026.

4.6. Marine invasive non-native species assessments

4.6.1. Marine INNS monitoring

4.6.2. Marine INNS Outreach and Education

4.6.3. Management of Marine INNS

In 2024, the AWT initiated an internal marine invasive non-native species (marine INNS) plan, as part of the AWT Living Seas Programme. For 2026, the aim will be to continue developing the plan and subsequent objectives, including: monitoring, outreach and management of marine INNS.

The monitoring objective consists of recording the presence, location, abundance and habitat preference of both 'established' and 'under-recorded/new' marine INNS, across Alderney's marine environment, such as devil's tongue weed (*Grateloupia turuturu*). Outreach comprises of increasing public awareness of marine INNS and how to potentially

reduce the risk of marine INNS spread within Alderney's territorial waters. Management objectives include considering potential management options of marine INNS present on Alderney, such as species eradication or use (e.g. as a food source or fuel).

Recommendations

1. To continue to implement marine INNS surveys, specifically the devil's tongue surveys, within the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay) and other sites across Alderney in 2026.
2. To support public marine INNS outreach and education activities across Alderney where possible, for 2026.
3. To support marine INNS management options across Alderney where possible, for 2026.

4.7. Seasearch

4.7.1. Promote Seasearch snorkels and dives within the Ramsar Site

Seasearch is a valuable citizen science project to record marine habitats and species with interested recreational snorkellers and scuba divers. Currently, records are collected by trained Seasearch volunteers either whilst visiting the island (e.g. for recreational purposes) and/or with the AWT Seasearch Snorkel Group.

Recommendations

1. To encourage and support Seasearch (snorkel/ scuba dive) surveys to be completed within the Ramsar Site (such as Clonque Bay and Hanaine Bay) and other sites by trained Seasearch volunteers in 2026.

4.8. BRUV surveys

4.8.1. BRUV surveys within Hanaine Bay

Fish and shellfish species are considered important components/priority species within the marine environment. In 2024 and 2025, a baited underwater video survey (BRUV) was scheduled with the aim to record fish/shellfish presence and abundance at Hanaine Bay. This was cancelled during both years due to poor weather conditions in the autumn.

Recommendations

1. To consider undertaking this survey within Hanaine Bay and other sites for 2026, potentially during the summer, in addition to the autumn survey timeframe.

4.9. Inshore plankton

4.9.1. Planktoscope surveys in Clonque Bay

During 2023 and 2025, a small number of inshore plankton surveys (recording species type/presence from seawater samples) were undertaken across Alderney's inshore bays, using Planktoscope survey equipment. The extracted information (photographs of plankton individuals within seawater samples) was successfully uploaded to the online database, Ecotaxa (see here: https://ecotaxa.obs-vlfr.fr/), for species identification/verification

processes in 2025. These surveys were initiated due to limited information related to inshore plankton communities within Alderney's marine environment.

Recommendations

1. To continue to implement Planktoscope surveys within the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay and Platte Saline Bay) and other sites across Alderney in 2026.

4.10. Fish-Intel Project

4.10.1. Support for Fish-Intel Project

The Fish-Intel project was initiated across the Channel Islands in 2022, managed by the States of Jersey's Marine Resources team and the University of Plymouth, with support from the AWT and SoA. The project comprises of a network of acoustic monitoring equipment (attached to mooring buoys) deployed across the islands, with the aim to record the distribution, movement patterns and habitat preferences of commercially important fish and cetacean species. On Alderney, two buoys with mounted acoustic receivers have been deployed within Hanaine Bay and Longis Bay. The results from 2025 are pending. For 2026, the AWT will fund the maintenance costs of one of the buoys, for one year. Further funding will be required to continue to maintain the second buoy, where possible.

Recommendations

1. To support the extension of the deployment of the two buoys to record cetacean presence and sea surface temperature within Alderney's waters (including the Ramsar Site) for 2026. This includes seeking funding for the second monitoring buoy for 2026.

4.11. Seawater quality testing

4.11.1. Test physical parameters of seawater

From June (2024), the AWT began regular inshore seawater testing across a small number of intertidal bays on Alderney, as part of a new citizen science project. Sampling within the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay and Hanaine Bay) began in 2025.

Recommendations

1. To continue seawater parameter testing within the inshore areas of the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay and Hanaine Bay) and other sites across Alderney for 2026.

4.12. Marine mammal surveying

4.12.1. Effort (boat) based grey seal surveys

4.12.2. Grey seal identification

4.12.3. Cetaceans

Marine mammal species, such as the grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*) are considered priority species across the Channel Islands, UK and Europe. As a result, several survey methods are adopted by the AWT to help quantify their presence, abundance and population structure within the Ramsar Site and throughout Alderney's territorial waters.

Recommendations

1. To continue seal effort (boat) based surveys within the Ramsar Site for 2026.
2. To potentially consider and/or trial additional survey techniques to help record grey seals within inaccessible locations, such as the use of drones/aerial photography/thermal imagery.
3. To continue to develop the grey seal photographic identification catalogue for 2026.
4. To continue to implement land-based observation surveys within the Ramsar Site and other sites for 2026.

4.13. Marine mammal strandings

4.13.1 Support BDMLR response to marine mammal strandings

This objective comprises of supporting on-island British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) volunteers, AWT marine life rescue volunteers and subsequent action plans/protocols related to managing marine mammal strandings (both alive and dead marine mammal individuals).

Recommendations

1. To continue to support on-island marine life rescue volunteers (including both BDMLR/AWT marine life rescue volunteers) with marine mammal strandings for 2026 (including potential engagement activities/training).
2. To maintain and update existing stranding protocols with the AAWS and the SoA in 2026, where appropriate.

4.14. Marine Conservation Society beach cleans

4.14.1 Beach cleans at Clonque, Hanaine and Platte Saline

Recording marine litter in collaboration with the Marine Conservation Society increases the opportunity to engage with the public on waste issues whilst aiding cleaner shores.

Recommendations

1. To implement MCS beach clean surveys within the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay, Hanaine Bay and Platte Saline Bay) and other sites across 2026.

4.15. European eel survey

4.15.1 Investigate presence of European eels in Ramsar Site

The European eel (*A. anguilla*) is considered a critically endangered species (see here for OSPAR 2022 status review: https://oap.ospar.org/en/ospar-assessments/committee-assessments/biodiversity-committee/status-assesments/european-eel/) and has been recorded on Alderney. Currently little information on its presence within the Ramsar Site is available. In 2025, the AWT carried out a small number of surveys both within Clonque Bay and Longis Bay to record the presence of juvenile (glass eel life stage) European eels.

Recommendations

1. To continue implementing European eel (glass eel life stage) surveys in the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay) and Longis Bay in 2026.

Alderney Ramsar Community Action Plan 2026

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Abstract

This report details the community engagement and education objectives to take place in 2026 as part of the Alderney Ramsar Programme. This includes a range of activities such as livestreaming of wildlife webcams, public events and talks, boat tours and guided walks, signage, and citizen science events.

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Education and Community Outreach

The events and outreach programme aims to promote and make the Ramsar Site accessible to a wide range of people, especially residents, in line with the aims of the Ramsar convention. Education forms a cornerstone of this and is a common feature for all objectives detailed below.

5.1 Wildlife Webcams

5.1.1 Live streaming wildlife webcams

Live streaming of wildlife webcams will continue in 2026. 'PuffinCam' and 'GannetCam' will be reinstalled. The video feeds will continue to be used to assist the seabird monitoring programme outlined in section 4.1.1 allowing 'live viewing' or real-time observation of both puffin and gannet colonies as well as the opportunity to review recorded video for later analyses.

The PuffinCam livestream will be available through the AWT YouTube page and the AWT Website, while the GannetCam livestream will be available through the Living Islands Facebook page and the AWT website. The AWT will also maintain a livestream from the cameras at the AWT Information Centre on Victoria Street, St Anne. From here it will be possible to remotely control the camera and expand the view available for set periods during the day i.e. when the cameras position does not need to be fixed for survey purposes. Continued interest in the cameras will be maintained through ongoing outreach.

5.1.2 Review Webcams Community Impact

A review of the webcams' community impact and how we measure this will be conducted, particularly for the local Alderney community, to optimise their benefits to the island. Additionally, work will continue with Visit Alderney to maximise the value of the cameras for tourism and marketing purposes for the island.

5.1.3 Activation of PuffinCam

PuffinCam will be reactivated on Burhou in 2026 using the same equipment and procedures as in previous years. To minimise disturbance to the seabird colony on Burhou, it will be activated before 15th March when Burhou closes for the puffin breeding season. The camera will be located outside of the puffin colony. The cameras will be uninstalled and removed at the end of the puffin breeding season, serviced and reinstalled prior to the 2026 closed season.

It is important that PuffinCam and the relay equipment remains operational throughout the 2026 season and any trips required for maintenance within the closed season will

be coordinated by the ARAG and will follow methodology approved in 2024, with the Harbour Office and SoA notified.

5.1.4 New Potential Webcams

The puffin colony is spread across Burhou, however, PuffinCam only covers the central south-eastern area. PuffinCam active burrow records are used to validate the AOB survey (see Report 01 "Atlantic Puffin *Population Assessment Through Raft Count and AOB Survey*" section), however, there is concern that in other areas of the island where there are different conditions (e.g. plant cover, exposure, rabbit activity), this validation may be less accurate. Therefore, a new camera is proposed to be situated facing the north-west puffin burrow area (Figure 5.1). This will provide a new insight into the puffin population in that area and has the potential to significantly improve our understanding of the Burhou colony. This will not require significant infrastructure on Burhou (e.g. new solar panels).

Figure 5.1 Proposed location for deployment of additional PuffinCam camera on Burhou in 2026. Area marked in red shows section of central ridgeline to the west of the island where the camera will be placed. The camera will be deployed outside of any breeding areas and will face north-west, overlooking the puffin burrow area.

5.1.5 Investigate Further Uses for PuffinCam

The use of the camera for other work, including but not limited to resighting of colour ringed gulls by the Alderney Bird Observatory, or monitoring any potentially injured or diseased wildlife on Burhou by Alderney Animal Welfare, will be made possible when the camera is not required for Atlantic puffin observations, and this can be arranged on request.

5.1.6 Activate GannetCam

GannetCam will be activated again in 2026. As the data link from Burhou to Alderney will be used to relay the GannetCam feed from the west cliffs of Alderney, the transmitter array will be kept in place on Burhou until the end of the gannet breeding season.

5.2 Boat tours

5.2.1 Boat Tours on Sula of Braye

The AWT operate an MCA Category 2 coded vessel named 'Sula of Braye' to assist the Ramsar management strategy by providing an 'on sea' platform for marine research as well as access to the offshore islets and boat tours. The AWT will also support other boat operators with information on request, as to the Ramsar site's ecology, seabird populations etc. wherever possible, to help with their development of tour activities.

5.2.2 Free educational boat tours for Year 6 students at St Anne's School

The AWT will continue to provide free educational boat tours for Year 6 students at St Anne's School. In addition, all young people between ages eleven and twelve will be offered a free educational boat tour ticket to ensure that homeschooled children are also able to access this provision. In time, it is hoped that all children growing up on Alderney will have accessed the Ramsar site from the water.

This promotion will be completed through St Anne's School, Youth Commission, The Journal, and social media. An evaluation method will be created to gather feedback to highlight the benefits of running free tours. Any children not supervised by the school will require supervision from an adult or guardian.

5.3 Community engagement and public awareness events

5.3.1 Public Engagement Events

At least six public engagement events will be undertaken in the Ramsar site throughout the year. Where possible, these will be incorporated into events for World Wetlands Day, Wildlife Week, National Marine Week, Alderney Week and the August Bank Holiday weekend. Additional events such as rock-pooling and special boat trips to observe marine life at sea, will also be scheduled wherever possible. Fundraising events will

continue to support the free events involved in this programme, namely marine tank sessions, beach cleans and surveys.

5.3.2 Citizen Science

In 2026, AWT will continue to promote opportunities for local people to get involved in citizen science on the Ramsar site, through public intertidal surveys, coastal erosion surveys and water parameters surveys.

5.4 Ramsar Signage

5.4.1 Produce and Relace Ramsar Information Boards

In 2025, three Ramsar information boards were approved, with two signs deployed at the Guns and inside Fort Tourgis. The final sign will be deployed at Tourgis carpark in 2026, pending approval and permission by BDCC where required.

Alderney Ramsar Administrative Action Plan 2026

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Abstract

This report summarises the schedule of administrative work to be carried out to support the Alderney Ramsar Strategy in 2026.

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6.1 ARS4

The Alderney Ramsar Five-Year Strategy 2026-2030 has been approved by GSC. Progress against the goals and objectives of the strategy will be reported to GSC annually alongside the full Alderney Ramsar Review and Action Plan documents. The Alderney Ramsar Secretariat will compile these documents.

6.2 Update the Terms of Reference for the Alderney Ramsar Site

The terms of reference for the Ramsar Site should be updated in 2026 to bring them into line with current operations under the new Alderney Ramsar Five-Year Strategy.

6.3 Scientific Advisory

The Alderney Ramsar Advisory Group will continue to provide expert advice to the GSC and Activity Organisations through their review of annual reporting and work proposals. The process for this is broadly laid out in the Alderney Ramsar Five Year Strategy, and should be specified in the new terms of reference.

The ARAG membership should be expanded to include at least one additional member.

6.4 The Puffin Friendly Zone

Support for the Puffin Friendly Zone via the Alderney Harbour Office and stakeholders will continue in 2026. Marine users will be asked to submit incursions they observe to the Alderney Harbour Office.

6.5 Networking with other Channel Islands Ramsar Sites

The Alderney Ramsar Secretariat will continue to meet regularly with managers of other Channel Islands Ramsar Sites.

6.6 International communications

The Alderney Ramsar Secretariat will continue to support the States of Alderney in responded to international developments which may impact Alderney's Ramsar Site.

International links and projects, such as the Fish-Intel project and the grey seal monitoring network will be supported.

6.7 Websites

The Channel Islands Ramsar website will be maintained by the Alderney Ramsar Secretariat, with the Jersey Ramsar Advisory Group (JRAG) section managed by representatives of the JRAG.

Alderney Ramsar reporting will be uploaded to the Channel Islands Ramsar website and the States of Alderney's website.

6.8 Ramsar Information Sheet

The Alderney Ramsar Information Sheet was updated in 2025 and will need to be updated in 2028.

6.9 Ramsar Stakeholder Forum

Two Alderney Ramsar Stakeholder forums will be hosted in 2026, with the Harbour Master chairing. The first of these will be held in the Harbour Office in April 2026.

6.10 Burhou Maintenance

Support will be provided to the Burhou warden for general maintenance to Burhou (e.g. hut repairs), coordinated with the Harbour Office.

The Stakeholder group should be consulted regarding cutting paths on Burhou outside of sensitive areas to limit chance of people walking through them, with paths cut if the Stakeholder Group, in particular the Burhou Warden and Harbour Office, decide this would be beneficial.

6.11 Support for Academic Projects

Support for academic projects will continue in 2026, if resources allow and suitable projects can be found. Any projects which require active data collection within the Ramsar site, or wish to draw funds from the Ramsar programme, should be presented to ARAG and then GSC for consideration, particularly if they will change the existing Ramsar work programme or require licensing.

6.12 Sensitive Wildlife Signage

Temporary signage alerting the public to sensitive wildlife (for example breeding waders on Platte Saline) will be deployed. Planning for signage is detailed in *Report 01 Alderney Ramsar Seabird Population Action Plan 2026* "Ringed Plover" & "Common Tern" sections.

The SoA has given notice that it is appropriate that permission to deploy interim signs where there is an urgent need to prevent harm to breeding wildlife may be actioned through Richard Phelan, Head of States Works, who has standing permission from the SoA to erect signage necessary for the operations of the States. The installation of signage for the protection of wildlife requires careful consideration which should be made on a case-by-case basis and will target only those who may inadvertently cause harm to wildlife. Installation may be subject to a documented assessment of the risks/ benefits.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Document History

Table.1 Document History

Date completed	Version	Title	Amendments	Contributors (initials)
15/01/2026	1.0	Draft 1.0	Compilation of reporting from Activity Organisations into draft.	NMD, TC, MS, KH, ML (reporting), AP (compilation and formatting)
23/02/2026	2.0	Draft 2.0	Document reviewed by ARAG and Activity Organisations.	TC, KH, MS, GS, FB, PB, PA, DC, AP
27/02/2026	3.0	Final Version for GSC	Feedback incorporated into submission by Alderney Ramsar Secretariat	AP

Appendix 2. Methodologies

Seabirds

Method/ Action title
Atlantic puffin post-season apparently occupied burrow survey
Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf
1.1.2
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Census of the number of apparently occupied Atlantic puffin burrows (AOB) on Burhou to give an estimation of the size of the breeding population. The accuracy of the post-season AOB census method will be validated by comparing the number of AOBs on recorded Burhou with the number of active burrows recorded in the early season via PuffinCam.
Methodology
Species: Atlantic puffin **Location**: Burhou (The survey will require a team of AWT ecologists to land on Burhou for around six hours) **Date and time range**: Early August data collection, late August – November data analysis **Methods:** 1. Known puffin burrow areas on Burhou are mapped to identify survey area. Any areas which are deemed inaccessible, or too sensitive to survey (decision by survey team, or at advice of ARAG), e.g. due to very fragile ground, are marked off limits. 2. Before landing, monitor for signs of Atlantic puffin activity using PuffinCam and boat obs. At minimum 8 hours of observation. 3. On Burhou, surveyors walk around breeding areas, taking care not to damage burrows, looking at every potential burrow for signs of occupation, including: puffin eggshell, discarded fish, down or feathers, guano streaked at burrow entrance, the presence of a strong smell of ammonia, and the lack of rabbit droppings. 4. Burrows showing more than two signs of occupation are tallied as "confident" AOBs, burrows with just one sign are tallied as "potential" AOBs. 5. Any burrow that has been reviewed has a pasta shell places at the entrance to avoid double counting. 6. Burrows which are identified as confident within the productivity plots previously mapped using PuffinCam in the early season (see Atlantic puffin productivity methodology) are marked with a flag, and the areas are photographed from the viewpoint of PuffinCam. Repeat for burrows identified as potential if time allows. **Protocol and timeline for analysis of data:** August-November 7. The accuracy and precision of the post-season AOB survey is validated by comparing the number of AOBs known to be active through monitoring with

PuffinCam with those identified as confident and potentially active in person on Burhou.

8. A confusion matrix is constructed from these data, and the F-1 score of the AOB survey is calculated, giving the accuracy of the AOB survey in correctly identifying all active AOBs (https://medium.com/analytics-vidhya/confusion-matrix-accuracy-precision-recall-f1-score-ade299cf63cd)

Data archiving and public access protocols:

9. Submit AOB count with the best F-1 score to Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database. Consider submitting both counts as upper and lower estimates.
10. Report in Ramsar review, giving upper ("potential") and lower ("confident") AOB estimates.

Additional information

The validation using a confusion matrix should be reviewed in 2027. Notes on grass growth, weather leading up to the survey, observers etc, may also be useful.
Note: In 2026, an additional remote camera will be positioned facing the north-west area of Burhou to record puffin burrow activity in an area outside of the typical monitoring area located at the south-east. This camera will not be streamed live but will record footage that will be stored on a hard drive located at GannetCam at the Guns. This footage will be reviewed and the number of active burrows recorded in the early season (e.g. at the end of May). This footage will be used to validate the post-season AOB survey, with the aim to improve understanding of the puffin colony on Burhou and to increase the accuracy of the post-season AOB survey validation.

References

Confusion matrix and F-1 score methods: https://medium.com/analytics-vidhya/confusion-matrix-accuracy-precision-recall-f1-score-ade299cf63cd

Method/ Action title

Atlantic puffin raft counts

Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf

1.1.2

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

Census & late season potential recruitment counts. Early season raft counts within the Puffin Friendly Zone through April and May when puffins are likely to be incubating eggs to give an estimate of the number of pairs. Late season raft counts to give an estimation of recruitment to the colony.

Methodology

Species: Atlantic puffin
Location: Puffin Friendly Zone of Burhou (via PuffinCam and boat)
Date and time range: Early season raft counts in April and May, late season raft counts in June and July, data analysis August

Methods:

1. Counts of Atlantic puffin rafting within the Puffin Friendly Zone bay are conducted ca. every two days through the early season, using either PuffinCam or by boat.
2. Sea state, visibility, weather conditions, count method (e.g. camera live, camera recorded, boat) and other species present are recorded.
3. Counts are continued where possible in the late season, to estimate the number of non-breeding birds which visit the colony in comparison to other years.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: August

4. Calculate maximum and mean number of individuals recorded in early and late seasons.

Data archiving and public access protocols:

5. Submit maximum raft count to Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database
6. Report in Ramsar review, giving maximum and average number of individuals recorded in early and in late seasons.

Additional information

References

Method/ Action title
Atlantic puffin mapped burrows with remote camera observations
Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf
4.1.1.1
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Map active burrows and record fish returns to estimate Atlantic puffin productivity
Methodology

Species: Atlantic puffin
Location: Burhou via PuffinCam
Date and time range: April – July PuffinCam recording, April – August footage review, September – November data analysis

Methods:

1. Select productivity plots and set PuffinCam to track between each plot ca. hourly.
2. Several watches are made during the early season (April – May), ca. 5 hours per plot minimum. Label AOBs which are used on two separate days as active.
3. Monitor through the late season (June-July), any active burrows that have at least one fish return are marked as successful.
4. Also record any predation or kleptoparasitism events and link to a burrow if possible.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: September - November

5. Calculate the weighted mean productivity (accounting for the different number of burrows in each productivity plot).

Data archiving and public access protocols:

6. Submit weighted mean productivity to Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.
7. Report in Ramsar review, giving total number of active burrows, successful burrows and weight mean productivity.

Additional information

Note: In 2026, an additional remote camera will be positioned facing the north-west area of Burhou to record puffin burrow activity in an area outside of the typical monitoring area located at the south-east. This camera will not be streamed live but will record footage that will be stored on a hard drive. Footage recorded between mid-May and the end of May will be reviewed prior to the post-season AOB census at the beginning of August, to determine the number of active burrows in the north-west area. This footage will be used to validate the post-season AOB survey, with the aim to improve understanding of the puffin colony on Burhou and to increase the accuracy of the post-season AOB survey validation. The footage recorded of the north-west of the island will not be reviewed to monitor for fish returns, however if a considerable amount of activity is discovered, this area may be monitored for productivity in future, if resources allow.

References

Method/ Action title

Atlantic puffin productivity monitoring via PuffinCam – continuous watches

Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf

1.1.1

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

Record fish returns using dusk-till-dawn observations to estimate puffin productivity and to develop a more efficient method of monitoring fish returns.

Methodology

Species: Atlantic puffin
Location: Burhou via PuffinCam
Date and time range: April – July PuffinCam recording, April – August footage review, September – November data analysis
Methods:

1. Record AOBs using hourly method used for existing productivity survey (see Method Section 4.1.1.1).

2. Select a minimum of two plots with sufficient AOBs to create a sufficient sample (e.g. ~25 AOBs total).
3. Set the guard tour on PuffinCam to record two 16hr watches on each site during June and July (preferably between mid-June and mid-July). These watches should be during good weather conditions (e.g. good visibility, < force 4). Check these have been successfully recorded immediately after each survey and repeat if required.
4. Review footage from full day observations. Record any fish returns, and interactions with predators (noting the type of interaction, predator species, and the associated burrow if applicable)

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: September – November

1. Calculate the productivity by dividing the number of burrows with fish returns by the number of active burrows.
2. Compare the results of this survey to the hourly observations AOB survey, recording where burrows were marked as successful or unsuccessful in each survey. For example, depending on data, perform a binomial GLM (e.g. Burrow outcome ~ Survey type, method = binomial).
3. Compare ability of the survey to record predator interactions.

Data archiving and public access protocols:

1. Report outcome in Ramsar review.
2. If survey is more effective than existing method, report productivity data to SMP alongside existing survey. This is a publicly accessible database.

Additional information

References

Method/ Action title
Northern gannet aerial census
Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf
1.2.5
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Full colony census of Les Etacs and Ortac using counts of AOTs from aerial photographs
Methodology
Species: Northern gannet **Location**: Les Etacs and Ortac **Date and time range**: June or July photographs, August – November data analysis **Methods**:

1. Aerial photographs are taken in June or July

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: August - November

2. Plots are marked out on these photographs, and they are distributed to counters (n = ca. 5)
3. The unit to count is apparently occupied site (AOS), i.e. a site occupied by one or two adults irrespective of whether nest material is visible/present – if a site is suitable for breeding it is counted
4. Birds occupying "club" sites are not counted. Where non-breeders and immatures are mixed with breeders, particularly on the lower slopes, the presence of nest material or the "suitability of the site for nesting" is used to determine an AOS from a site occupied by a non-breeder. Non-suitable sites include sites located on sheer faces, inadequate ledges or positions too close to the high-water mark and splash zone.
5. To avoid bias, each counter works individually and does not see any other counter's count.
6. The final assessments are based on the mean of the counts (with standard deviation).

Data archiving and public access protocols:

7. Submit full census counts for Les Etacs and Ortac combined to Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.
8. Report in Ramsar review, giving total counts of AOSs for both sites individually and for entire colony.

Additional information

1. It is advised that apparently occupied nests (AONs) are identified where possible as well as mapping all AOTs.
2. In 2025, drone surveys were carried out to census Les Etacs and Ortac (following the methods outlined in 1.2.5, Northern Gannet Drone Census) alongside the aerial census. Counts using both methods were compared.

References

Method/ Action title
Northern gannet drone census
Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf
1.2.5
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Full colony census of Les Etacs and Ortac using a drone
Methodology
Species: Northern gannet **Location**: Les Etacs and Ortac

Date and time range: June or July data collection, August – November data analysis
Methods:

1. A Guernsey Aerial Work Permit (issued by the Channel Islands Director of Civil Aviation [DCA]) and permission from Alderney Air Traffic control are obtained prior to the census. All drone pilots must also have a minimum of the A2 Certificate of Competency qualification.
2. Weather forecasts for flight location are checked at least 24 hours before planned flight and monitored until and during deployment to ensure safe drone operation and usable imagery.
3. Pre-deployment checks are carried out, including checks for any hazards in the vicinity of the flight area.
4. Conduct two separate drone censuses, one of Les Etacs another of Ortac. Launch both censuses from land at 'The Guns' using flight paths that aim to overlap by at least 70%–80% forward/backward overlap and 60% sideways overlap to ensure orthomosaic imagery can be stitched (Edney et al., 2023).
5. Deploy the drone and approach both colonies at a minimum distance of 200m, maintaining a distance of at least 50m, but not exceeding a height of 122m, throughout the flight (Edney et al. 2023).
6. Throughout the surveys, two observers equipped with scopes/binoculars and experienced in detecting alert behaviour in gannets are situated on cliff vantage points to monitor the surrounding area for safety hazards and potential disturbance to the colony. Observers maintain constant communication with the drone pilot, relaying information and instructions by telephone.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: August - November

7. Automated counts of gannets are conducted using orthomosaic images and AI software.

Data archiving and public access protocols:

8. Submit full census counts for Les Etacs and Ortac combined to Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.
9. Report in Ramsar review, giving total counts of AOSs for both sites individually and for entire colony.

Additional information

In 2026, photos will be collected by data not processed unless there are sufficient resources. Data will be stored for future use.

References

Edney, A., Hart, T., Jessopp, M., Banks, A., Clarke, L., Cugniere, L., Elliot, K., Juarez Martinez, I., Kilcoyne, A., Murphy, M., Nager, R., Ratcliffe, N., Thompson, D., Ward, R., & Wood, M. (2023). Best practices for using drones in seabird monitoring and research. Marine Ornithology, 51(2), 265–280.

Walsh, P., Nevo, A. de, Halley, D. J., Sim, I. W. M., & Harris, M. P. (1995). *Seabird monitoring handbook for Britain*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Method/ Action title
Northern gannet drone-assisted survey of Ortac productivity
Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf
1.2.2
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Map and photograph randomly selected nest sites on Ortac from mid-March through to October using a drone to determine the proportion which fledged a chick and therefore estimate productivity.
Methodology
Species: Northern gannet **Location**: Ortac **Date and time range**: Drone flights monthly between mid-March to June, then biweekly from early August. Data analysis and write up between October to November. **Methods**: <u>*Equipment*</u> A DJI Mavic 3 Pro will be used. The device is a quadcopter with a mass of 958g, dimensions of 34.8 x 29.1 x 10.8 cm (L x W x H) and a maximum wind resistance of 12 m/s. <u>*Participants*</u> All participants will undergo briefings and training, including emergency drills (see Additional Information). ***Pilot*** Role: Pilot the drone and capture images of Ortac. Requirements: Qualified with A2 C of C and training from Seabird Watch 'Best Practice for Drones in Seabird Monitoring and Research'. Experienced with aircraft and flight plan. Listed on Aerial Work Permit as a Pilot (see Additional Information for current pilots). **Observer** Role: Maintain watch on the drone, act as back-up Pilot in emergencies, relay communications to Air Traffic Control and if required, AWT Office staff (e.g. CEO, or a member of ecology team) and emergency services.

Requirements: Qualified with A2 C of C. Be experienced in detecting alert behaviour in gannets. First aid trained (for surveys where the team are not in an area with phone signal coverage).

Pre-flight

1. Agreement with Air Traffic Control will be sought prior to any flights.
2. The drone should be launched and land from Alderney's coastline near 'the Guns' (Alderney's West Coast), or from the AWT's boat, depending on feedback from the Channel Islands Director of Civil Aviation (CIDCA).
3. The Pilot and Observer should remain in range of contact during the survey so that the Observer can immediately notify the Pilot of any issues. If using a radio to maintain contact, a radio check must be performed on arrival at the site.
4. The Observer must remain in an area with mobile phone coverage so they can immediately contact Air Traffic Control, if necessary.
5. Pilot and Observer to make final call on conditions using the below weather requirements:

- Winds not exceeding 12 m/s (26.8 mph).
- No low cloud (<1000 m) or fog.
- Not below 0°C.
- No heavy precipitation forecast (e.g. above 2 mm per hour).

6. Pilot and Observer to complete pre-flight checklists and the I M S A F E (illness, medication, stress, alcohol, fatigue, eating) checklist (see Additional Information) and confirm they are ready for the survey.
7. The Observer must call local Air Traffic Control number to confirm flight can go ahead and specify Flight Plan (see Additional Information), then confirm with the Pilot that they are permitted to fly.
8. Pilot will turn on the drone and ensure its navigation lights are on.
9. Observer and Pilot to confirm no uninvolved people are too close, and alert anyone nearby.

During flight

1. Throughout the survey, the Observer must be equipped with a scope and/or binoculars to monitor the drone and the surrounding area for safety hazards. The Observer should maintain constant communication with the Pilot, relaying information and instructions by radio, telephone (if both are within an area of mobile phone coverage) or verbally.
2. If any plane, helicopter or other aerial vehicle is detected in the vicinity of the survey area at any time during the flight, the Pilot must immediately return drone to the take-off site, if safe to do so.

3. The drone must approach the colony at a minimum distance of 200 m and maintain a distance of at least 50 m from the colony at all times (Edney et al., 2023).
4. In line with requirements enforced by the CIDCA, the drone will not exceed a height of 120 m throughout the flight.
5. Pilot will fly over the colony in a lawnmower pattern using a route and capture images with at least 80% forward/backward and sideways overlap to ensure an orthomosaic of the colony can be stitched. An additional orbital flight may also be attempted to capture side-on images of the colony.
6. Pilot to end flight when no less than 30% of drone battery remains. Pilot to inform Observer and when returning from survey.
7. Observer must notify Air Traffic Control once the survey is complete.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: October - November

10. After each survey an automated approach will be used to stitch the high-resolution aerial photographs into one orthomosaic of Ortac using software, such as Web OpenDroneMap https://opendronemap.org/webodm/, or DroneDeploy https://www.dronedeploy.com/.
11. From the orthomosaic produced after the first survey in March, 230 select AOSs using stratified random sampling from five plots (Figure 1).
12. Record breeding activity at these sites using images from subsequent surveys, where the presence of an adult (single or pair), chick, and chick age should be recorded.
13. Mark sites as successfully fledging a chick if a chick disappeared between surveys and would have reached 12 weeks old during that period, failed if a chick disappeared between surveys but would have not reached 12 weeks, and 'no chick' for remaining sites.
14. Record productivity as the proportion of AOSs that successfully fledged a chick.

Data archiving and public access protocols:

15. Submit Ortac colony overall productivity to Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.
16. Report in Ramsar review, giving productivity for the colony.

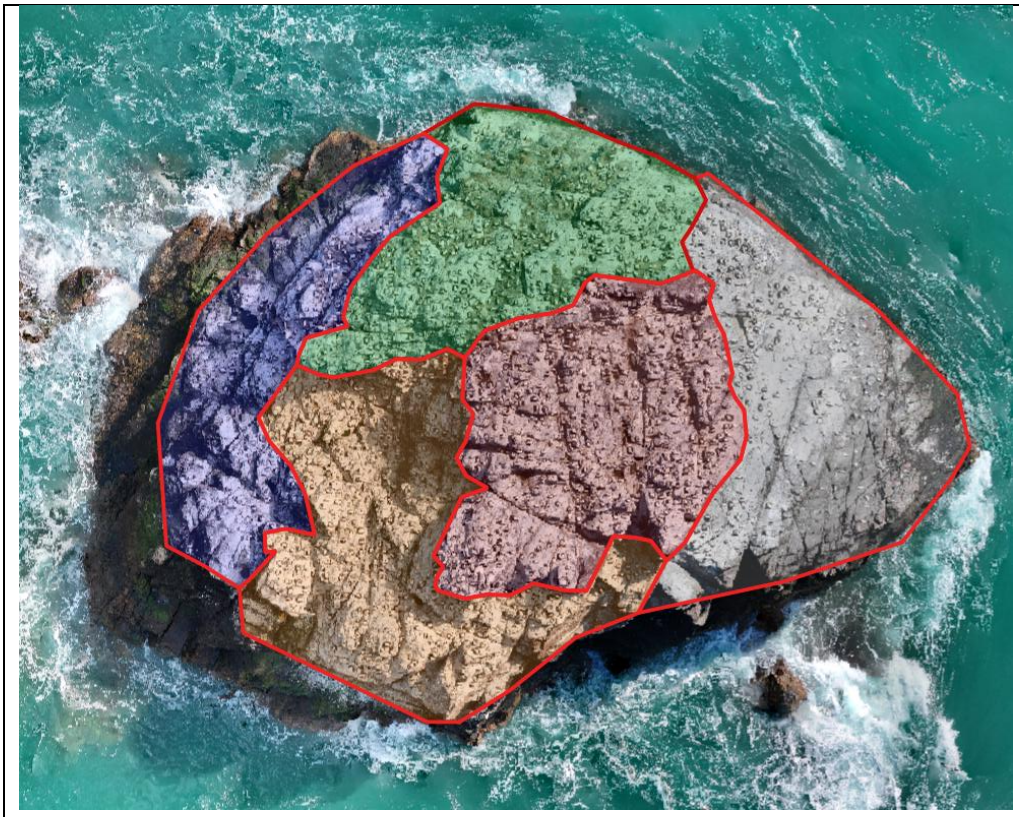

Figure 1. Five productivity plots for Ortac: Ortac plateau (red), North ledge (orange), North slope (blue), East ledge (green) and South slope (grey).

Additional information

Pilots

All Pilots will have gone through Seabird Watch training, 'Best Practice for Drones in Seabird Monitoring and Research', for flying drones to collect ecological data around seabird colonies before piloting the drone. Additionally, all pilots will hold a minimum of A2 C of C and be listed on the AWT's Aerial Work Permit. Current pilots are:

- Dr. Tara Cox
- Alex Purdie

AWT staff who will undergo Pilot training and conduct Ortac productivity surveys:

- AWT Ecologist
- AWT Data Officer
- AWT Conservation Officer

Flight Plan

Review practice after the first flight of each project, each season, to check whether adjustments are needed to avoid disturbance etc.

During work hours, flight plan is completed and is confirmed with Alderney Air Traffic Control and AWT Office. Flight plan to include the following:

- Pilot details (name, qualifications, contact details).
- Drone details (make).
- Location of take-off site and access route to take-off sight.
- Flight description (e.g. flight route, altitude, purpose, photography or videography to be taken).
- Flight schedule (e.g. approximate take off time and landing time).
- Contact numbers.

Emergency Provisions Checklist

1. Flight plan and contact details of survey team to be confirmed with Alderney Air Traffic Control before flight. Observer to ensure they are within mobile signal range and maintain contact with Pilot.
2. Survey team to have:

- Fully charged radios (if needed).
- Fully charged mobile phones with spare battery pack and charger.
- Whistles.
- Warm clothing, including waterproof clothing.
- High visibility jackets.
- Shoes with good quality tread for rocky and muddy conditions (e.g. hiking shoes or boots, work boots). Preferably ankle protecting.
- First aid kit.
- Powder fire extinguisher.
- Copy of the Aerial Work Permit.

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY INVOLVING ANOTHER AIRCRAFT OR LOSS OF CONTROL OF THE DRONE, SURVEY TEAM TO IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY THE POLICE ON 999.

Drone Maintenance Checklists

Checks should be performed to ensure the safety and airworthiness of the drone. A record should be kept of all checks. These must be performed routinely as outlined below.

Daily checks (to be done before each flying day/period):

- No panels and body parts have any signs of cracks or looseness.
- Surfaces are dry and no water has not entered the drone.
- Arms hinge smoothly and remain in place securely.
- Gimbal moves freely and is secure.
- Motors rotate by hand, and that they are smooth and silent.
- Propellers are securely attached and in the correct motor position.

Preflight checks (to be done before each individual flight):

- Camera lenses are free from dirt or water.
- Propeller blades are free from dirt, damage or cracks.
- Memory card is fitted and checked to have adequate free space for the planned task.
- When powered and in take-off location; displayed location and heading is correct.
- Flight battery and transmitter battery charge level is adequate to carry out planned flight with suitable margin.
- Weather conditions are within limits (see Methods: Pre-flight).

In the event of any heavy landing or collision, daily checks must be completed before proceeding to fly again, even if it is during the same operational period or day.

Day-end checks (to be completed when daily flying has finished):

- Surfaces free of water, dust or dirt wiped clean from surfaces.
- Motors clear of dirt or dust.
- If no further flying is planned within 10 days:
  - Battery discharged to 40-65% where 3 bars show on the charge indicator.
  - Transmitter and systems powered off for storage.

Other checks and logs:

- Battery charging and flights should be logged.
- Battery endurance during practice flights logged.

Emergency Procedures

Fly away (drone flying away not responding to controls)

1. Call "EMERGENCY – FLYAWAY" to warn the Survey Team and people nearby.
2. Instruct all nearby Survey Team to visually track the drone.
3. If possible, switch to Attitude ('ATTI') Mode (i.e. manual flying mode).
4. If control not recovered, raise transmitter above your head and repeatedly attempt to shut down the drone using Combined Stick Control input (both sticks down to the centre). If possible, switch to ATTI Mode (manual).
5. If the drone continues to fly away, take note of flight path, estimated flying time and notify any relevant local parties, including the most appropriate Air Traffic Control unit and the Police.

Fire (drone or controller catches fire)

1. Call "EMERGENCY – FIRE" to warn Survey Team and people nearby.
2. Execute an emergency landing at the most suitable landing area (visual observer may be able to offer guidance).
3. Use fire suppression equipment to control any ensuing fires. Avoid inhaling any toxic fumes.

Pilot incapacitation (Pilot becomes unable to operate the drone)

In the event that the Pilot is incapacitated and therefore unable to operate the aircraft:

1. The Pilot or Observer should activate the Return To Home (RTH) function and call "FAILSAFE" to warn Survey Team and people nearby.
2. Pilot or Observer (if present) should clear the landing area of any items or equipment and people
3. Monitor the drone as it executes the RTH function.
4. Once the aircraft has landed, disarm the battery, shut it down, and turn off the controller.

Air Incursion (Another aerial vehicle approaches or enters the operating area)

If you or your observer notice an incursion into the flight operations area by another aircraft:

1. The Pilot should be immediately informed by the Observer calling "AIR INCURSION" and pointing or verbalising the location of the incursion.
2. The Pilot will assess the risk of collision and if necessary, take whatever avoiding action most reduces or eliminates this risk. This will generally be to descend the drone as quickly as possible. However, the Pilot must make a judgment based on the situation.
3. Resume operations only once the other aircraft has cleared the area.

Ground incursion (Incursion by an uninvolved person, animal, vehicle etc on the ground)

Should you or your Observer notice an incursion into the flight operations area by a person, animal, vehicle or any other ground-based hazard:

1. The Pilot should be immediately informed by the Observer calling "GROUND INCURSION" and pointing or verbalising the location of the incursion.
2. The Pilot will assess the risk of collision and, if necessary, take action to avoid collision. This may include flying the drone away from the point of incursion and/or descending the drone to land as quickly as possible. However, the Pilot must make a judgment based on the situation.
3. Resume operations only once the incursion has been cleared or has been brought under the control of the Survey Team.
4. Observer may interact with incursion e.g. to move animals from hazardous area or warn people.

Air incursion – wildlife (Incursion on operations area by a bird or bat which is likely to cause a collision)

DO NOT FLY WITHIN 50 M OF RESTING BIRDS. AVIOD TAKING OFF NEAR BIRD AND BAT ACTIVITY.

If a bird or bat enters the operational zone and poses a collision risk:

1. Call HAZARD – BIRD/BAT and note the location of the animal relative to the drone.
2. If required, fly the drone slowly away from the animal and its flight path (preferably either moving up or down). Conduct a rapid flyaway if required.

IF ANIMAL ACTIVELY ATTACKS DRONE

1. Move drone down (if this will not result in a collision) or up, following rapid & erratic movement procedures.
2. Fly the drone away from the aggressive animal. Land if required, and do not resume the survey until the animal has left the area.

References

Edney, A., Hart, T., Jessopp, M., Banks, A., Clarke, L., Cugniere, L., Elliot, K., Juarez Martinez, I., Kilcoyne, A., Murphy, M., Nager, R., Ratcliffe, N., Thompson, D., Ward, R., & Wood, M. (2023). Best practices for using drones in seabird monitoring and research. Marine Ornithology, 51(2), 265–280.

Method/ Action title

Northern gannet randomly selected mapped AONs

Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf

1.2.1

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

Map and observe randomly selected nest sites on Les Etacs from mid-March through to October to determine the proportion which fledged a chick and therefore estimate productivity.

Methodology

Species: Northern gannet
Location: Les Etacs
Date and time range: Mid-March to October data collection, October – November data analysis
Methods:

1. 350 nests in total are selected. 50 nests are selected at random from within five plots (Pyramid, West-Rock Gully, West-Rock West-End, North-Stack High and North-Stack Low) and 100 nests from West-Rock Plateau (Purdie et al. 2023).
2. Nest sites are observed weekly noting behaviour, number of adults present, the presence and age of any chicks or eggs, any dead birds, or other species occupying the site.
3. Nest sites are marked as successful if a chick reaches 11 weeks and is absent the following week.
4. Non-layers and the stage of failure (e.g. egg, chick) are identified.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: October - November

5. Calculate productivity for each plot and overall Les Etacs colony.

Data archiving and public access protocols:

6. Submit Les Etacs colony overall productivity to Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.

7. Report in Ramsar review, giving productivity for each plot and for the colony as a whole.
Additional information
References
Purdie, A., Broadhurst-Allen, M., Whitelegg, D., Lewis, M., & Horton, J. (2023). Alderney's West Coast and Burhou Islands Ramsar Site and Other Sites Annual Ramsar Review 2022 (Annual Ramsar Review, p. 118). Alderney Wildlife Trust.

Method/ Action title
Northern gannet anthropogenic material survey – Entanglements
Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf
1.2.4
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Record the number of entanglements of adult gannets and chicks on Les Etacs
Methodology
Species: Northern gannet **Location**: Les Etacs **Date and time range**: Early March – October data collection, October-November data analysis **Methods**: 1. Throughout the gannet nesting season (early March – early October), telescopes (x25) are used to search Les Etacs every week for entangled birds. 2. The colony is observed from The Guns North vantage point, from which about 70% of the occupied part of the colony is visible. 3. Observations are made for approximately 15 minutes, which is enough time to slowly scan the whole colony. 4. The date the entanglement is observed, the region of Les Etacs the individual is entangled in, age of the individual entangled (adult/chick) and whether the individual is alive, or dead will be recorded. 5. Observations are not conducted in conditions that limited visibility (i.e. rain, wind above Beaufort Force 6, low fog), with weather conditions recorded for the period of observation (temperature, wind speed, wind direction, cloud cover, percent of rain in observation window, estimated visibility (km)). 6. Additionally, drone images of Les Etacs will be taken after the gannets have left at the end of the season (beginning of November), following the same methods and pre-flight checks outlined in methods section XXX.

7. A 3D model of Les Etacs will be created from the drone imagery. The 3D model will be searched systematically for any dead gannets that have been missed during the in-person observations throughout the season.
8. If a possible dead gannet is identified on the 3D model, this will be confirmed by referencing the drone images of the area and the cause of death will be determined (i.e. clearly entangled or unknown cause). The location and age of the dead gannet is then recorded.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: October - November

9. Calculate total number of entanglements recorded for adults and chicks, the number of entanglements recorded each month, and the proportion of pairs in which one individual suffered lethal entanglement.

Data archiving and public access protocols:

10. Report in Ramsar review, giving total number of entanglements recorded for adults and chicks, the number of entanglements recorded each month, and the proportion of pairs in which one individual suffered lethal entanglement.

Additional information

References

Method/ Action title

Northern fulmar nest site mapping

Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf

1.3.1

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

Productivity and partial census of northern fulmar. Perch points are mapped from vantage points and consistently occupied nests are identified and observed through the breeding season to estimate productivity.

Methodology

Species: Northern fulmar
Location: West cliffs
Date and time range: May – September data collection, October – November data analysis
Methods:

1. From vantage points, map northern fulmar occupying sites. Visit every two days for ca. 10 days, map those consistently occupied as AONs.
2. Monitor AONs weekly, recording if adults or chicks are present and their behaviour, e.g. brooding posture or standing
3. Mark chicks as fledged if they are observed with full, or near full, plumage and are absent the following week.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: September - November

4. Calculate productivity as the number of AONs that successfully fledged chicks divided by the number of consistently occupied nests.

Data archiving and public access protocols:

5. Submit the total number of fulmar AONs located around Alderney (including those recorded during round island seabird censuses) and the productivity of AONs located within the West Cliffs survey area to the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.
6. Report in Ramsar review, giving an estimate of total number of fulmar AONs located around Alderney's coast (including those recorded during round island seabird censuses), the number of AONs located inside survey area and productivity.

Additional information

Additional northern fulmar AONs are recorded during round island seabird censuses.

References

Method/ Action title
Common tern census and productivity
Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf
1.4.1
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Census and monitor common tern nest sites to determine the proportion of nests which fledged chicks and therefore estimate productivity.
Methodology

Species: Common tern
Location: Houmet Herbe, Houmet des Pies and Houmet de Agneaux
Date and time range: Mid-May – August data collection, September – November data analysis
Methods:

1. Begin with periodic onshore vantage point observations of all historic nesting sites (Fort Houmet Herbé, Houmet des Pies and Houmet de Agneaux [the east Saye bay promontory]) until the birds have settled.
2. Continue with weekly onshore vantage point observations of apparently occupied site(s). Record the location of each site, behaviour (e.g. incubating, fish return), and if possible, the number and age of chicks, predator activity and whether chicks successfully fledged.
3. During weekly observations, also record the total number of terns observed at the site (i.e. standing and flying, as well as nesting). Use the maximum count of total birds observed for year-on-year comparison.

4. Continue weekly observations until breeding has finished and no terns remain at the nesting site.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: September - November

5. Estimate productivity as proportion of nests which fledged chicks

Data archiving and public access protocols:

6. Submit maximum count of total individuals, number of AONs and productivity to the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.
7. Report in Ramsar review, giving maximum count of total individuals, number of AONs and productivity for each site.

Additional information

References

Method/ Action title
Guillemot population size
Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf
1.6.3
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Estimate population size of guillemots and, where possible, razorbills at all potential sites.
Methodology

Species: Guillemot
Location: Coque Lihou, La Nache, Ortac and North Stack High on Les Etacs
Date and time range: April – June data collection, July – November data analysis
Methods:

1. Conduct three onshore observations of North Stack High, Coque Lihou and La Nache, as well as three boat-based photographic surveys of Ortac, between mid-May to early June (designated 'in season' for guillemots).

2. Counts from camera traps placed on Coque Lihou and La Nache overlooking areas less visible from shore are also included in the final population counts.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: July – November

3. Estimate population size for both species across all sites

Data archiving and public access protocols:

4. Submit maximum counts across all potential sites to the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.
5. Report in Ramsar review, giving maximum counts across all potential sites.

Additional information
This will only be conducted in full if there are sufficient resources.
References

Method/ Action title

Guillemot productivity

Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf

1.6.3

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

Record the success of observable guillemot AOSs through vantage point observations and camera trap observations to estimate productivity.

Methodology

Species: Guillemot
Location: Coque Lihou, La Nache and North Stack High on Les Etacs
Date and time range: April – June data collection, July – November data analysis
Methods:

1. Monitor breeding activity (e.g. fish returns, attendance) via onshore observations with a scope alongside population counts between mid-May to early June (designated 'in-season' for guillemots).
2. Where trail cameras are deployed overlooking nesting areas, images are also used to count nesting attempts and their outcomes recorded.
3. Any signs of previous nesting activity, such as broken eggshells found at new loci during the post-season site visits, are also added to the counts.
4. On North Stack High, observe guillemot AOS every 1-2 days from the day the first chick is observed, and monitor all active sites through to jumping.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: July – November

5. Estimate mean productivity across all sites following Seabird Monitoring Handbook guidelines (Walsh, et al. 1995).

Data archiving and public access protocols:

6. Submit mean productivity across all sites to the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.

Report in Ramsar review, giving mean productivity across all sites.

Additional information

North Stack High is observed differently because a large sample of guillemot AOS are clearly visible from the shore and chick growth and jumping can be directly observed.

This will only be conducted if there are sufficient resources.

References

Walsh, P., A. de Nevo, D. J. Halley, I. W. M. Sim, and M. P. Harris. 1995. Seabird monitoring handbook for Britain. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Method/ Action title

Ringed plover population size and productivity

Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf

1.5.1

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

Monitor number and success of ringed plover nests to determine population size and productivity

Methodology

Species: Ringed plover
Location: Platte Saline, Clonque and Saye
Date and time range: Mid-March – July data collection, August – November data analysis
Methods:

1. Nests on Platte Saline, Clonque and Saye are located as soon as possible once laying has begun through a combination of beach walkovers followed by retreat and observation of alarm calling ringed plover adults, and vantage point observations of potential sites. Each beach is checked twice a week in the breeding season for new nests.
2. Located nests are then checked regularly by vantage-point observation (using a telescope) at least two times a week. BTO behaviour status codes are used to classify adult (and where relevant) pulli behaviour, and observations last the minimum of the amount of time to determine the nest status and the number of chicks. When nests have failed, attempt to identify cause of failure based on observed predator interactions, and any remaining physical evidence at a nest inspection (e.g. punctures in eggshells caused by avian predation).
3. Where possible, located nests are placed under 24-hour observation using trail cameras to better identify causes of nest failure and reduce the number of in person observations required. Specifically, placing Ltl Acorn trail cameras with wide angle and close focus capabilities (or equivalent) two to three metres from each nest and camouflaging them using nearby flotsam (e.g. seaweeds) to minimise disturbance to the birds. Cameras are only placed in areas with sufficient cover that the camera would not itself draw the attention of people or predators (e.g. crows) to the nest.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: August – November

4. Review footage to identify causes of nest failure at egg stage and record any predator interactions.
5. Calculate egg and chick survival using the Mayfield method.
6. Calculate population size and productivity

Data archiving and public access protocols:

7. Report in Ramsar review, giving number of breeding pairs, number of nesting attempts, number of hatched chicks, number of fledged chicks, productivity and survival.

Additional information

References

Method/ Action title
Ringed plover nest cordons
Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf
1.5.2
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Installation of rope cordons to protect ringed plover nests and improve clutch survival
Methodology
Species: Ringed plover **Location**: Platte Saline and Saye **Date and time range**: Mid-March to July **Methods**: 1. Identify probable nest sites ahead of the breeding season from locations that had been previously occupied, and which are located above the high-water mark and in suitable habitat. 2. Place rope cordons around these probable areas on Platte Saline, creating relatively large cordoned areas, unless an existing barrier (such as the wall to the East of the sand works) already limits potential disturbance. 3. Construct and install these cordons in mid-March by siting metal rebar poles at four-metre intervals to create a rectangle with a shortest side of approximately 20 m down the shoreline. Then attach two lines of manila rope to the top and middle of the poles. These heights allow birds underneath the rope while still acting as a deterrent to people and dogs entering. 4. Public information signs are displayed alongside the cordons. Once a nest at Saye is identified, place another rope cordon around this nest as well. 5. Remove cordons in July once ringed plovers have finished breeding.
Additional information
Permission was granted under a Building and Development Control Committee planning application for cordons to be erected on Platte Saline and Saye beaches provided erection commenced prior to March 2025. As the cordons have been erected annually since permission was granted, the planning department of the SoA have advised the AWT that the permission is extant and does not need renewal.
References

Method/ Action title

Round island census

Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf

1.6.1

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

Census of breeding birds around Alderney to estimate breeding population sizes

Methodology

Species: European shag, great cormorant, herring gull, lesser black-backed gull, great black-backed gull, common tern, northern fulmar
Location: Around the Ramsar site and Alderney
Date and time range: Late May – early June data collection, July – November data analysis
Methods:

1. Three boat-based surveys conducted between late May and early June.
2. AONs recorded based on species specific observations (see Walsh et al. 1995). AOTs or other lower designations may also be stipulated.
3. Maximum count of nest sites recorded as primary count.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data: July - November

4. Calculate total number of AONs and AOTs for each species on each survey day.

Data archiving and public access protocols:

5. Submit the maximum counts for AONs and AOTs for each species to the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) database.
6. Report in Ramsar review, giving the maximum counts (across the three survey days) for AONs and AOTs for each species.

Additional information

References

Walsh, P., A. de Nevo, D. J. Halley, I. W. M. Sim, and M. P. Harris. 1995. Seabird monitoring handbook for Britain. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Method/ Action title

Wetland Bird Survey Core Counts

Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf

1.6.4

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

Monthly standardised counts of waterbirds using bays within the Ramsar site

Methodology

Species: Waterbirds
Location: Bays within the Ramsar site (Clonque Bay and Platte Saline)

Date and time range: Once per month January to December **Methods**: 1. WeBS core counts are conducted monthly, ideally at high tide when most wetland birds are least dispersed and easiest to count, and ideally two hours before or after high tide. Hanaine Bay, Clonque Bay and Platte Saline are monitored within the Ramsar Site. 2. All birds using (e.g. not simply transiting through) the bays are recorded. **Data archiving and public access protocols:** 3. Submit counts to the BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) 4. Report in Ramsar review, giving total number of species recorded, total number of individuals for each species, and the monthly peak counts for the four most frequently recorded species.
Additional information
References
BTO WeBS data submission: https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/wetland-bird survey/data/submit-data-request

Method/ Action title
Manx shearwater passive acoustic monitoring
Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf
4.1.6.6
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Record presence and timing of occurrence of Manx Shearwater on Burhou during the breeding season
Methodology
Species: Manx Shearwater **Location:** Burhou (No in-season access required) **Date and time range:** June-August recording **Study design:** passive acoustic monitoring ***What will be measured:*** *Calls of Manx Shearwater flying over Burhou* ***Samples taken?*** *No* ***Control variables:*** *N/A* ***Requirements to handle wildlife:*** *No* ***Data collection method:***

1. *SongMeter Mini 2 Li recorder fitted with acoustic microphone, Lithium batteries and large SD card deployed on Burhou before the breeding season and configured to start recording from late February.*
2. *Recorders active between 23:00 to 04:00 each night from February to September, based on* Arneill et al. (2020).
3. *Retrieve recorders late September.*

Protocol and timeline for analysing data: *October-November*

4. *Analyse calls using BirdNET* (Kahl et al. 2021)
5. *Manx Shearwater calls are manually verified.*
6. *Plot acoustic activity over time to determine how consistent presence is within the breeding season.*

Data archiving and public access protocols:

7. *Report outcome in 2026 Ramsar Review.*

Sample of calls retained for review on request.

Additional information

Survey period extended compared to 2025 methods to capture full Manx shearwater breeding season.

References

Seabird Ringing

Method/ Action/ Project Title (<20 words)

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) ringing programme, Little Burhou

Organisation(s)

Alderney Bird Observatory

Action Plan Objective Number from 2025 plan (see page 8-11, Action Plan 2025)

NA – Added in 2025 as supplementary material after publishing.

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

The focus of this expedition is to apply metal ring and colour ring on the tarsus of Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) (other species may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated ringing expeditions). To monitor dispersal and longevity from colour ring re-sighting and ring recoveries. To record nest productivity while in the colony.

Method(s) including:

- The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected
- The location(s)
- Date and time range(s)
- The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.
- The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.
- Data archiving and public access protocols.

The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected

- The study species is Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*).

The location(s)

- Little Burhou

Date and time range(s)

- To visit the nest colony on Little Burhou once between 25th April - 21st May, subject to tide and suitable weather. The visit date for 2026 has not yet been confirmed and this will likely be agreed in March 2026.. The expedition date will depend on suitable tides and weather conditions.

The study or action design

- To apply a metal ring and colour ring on the tarsus of Great Cormorant..
- The birds will be handled and ringed by or under the close supervision of qualified ringers. Participants handling birds have submitted a copy of their ringing permit to The States of Alderney and the Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme (CIBRS), via the Alderney Bird Observatory (ABO) Warden, qualifying applications have been reviewed and each applicant individually approved to ring by The States of Alderney and the CIBRS.
- Nest productivity, number of nests and activity, will also be recorded while in the colony.

The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.

- Ringing Data will be submitted to Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme (CIBRS), colour ringing data will be passed on to the colour ring co-ordinator in May.
- A report detailing nest productivity will be submitted to the RAMSAR secretariat following the completion of seabird ringing expeditions, before end of year.

Additional information

Participants

Lead ringer: Matt Scragg (ABO Warden), ringing permit no. C.I. 167 and BTO S/6414
Maximum of six participants comprising of supporting experienced licenced ringers and helpers. The specific ringers are to be confirmed.

Copies of ringing permits will be sent via email to the Harbour Authority.

For additional guidance on avoiding disturbance when ringing in seabird colonies, please see the appended document, "Ringing in Seabird Colonies, ABO".

References

Method/ Action/ Project Title (<20 words)

Seabird ringing expedition, Burhou

Organisation(s)

Alderney Bird Observatory

Action Plan Objective Number from 2025 plan (see page 8-11, Action Plan 2025)

NA – Added in 2025 as supplementary material after publishing.

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

The focus of this expedition is the continuation of long term monitoring of Storm Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*) and Lesser Black-back Gull (*Larus fuscus*) to include colour ringing. (Other species may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated ringing expeditions.).

To increase the marked (metal ring) population of seabirds to generate more local and international recoveries, to improve the knowledge of population estimates, survival and movements.

The aim of the colour ringing project is to monitor dispersal from the breeding colonies in the Channel Islands through colour ring resightings and long term survival from ring recoveries.

To provide an opportunity to train people to ring and monitor seabirds, which will improve the number of ringers available to continue seabird studies into the long term future.

Method(s) including:

- The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected
- The location(s)
- Date and time range(s)
- The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.
- The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.

- Data archiving and public access protocols.

The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected

- The focus will be Storm Petrel and Lesser Black-back Gull. Historically during July other incidental species ringed have included, Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*), Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*), Great Black-back Gull (*Larus marinus*), Shag (*Gulosus aristotelis*), Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) and Rock Pipit (*Anthus petrosus*).

The location(s)

- Burhou island group

Date and time range(s)

- Within a window from 1st July to 31st July. The 2026 expedition is proposed for 12th – 15th July, to coincide with the new moon, arriving and departing on suitable tides and weather conditions.

The study or action design

- To check and record or fit a metal ring to the tarsus of Storm Petrel.
- To check and record or fit metal and colour ring to the tarsus of Lesser Black-back Gull.
- To check and record or fit metal ring to the tarsus of other species encountered, including colour ring for Great Black-back Gull and Herring Gull.
- The birds will be handled by or under the close supervision of qualified ringers.
- Participants handling birds have submitted a copy of their ringing permit to The States of Alderney and the Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme (CIBRS), via the Alderney Bird Observatory (ABO) Warden, qualifying applications have been reviewed and each applicant will be individually approved to ring by The States of Alderney and the CIBRS. Copies of permits will be submitted to the Harbour Authority as part of the application process.

The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.

- Ringing Data will be submitted to Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme (CIBRS), colour ringing data will be passed on to the colour ring co-ordinator following the expedition.
- A report will be submitted to the RAMSAR secretariat following the completion of seabird ringing expeditions, before end of year.

Additional information

Participants

Lead ringer: Matt Scragg (ABO Warden), ringing permit no. C.I. 167 and BTO S/6414
Maximum of twelve participants comprising of supporting experienced licenced ringers and helpers. The specific ringers are still to be confirmed.

Copies of ringing permits will be sent via email to the Harbour Authority.

For additional guidance on avoiding disturbance when ringing in seabird colonies, please see the appended document, "Ringing in Seabird Colonies, ABO"

References

Method/ Action/ Project Title (<20 words)
Seabird ringing expedition, Coque Lihou
Organisation(s)
Alderney Bird Observatory
Action Plan Objective Number from 2025 plan (see page 8-11, Action Plan 2025)
NA – Added in 2025 as supplementary material after publishing.
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
The focus of this expedition will be Razorbill (*Alca torda*), Common Guillemot (*Uria aalge*) and European Shag(*Gulosus aristotelis*). Other species may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated bird ringing expeditions. To increase the marked (metal ring) population of seabirds to generate more local and international recoveries, to improve the knowledge of population estimates, survival and movements. To record nest productivity while in the colony.
Method(s) including: • The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected - The location(s) - Date and time range(s) - The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc. - The protocol and timeline for analysis of data. - Data archiving and public access protocols.

The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected

- The focus of this expedition is Razorbill (*Alca torda*), Common Guillemot (*Uria aalge*) and European Shag (*Gulosus aristotelis*). Other species may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated bird ringing expeditions.

The location(s)

- Coque Lihou island

Date and time range(s)

- To visit the nest colony on Coque Lihou once between 1st and 30th June, subject to tide and suitable weather. The visit date for June 2026 has not yet been confirmed and this will likely be agreed in March 2026.. The expedition date will depend on suitable tides and weather conditions.

The study or action design

- To check and record or fit a metal ring to the tarsus of Razorbill.
- To check and record or fit a metal ring to the tarsus of Common Guillemot.
- To check and record or fit a metal ring to the tarsus of European Shag.
- To check and record or fit a metal ring to the tarsus of 'incidental' species encountered, to include a colour ring for Great Black-back Gull, Lesser Black-back Gull and Herring Gull.
- The birds will be handled by or under the close supervision of qualified ringers.
- Participants handling birds have submitted a copy of their ringing permit to
- The States of Alderney and the Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme (CIBRS),
- via the Alderney Bird Observatory (ABO) Warden, qualifying applications have
- been reviewed and each applicant will be individually approved to ring by The States of
- Alderney and the CIBRS. Copies of permits will be submitted to the Harbour Authority as part of the application process.

The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.

- Ringing Data will be submitted to Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme (CIBRS) and any colour ringing data will be passed on to the colour ring co-ordinator in the week following the expedition.
- A report will be submitted to the RAMSAR secretariat following the completion of seabird ringing expeditions, before end of year.

Additional information

Participants

Lead ringer: Matt Scragg (ABO Warden), ringing permit no. C.I. 167 and BTO S/6414
Maximum of four participants comprising of supporting experienced licenced ringers and helpers. The specific ringers are still to be confirmed.

Copies of ringing permits will be sent via email to the Harbour Authority.

For additional guidance on avoiding disturbance when ringing in seabird colonies, please see the appended document, "Ringing in Seabird Colonies, ABO".
References

Method/ Action/ Project Title (<20 words)
Northern Gannet (Morus bassanus) ringing programme on Ortac
Organisation(s)
Alderney Bird Observatory
Action Plan Objective Number from 2025 plan (see page 8-11, Action Plan 2025)
NA – Added in 2025 as supplementary material after publishing.
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
The focus of this expedition is to apply a metal ring on the tarsus of Northern Gannet. Other species may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated bird ringing expeditions. To increase the marked (metal ring) population of seabirds to generate more local and international recoveries, to improve the knowledge of population estimates, survival and movements.
Method(s) including: • The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected - The location(s) - Date and time range(s) - The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc. - The protocol and timeline for analysis of data. - Data archiving and public access protocols.

The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected

- The study species is Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*)

The location(s)

- Ortac island

Date and time range(s)

- To visit the nesting colony on Ortac once between 1st and 30th July, subject to tide and suitable weather. The visit date for July 2026 has not yet been confirmed and this will likely be agreed in March 2026.. The expedition date will depend on suitable tides and weather conditions.

The study or action design

- To apply a metal ring on the tarsus of Northern Gannet.
- Birds will be handled and ringed by or under the close supervision of qualified ringers. Participants handling birds have submitted a copy of their ringing permit to The States of Alderney and the Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme (CIBRS), via the Alderney Bird Observatory (ABO) Warden, qualifying applications have been reviewed and each applicant individually approved to ring by The States of Alderney and the CIBRS.

The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.

- Ringing Data will be submitted to Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme (CIBRS) in July.
- A report will be submitted to the RAMSAR secretariat following the completion of seabird ringing expeditions, before end of year.

Additional information

Participants

Lead ringer: Matt Scragg (ABO Warden), ringing permit no. C.I. 167 and BTO S/6414
Maximum of six participants comprising of supporting experienced licenced ringers and helpers. The specific ringers are still to be confirmed.

Copies of ringing permits will be sent via email to the Harbour Authority.

For additional guidance on avoiding disturbance when ringing in seabird colonies, please see the appended document, "Ringing in Seabird Colonies, ABO"

References

Method / Action title

Seabird and wader ringing, Alderney

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.1.6.5.

Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)

Monitoring breeding birds and their dispersal using metal rings for, Common Tern *(Sterna hirundo*), Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) and Ringed Plover *(Charadrius hiaticula*).

Monitoring breeding birds and their dispersal using metal and colour rings for, Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*), Greater Black-back Gull (*Larus marinus*) and Lesser Black-back Gull *(Larus fuscus*).

Other species may also be 'incidentally' ringed during this and any other similar dedicated ringing expeditions.

To increase the marked (metal ring) population of seabirds to generate more local and international recoveries, to improve the knowledge of population estimates, survival and movements.

The aim of the colour ringing project is to monitor dispersal from the breeding colonies in the Channel Islands, from colour ring re-sightings and long term survival from ring recoveries.

To provide an opportunity to train people to ring and monitor seabirds, which will improve the number of ringers available to continue seabird studies into the long term future.

- **Method(s) including:**
- **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected**

The focus species will be, Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*), Ringed Plover *(Charadrius hiaticula*), Greater Black-back Gull (*Larus marinus*), Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*), Lesser Black-back Gull (*Larus fuscus*) and Common Tern *(Sterna hirundo*).

- **The location(s)**

Alderney

- **Date and time range(s)**

Ongoing throughout the nesting period

- **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.**

To check and record or fit metal ring to the tarsus of species encountered, including colour ring for Lesser Black-back Gull, Great Black-back Gull and Herring Gull.

The birds will be handled by or under the close supervision of qualified ringers and following the seabird ringing protocol.

Participants handling birds have submitted a copy of their ringing permit, via the Alderney Bird Observatory (ABO) Warden, to The States of Alderney and the Channel Islands Bird Ringing

Scheme (CIBRS). Qualifying applications have been reviewed and each applicant will have been individually approved to ring by The States of Alderney and the CIBRS. - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** Ringing Data will be submitted to Channel Islands Bird Ringing Scheme (CIBRS), colour ringing data will be passed to the colour ring co-ordinator. A report will be submitted to the RAMSAR secretariat following the completion of seabird ringing expeditions, before end of year.
Additional Information
Lead ringer Matt Scragg, ABO warden. CIBRS permit no. 167, British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) permit no. S/6414. Has been issued The States of Alderney (SoA) 5 (a) (ii) certificate.
References

Terrestrial

Method/ Action title
Biosecurity monitoring on Burhou and Coque Lihou
Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf
3.1.1
Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)
Monitor for presence of rodents on islands Burhou and Coque Lihou, where they are not currently present
Methodology
Species: Rodents spp. **Location**: Burhou and Coque Lihou **Date and time range**: February-March, August-November **Methods**: 1. Non-toxic wax chew blocks in tamper proof bait stations are deployed in; a. Burhou across a 75 x 100 m grid around the hut in addition to two stations at the east and west ends of the island. b. Coque Lihou at 25 m intervals across the whole of the islet 2. Trail cameras are deployed on both sites set on PIR mode.

3. Bait stations and trail cameras are checked monthly outside of the seabird breeding seasons for each site*

*Burhou bait stations checked in August when the island is opened to the public, storm petrel breeding season still ongoing at this point.

4. Should a rodent incursion be detected, rodent control will be rapidly deployed by AWT and in collaboration with the States Public Works. This will protect nesting seabirds and other native wildlife.
    a. If required, this control may include bromadiolone bait stations, A24 humane traps, other methods at the discretion of States Public Works.
    b. Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) code of conduct will be followed and it will be managed by qualified individuals, e.g. with Principles of Rodent Control qualification.

Additional information

Acoustic monitoring equipment, if deployed, may also be used to detect rodents on these sites.

References

CRRU Code of Conduct: https://www.thinkwildlife.org/code-of-best-practice/crru-code/

Rodent control certificate: https://training.killgerm.com/open-awards-level-2-award-in-the-principles-of-rodent-control/

Method/ Action title: Biosecurity of common tern nesting sites

Action Plan Objective Number from 2026 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2026) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2026.pdf

3.1.2

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

Suppression of rats on common tern breeding sites to promote breeding success for common terns.

Methodology

Species: Rat spp.

Location: Houmet Herbé (primary site), secondary sites may include any area the common terns breed, for example; Houmet des Pies and Houmet de Agneaux.

Date and time range: April-July 2026

Methods:

1. Rodent control will commence four weeks prior to the common tern breeding season (ca. 20th April 2026)

2. Rodent control will be undertaken by licensed and trained individuals (holding principals of rodent control or an equivalent qualification)
3. Rodent bait will be bromadiolone (2nd generation anticoagulant, currently licensed for outdoor use and used by the States of Alderney). There is potential that bromadiolone will be restricted for outdoor use in 2026 by the UK government. If this is the case either special permission to use bromadiolone will be sought, or an alternative bait (e.g. a 1st generation anticoagulant) will be deployed.
4. Bait will be deployed using wax-chew blocks inside tamper proof bait stations in a 25 x 25 m grid.
5. A pulse baiting schedule will be followed, with exact timings depending on the bait choice. This is likely to involve four-five visits: pulse 1 (day 1), pulse 2 replenishment of bait (day 7), pulse 3 replenishment of bait (day 14), final bait check and removal if no take, or replenishment if take continues (day 21), additional pulse/ check as required (day 28).
6. CRRU guidelines will be followed, including the removal of any carcasses to reduce the risk of harm to non-target species.
7. Additional control methods may be deployed including A24 and T-Rex traps which will reduce the risk of rats surviving the pulse baiting.
8. During the season, A25 rodent traps will be left in place.
9. Rodent control may also be considered on adjacent onshore areas to reduce the risk of an incursion.
10. Should common terns settle on alternative sites (e.g. secondary sites), a rapid deployment of pulse baiting or A24 traps should be considered.
11. All care will be taken to avoid causing disturbance of breeding birds if baiting is required during the breeding season, e.g. limiting visits, minimising time within the colony, avoiding nesting areas. A license will be sought for this if access is required during the breeding season.

Protocol and timeline for analysis of data:

1. Records of the volume of rodent bait which has been deployed, and the amount of take will be recorded and reported in the 2026 Annual Report.
2. Rodent carcasses will be recovered and stored for potential rodenticide resistance testing if resources allow (not within the scope of this project).

Data archiving and public access protocols:

1. All results will be published in the 2026 annual Ramsar review.

Additional information

CRRU: https://www.thinkwildlife.org/code-of-best-practice/crru-code/

References

Marine

Method / Action title
European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) presence survey
Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf
4.15
Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)
To record the presence of European eel (glass eel/elver life stage) within Alderney's bays, including sites within the Ramsar Site.
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**
Method: The presence of the European eel glass/elver life stage will be carried out at pre-selected intertidal coastal inlet habitat areas, from May – August (2026). The pre-selected areas are based on known habitat preference of European glass eels/elvers (see La Societe Jersiaise (2024) internal report for full habitat preference description). This includes upper-shore intertidal coastal areas with freshwater outlets and mixed substrata (such as cobbles, pebbles and gravel). Following a preliminary qualitative review of marine intertidal habitat information (completed by AWT) sites for assessment include: Braye Bay, Clonque Bay and Longis Bay. The survey months (May – August) were selected as this is the time period that glass/elver eels are known to approach coastal inlets in search of freshwater habitat for their next life stage (e.g. searching for freshwater for their yellow/adult life stages). The field-based survey method to assess the presence of European eel glass/elver life stage follows sampling guidance from members of La Société Jersiaise who conduct

regular, in-depth surveys of European eels on Jersey (see La Société Jersiaise, 2024). This survey method comprises of hand digging into the selected habitat, searching for hidden glass eel/elver individuals. Once found, individuals are transferred quickly to a tray and/or tube for qualitative assessment e.g. species verification, individual information such as potential length. All individuals will be photographed and released back into the same location shortly after the survey. General metadata will be recorded during each survey e.g. weather, location etc.

Location(s):

European eel surveys are carried out on accessible intertidal rocky-shore bays across Alderney, such as Longis Bay. Bays are selected based on their potential preference by European eels: intertidal habitats associated with shingle/cobble substrate and freshwater (e.g. running streams). Within the Ramsar Site, Clonque Bay is a key site for this survey.

Survey time range:

In general, once a year, per bay/survey site between May – August. The survey months (May – August) are selected as this is the time period that glass/elver eels are known to approach coastal inlets in search of freshwater habitat for their next life stage (e.g. searching for freshwater for their yellow/adult life stages).

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- European species presence/absence, abundance, size (length of individuals) and location.
- Associated intertidal habitat/localised area description.

Timeline/data analysis:

All data analysis and subsequent report writing will commence from November – December (2026).

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre.

Additional Information

References

NB – Extracted from original proposal document, so not all references may be referred to in this text.

Doble, C., Mowat, S., and Pecorelli, J. 2015. *The River Thames European Eel Monitoring Project Report, 2011-2014*. London: ZSL.

Environment Agency. No date. *Monitoring elver and eel populations. The Eel Manual – GEHO0211BTMY-E-E*. UK: Environment Agency.

Harrison, J.A., Walker, A.M., Pinder, A.C., Briand, C and Aprahamian, M.W. 2014. A review of glass eel migratory behaviour, sampling techniques and abundance estimates in estuaries: implications for assessing recruitment, local production and exploitation. *Rev Fish Biol Fisheries* DOI 10.1007/s11160-014-9356-8.

La Société Jersiaise. 2024. *Methodology Statement to support fieldwork studies on Anguilla anguilla*. Internal document for AWT. Jersey: La Société Jersiaise.

Pike, C., Crook, V. and Gollock, M. 2020. [Online:] *Anguilla anguilla*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2020: e.T60344A152845178. https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2020 2.RLTS.T60344A152845178.en. [Accessed: 15/05/2024].

Method / Action title

PlanktoScope surveys in Clonque Bay

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024)
Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.9

Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)
To record ecological information (species type and potential abundance information) of pelagic species, including plankton and zooplankton taxonomic groups across selected Alderney's shallow, inshore sub-tidal environments/bays. This project is linked to the PlanktoScope project (see here: https://www.planktoscope.org/) and originally The National Oceanography Centre, University of Southampton (NOC).
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**
Method: To assess pelagic species (plankton and zooplankton groups) presence and potential abundance, both field-based and desk-based (planktoScope equipment use) techniques will be used. The field-based element of this survey across was designed by the AWT. Guidance from NOC and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust was given on how to use the Planktoscope equipment, through online sessions and survey manuals. **Field-based seawater sampling:** Pelagic species are collected within one seawater sample taken at one pre-selected survey station location, per bay. The location of each survey station is positioned on upper shore beach/bay areas that are easily accessible on foot, by surveyors. The location of each survey station is taken via GPS with complementary metadata (e.g. habitat/substrate type). At each survey station, a surveyor throws a pelagic net (a fine mesh net with an attached bottle) 1 – 2 times into the water. Once the bottle is filled, the sample is coarsely filtered with additional filters on site. The sample is then taken to the AWT lab be analysed with the PlanktoScope equipment. **PlanktoScope sampling:** The seawater samples are added to the PlanktoScope equipment, which uses a Raspberry Pi computer software linked to a camera to 'take photographs' of pelagic species within each sample. The PlanktoScope equipment runs through a process of: - Filtering samples pre-analysis - Running samples through the PlanktoScope (linked to computer Planktoscope software) - Uploading sample results to EcoTaxa (website: https://ecotaxa.obs-vlfr.fr/). **Location(s).** Surveys to be completed at Clonque Bay and Longis Bay (one station per bay).

Survey time range:
Seawater samples are to be taken in April and July (corresponding with potential natural pelagic species presence/abundance increase), during high/rising tide times, within neap tide cycles.

Parameters measured:
- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Pelagic species presence.
- Pelagic species relative abundance (per sample).

Timeline/data analysis:
Analysis of the results will be completed from September – December (2026).

Data archiving:
Currently, all information is freely available online on EcoTaxa.

Additional Information

The PlanktoScope equipment needs regular maintenance so this may inhibit the programme of works if there is a fault.

References

PlanktoScope. 2025. [Online:] PlanktoScope. [Available at:] https://www.planktoscope.org/. [Accessed: 03/01/2025].

Method / Action title

Test physical parameters of seawater

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024)

Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.11

Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)

To collect long-term, open-source seawater parameter evidence across Alderney with interested members of the community and AWT citizen scientists. The survey comprises of three objectives:

a) Initiate seawater parameter survey

b) Utilise survey and results as a new engagement tool c) Provide new evidence source to assess marine environment
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**
Method: Fixed monitoring stations (a site to collect seawater samples) will first be identified at key inshore bays across Alderney. This includes the Ramsar Site (Clonque Bay and Hanaine Bay), Braye Bay, Saye Bay, Arch Bay, Corblets Bay and Longis Bay (local nature reserve). The locations of the fixed monitoring station will be determined during preliminary site visits (e.g., away from freshwater outlets etc.) and assessment of local tide information, with approximately two stations located per bay (for replication effort). In general, surveys will be completed during high neap tide tides, potentially around the same time of day, where possible (for temporal bay comparison). To assess the seawater parameters (samples taken at the fixed monitoring station), a seawater protocol will be implemented for each visit/fixed monitoring station, which comprises of: For each bay visit, surveyors/citizen scientists/members of the public will first record general metadata e.g. weather conditions, state of tide etc. At each (pre-determined) monitoring station, one seawater sample will be taken in-situ using the appropriate seawater sampling equipment (Hanna Instruments HI98194 kit). This comprises of selecting a continuous 'log' setting for 30 samples on the meter, initially named the bay and station number (e.g. Longis S1). The Hanna Instrument will be used to sample sea surface temperature (SST), pH, salinity, total dissolved solids (TDS) and

dissolved oxygen (O2). Information will be recorded electronically onto the Hanna Instrument.

It should be noted that the Hanna Instruments meter should be calibrated (quick calibration setting) regularly to ensure accurate results. All calibration/use of the kit should follow the Hanna Instruments instruction manual.

Survey time range:

Once a month (per bay).

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Monthly seawater parameter values (SST, pH, salinity, dissolved oxygen (O2)) x 2 monitoring stations per bay.

Timeline/data analysis:

Seawater parameter information will be assessed during December 2026 – February 2027.

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre and is added regularly to the AWT website.

Additional Information

References

Method / Action title
Coastal erosion survey
Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf
4.3.1
Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)
As part of a AWT (Alderney Wildlife Trust) climate change assessment, the aim of this survey is to identify and measure coastal erosion at key areas across Alderney's coastlines (including coastal areas within the Ramsar Site).
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**
Method: The coastal erosion survey method follows the stake site technique as described in Buzard *et al*., 2019. The method comprises of selecting a series of monitoring transects across coastal areas to identify sites prone to coastal erosion. A monitoring transect consists of three monitoring stations, with the first station located at the edge of a cliff/path. Further monitoring stations are then setup at graduated distances away, (approximately 15 m intervals) along the transect. The distance (m) between each monitoring station is then measured over time to identify coastal erosion (e.g. land lost over time). Location(s):

For Alderney, this includes the coastal areas of: Braye Bay (East end), Clonque Bay (coastal path from Fort Tourgis carpark leading to Fort Clonque) and Corblets Bay (along grassy area adjacent to carpark).

Survey time range:

Annually.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Distance between monitoring stations (m).

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre. The results will be included within a Climate Change Assessment report, due to be completed by the end of 2026 (as a AWT Living Seas Programme objective).

Additional Information

N/A

References

Buzard, R.M., Overbeck, J.R., and Maio, C.V., 2019, Community-based methods for monitoring coastal erosion: Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys Information Circular 84, 35 p. http://doi.org/10.14509/30182

Method / Action title

Green ormer tagging and abundance survey

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024)

Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.4
Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)
To record the presence, abundance, location, shell condition and movement patterns of green ormer (*Haliotis tuberculata*), within selected rocky-shore bays across Alderney (including bays within the Ramsar Site).
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**
Method: The green ormer survey method was developed by the AWT, following initial guidance from the States of Jersey, Société Jersiaise and the La Société Guernesiaise in 2013. This survey method was then updated in 2022 by the AWT to increase the opportunity to record previously tagged individuals. The survey is undertaken within selected mid-lower rocky-shore bays across Alderney, including sites within the Ramsar Site. Within each bay, two 10m^2 survey squares are established. General metadata (e.g., substrate type, weather conditions) and the GPS coordinates of each survey square's corner are taken. Within each survey square, surveyors stand in a line and walk in the same direction, turning rocks by hand, searching for green ormer individuals. If a green ormer individual is found, metadata (e.g., size, shell quality etc.) and photographs of the individual are taken. For large/adult individuals, a numbered yellow fish-tag is then attached with superglue to the topside of the shell (to assess movement patterns). Once the first survey square has been searched, surveyors will then establish the second survey square; adjacent to the first. The survey is then repeated within 72 hours, e.g. the 3rd day.

Location(s):

Green ormer surveys are carried out on accessible intertidal rocky-shore bays across Alderney, such as Braye Bay and Longis Bay. Within the Ramsar Site, Clonque Bay is a key site for this survey.

Survey time range:

During early spring and autumn only (two surveys within 72 hour period), to avoid key green ormer breeding period in the summer.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Green ormer species presence, abundance, location and shell condition.
- Green ormer tagging information (movement patterns).

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre.

Additional Information

N/A

References

Method / Action title

Intertidal crab abundance and population dynamics survey, and, intertidal crab photo bank

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024)

Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.5
Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)
To record the presence, abundance, size, sex and shell condition of crab species, within selected intertidal rocky-shore bays across Alderney.
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**
Method: The intertidal crab abundance and population dynamics survey method and the intertidal crab photo bank was developed by the AWT. Initial assistance on the recorded parameters: size and shell morphometric measurements was provided by the States of Jersey. The surveys are undertaken within selected mid-lower sections of intertidal rocky-shore bays across Alderney, including sites within the Ramsar Site. Surveys are completed within intertidal rocky-shore sub-habitats/areas (e.g. sub-survey sites with approximately area of 30 m^2) with volunteer citizen scientists. Surveyors first lay down a 20 m transect line and record latitude and longitude at start and end of the transect. Surveyors record general metadata of the site e.g. weather conditions, habitat type etc. Beginning at the two m mark, surveyors then turn over the nearest rock. Under each selected rock, the species type and abundance of each crab individual is recorded. For larger sized priority species such as the Chancre (*Cancer pagurus*), the sex, size and shell condition of each crab is recorded. A photograph of these crab individuals that show disease, poor shell condition or

attached species (such as calcified worm species) is taken (for the photo bank). All crab individuals and rocks are returned to their original location.

This method is then repeated every two m intervals (totalling ten rocks) along the transect line. A second transect line is then set down, adjacent to the first transect line, approximately 10 m away, with the survey method repeated again.

Location(s):

The intertidal crab abundance and population dynamics survey and, the intertidal crab photo bank are carried out on accessible intertidal rocky-shore bays across Alderney, such as Braye Bay and Longis Bay. Within the Ramsar Site, Clonque Bay is a key site for this survey.

Survey time range:

Four times a year (e.g. seasonal time-periods), per bay.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Intertidal crab species presence, abundance, sex, size and shell condition.
- Intertidal crab species' shell disease/poor condition.

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre.

Additional Information

N/A

References

Method / Action title

Phase I intertidal habitat survey of Burhou

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024)

Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.1

Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)

To record marine intertidal habitat presence, location, distribution, frequency and extent within selected intertidal bays across Alderney, including within the Ramsar Site.

- **Method(s) including:**
- **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected**
- **The location(s)**
- **Date and time range(s)**
- **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.**
- **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.**
- **Data archiving and public access protocols.**

Method:

The Phase I intertidal habitat survey method follows the 'Procedural Guideline 1-1 Intertidal Resource Mapping Using Aerial Photographs' methodology from JNCC's Marine Monitoring Handbook (Davis *et al*., 2001). The method comprises of identifying intertidal habitats using high resolution aerial photographs during ground-truthing fieldwork (either on foot or boat-based).

Intertidal habitats are classified following The Marine Habitat Classification for Britain and Ireland Version 04.05 (revised by JNCC, Connor *et al*., 2004). This classification is fully compatible with the European EUNIS habitat classification system.

Location(s):

Phase I intertidal habitat surveys are carried out across accessible intertidal rocky-shore bays across Alderney, such as Longis Bay. Within the Ramsar Site, Les Etacs, Ortac, Clonque Bay, Hanaine Bay and Burhou are key sites to survey.

Survey time range:

In general, this survey method is repeated every five years, per bay/site.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Intertidal habitat presence, location, (spatial) distribution, frequency and extent.

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre.

Additional Information

N/A

References

Connor, D.W., Allen, J.H., Golding, N., Howell, K.L., Lieberknecht, L.M., Northen, K.O., & Reker, J.B. 2004. *The Marine Habitat Classification for Britain and Ireland Version 04.05*. Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Davies, J., Baxter, J., Bradley, M., Connor, D., Khan, J., Murray, E., Sanderson, W., Turnbull, C., & Vincent, M. 2001. *Marine Monitoring Handbook*. Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Method / Action title

Marine INNS: Devil's tongue survey

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024)

Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.3.6.1
Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)
To record the marine invasive non-native species (marine INNS), devil's tongue (*Grateloupia turuturu*) presence, location, extent and habitat preference within selected rocky-shore bays across Alderney.
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**
Method: The marine INNS devils tongue survey method was developed by the AWT, for the AWT Living Seas Programme's marine INNS plan (2024). This field-based method comprises of surveyors walking along intertidal rocky-shore bays searching for the presence of the marine algae, devil's tongue (*Grateloupia turuturu*). Once the marine algae species is found, the extent/distribution of this species and localised habitat type present is recorded. Location(s): Marine INNS devils tongue surveys are carried out on accessible intertidal rocky-shore bays across Alderney, such as Braye Bay and Longis Bay. Within the Ramsar Site, Clonque Bay is a key site for this survey. Survey time range: In general, once a year, per bay/survey site.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Devils tongue species presence, location and extent/distribution.
- Associated intertidal habitat/localised area description.

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre.

Additional Information

N/A

References

Method / Action title

Marine mammal surveying

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024)

Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.12

Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)

To record marine mammal species presence, location, abundance, population structure and behaviour across Alderney's territorial waters, including the Ramsar Site. This includes recording stranded marine mammal individuals.

Note from AAWS

To assist and accompany any and all activities and organisations who request assistance with monitoring marine mammal populations including grey seals, or to visit previously active breeding sites to assess for any signs of ill health, any

disturbance activities which may impact the populations and make any applicable suggestions to changes in protocol or procedure which may be supportive.
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**
Method: To assess marine mammal species presence, location, abundance, population structure and behaviour across Alderney's territorial waters, a series of survey methods have been adopted by the AWT. This includes: grey seal effort (boat) based surveys, photographic identification catalogue development, land-based effort surveys and general collation of marine mammal sightings, including stranded (alive/dead) individuals. The grey seal effort (boat) based surveys follow a survey method developed by Groupe Mammalogique Normand (GMN). This method comprises of regular boat-based surveys which transit to known offshore grey seal haul out sites around Alderney. Experienced surveyors (a minimum of two) spot and record grey seal presence (abundance counts), location (sub survey site) and population information such as age (adult, juvenile/weaner, pup or unknown), sex (male, female or unknown), behavioural information of each seal individual (e.g. hauled out, swimming, feeding, bottling, disturbance (looked at boat, entered water, stampede)) during the survey. Photographs are taken of each individual seal (where possible) for the photographic identification catalogue.

The photographic identification catalogue comprises of high-resolution photographs of grey seal individuals (head, neck and body, either hauled out on rocks or in water). This information can help complement grey seal abundance surveys, through accurately identifying grey seal group dynamics/structure and distribution/movements. The on-going development of this catalogue comprises of the AWT collating photographs during surveys (e.g. boat-based surveys) or those donated by members of the public and updating/matching photographs with known/easily identifiable seal individuals within the catalogue.

The land-based survey method follows the Sea Watch Foundation (SWF) survey technique. This survey comprises of experienced surveyors recording general metadata, environment conditions and the presence, abundance, movement and behavioural patterns of marine mammals every 15 minutes from a fixed high position, such as a cliff-face.

General marine mammal sighting collation by the AWT includes collecting sightings of species (such as grey seals) from the public, stakeholders and groups, opportunistically. This includes collating sightings via the AWT sightings book (within the AWT Information Centre), AWT website, AWT social media platforms and irecord (online recording platform).

For opportunistic sightings of stranded marine mammal individuals (alive or dead), the species type, status and condition of the individual is recorded, where appropriate (either by AWT staff, AAWS, marine life rescue volunteers, SoA personnel and members of the public).

Location(s):

Grey seal effort (boat) based survey: throughout the offshore islets within the Ramsar Site e.g. Ortac, Nannals etc.

Land-based effort survey: cliff-based locations across Alderney.

Survey time range:

Grey seal effort (boat) based survey: monthly, where possible (based on weather/tide conditions/ volunteer time).

Photographic identification catalogue development: all year round.

Land-based effort survey: once a year, where appropriate.

General collation of marine mammal sightings/stranding information: all year round.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Marine mammal species presence, location, abundance, population structure and behaviour.
- General species sighting records (including stranded individuals). This includes species type, location, date/time spotted, size, population information etc. For stranded individuals this may also be status (alive/dead), sex, age, condition and individual body size.

Data archiving:

Information for these surveys are held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre. Grey seal effort (boat) based survey information is submitted to GMN. Land-based effort survey information is submitted to the SWF. Dead stranded marine mammal information is submitted to the UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP).

Additional Information

For the management and also the recording of marine mammal strandings, two internal policies are adopted (live/dead) which are developed and implemented by AWT, AAWS and SoA. See Ramsar Objective 4.3.13 for further details.

Note from AAWS

On receipt of notice of a planned excursion, AAW will arrange an RVN who can volunteer to accompany the organisation and assist with all activities undertaken as well as make considerations specific to the welfare of the all species and populations in the area.

This assistance is given on a voluntary basis and is subject to sufficient staffing levels and caseload or emergencies occurring at the clinic which must take priority for RVNs on duty or under sole charge conditions.

During the monitoring or assessment activities if any such urgent issue should arise where the RVN feels they must give advice or intervene with unnecessary or excessive disturbance activities, relocate or treat an animal due to injury, or suggest a change in protocol of the activity, they will discuss with the relevant organisation who have organised the activity, colleagues and peers potentially including veterinary surgeons such as States Veterinary Officer.

In all cases RVNs will endeavour to appreciate the scope and parameters of monitoring activities before the task is undertaken, so that any suggestions or concerns can be raised in ample time. If after the event during discussion any unforeseen concerns arise these will be discussed with the organisers immediately.
References
Method / Action title
Promote Seasearch snorkels and dives within the Ramsar Site
Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf
4.7
Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)
To record marine subtidal habitats and species through citizen science, with volunteer scuba divers and snorkellers across Alderney's territorial waters.
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**

Method:

Seasearch is a citizen science project to record marine habitats and species with volunteer scuba divers and snorkellers (see here: https://www.seasearch.org.uk/). Trained volunteers record key environmental conditions, marine habitat type, species presence and their relative abundance (using a SACFOR scale), during recreational scuba dives/snorkels.

Location(s):

Seasearch surveys are carried out within shallow, inshore sublittoral environments throughout Alderney's territorial waters, including the Ramsar Site.

Survey time range:

In general, from early summer (May) – autumn (October). Surveys are dependent upon weather/tide conditions and seawater visibility.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/location).
- General dive/snorkel/environmental conditions.
- Subtidal habitat type(s)/selected area description.
- Subtidal species presence and abundance (using a SACFOR scale).

Data archiving:

Seasearch volunteers submit their survey records to their local Seasearch coordinator and/or the AWT (which are the local coordinators for Alderney). Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre. The results are submitted to Seasearch and the JNCC Marine Recorder by the AWT, which are then subsequently added to the national biodiversity network (once survey results are verified etc.,).

Additional Information

N/A

References
Seasearch. 2024. [Online:] Seasearch. [Available at:] https://www.seasearch.org.uk/ [Accessed: 19/12/2024].

Method / Action title
Marine mammal stranding response - training and response during strandings
Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf
4.13
Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)
Qualified British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) Marine Life Medics KK and KH will keep their training up to date, and assist more to complete their initial and refresher training as required. Liaising with the BDMLR Channel Islands Coordinator Donna Gicquel de Gruchy during active strandings and the organisation of suitable new training courses. Maintain the volunteer roster to assist with monitoring live strandings, and coordinating any appropriate intervention, relocation or rehabilitation of live stranded animals. Successfully assess, treat, rehabilitate or relocate any marine mammals who strand and require intervention, as well as providing timely and appropriate euthanasia if required
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**

After a call out from member of public or AWT regarding a current live stranding of marine mammals AAW will endeavour to send one of their BDMLR Medics to the scene to assess and discuss with the Area coordinator and veterinary surgeon on duty. Once advice or assessment has been completed the animal will either be monitored, treated, relocated for treatment or euthanased. At this stage a volunteer roster will be coordinated to ensure the animal is left undisturbed but changes to the environment or animal can be noted. Volunteers and Medics will use provided information and logging sheets to record details of changes during a stranding, and Medics will regularly (at least once daily) discuss with area coordinator and/or veterinary surgeon the continuation or change of current actions and animal status. If at any stage the animal either in the natural habitat or in rehabilitation facilities is deemed of significantly poor welfare and unsuitable for release the decision may be made to euthanise. Social media and advertisement of an active stranding should be minimised for as long as possible to reduce traffic and disturbance activities, though very local signage can be useful to deter foot traffic and assist with volunteers monitoring an animal safely. This method applies to grey seals as described, and the likely outcomes of a cetacean stranding include reflotation or humane euthanasia.
Additional Information
The AAW will support and assist those who wish to become Marine Life Medics through the BDMLR either by arranging courses, notifying interested parties of training available, encouraging refresher courses to be completed in a timely fashion and providing appropriate engagement activities in the community.
References
The AAW will support and assist those who wish to become Marine Life Medics through the BDMLR either by arranging courses, notifying interested parties of training available, encouraging refresher courses to be completed in a timely fashion and providing appropriate engagement activities in the community.

Method / Action title
Shoresearch walkover survey
Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf
4.2
Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)

To record intertidal rocky-shore species presence within selected intertidal habitats/areas on Alderney (including those within the Ramsar Site), with interested members of the public, through citizen science.

- **Method(s) including:**
- **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected**
- **The location(s)**
- **Date and time range(s)**
- **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.**
- **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.**
- **Data archiving and public access protocols.**

Method:

The Shoresearch walkover survey method follows the survey technique developed by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT). This method first comprises of selecting an intertidal habitat/area within a rocky-shore bay. The boundary of the selected intertidal habitat/area is recorded by GPS. Interested members of the public then help identify and record all intertidal species (e.g. species presence) within the selected area.

Location(s):

Shoresearch walkover surveys are carried out on accessible intertidal rocky-shore bays across Alderney, such as Braye Bay and Longis Bay. Within the Ramsar Site, Clonque Bay is a key site for this survey.

Survey time range:

In general, three-four times a year, per selected rocky-shore bay.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Intertidal habitat/selected area description and spatial location.
- Intertidal species presence.

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre. The results are submitted to the RSWT Shoresearch national database.

Additional Information

N/A

References

The Wildlife Trusts. 2024. [Online:] Shoresearch. [Available at:] https://surveys.wildlifetrusts.org/ [Accessed: 1912/2024].

Method / Action title

BRUV surveys within Hanaine Bay

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024)

Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.8

Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)

To record fish species presence and relative abundance using Baited Remote Underwater Video (BRUV) survey techniques within Alderney's shallow subtidal environments, including sites within the Ramsar Site.

- **Method(s) including:**
- **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected**

- **The location(s)**
- **Date and time range(s)**
- **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.**
- **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.**
- **Data archiving and public access protocols.**

Method:

The survey method comprises of deploying a BRUV within several inshore subtidal environments/bays across Alderney, to record fish species presence and abundance, following guidance from Clarke (2023) and Storer (2000). A BRUV is an apparatus which comprises of a video recording element which points at a bait box in which fish interact with (Clarke, 2023a; Clarke, 2023b). The AWT built a BRUV using a GoPro Hero 8 camera mounted on an arm with a mesh box for the bait, with the camera angled to record species attracted to the bait.

Inshore, shallow subtidal marine environments/bays are first selected for study using Chart Datum and aerial photography of Alderney's territorial waters with ARCGIS software. A grid, with 50 x 50 m^2 numbered squares is then generated via the ARCGIS 'generate grid from area' application over the selected site's geographical area. Approximately four - six squares within the grid are randomly selected, using an online random number generator. The coordinates of the centroid of each of the randomly selected squares are used as the deployment locations for the BRUV.

Prior to each deployment, the BRUV will be baited with approximately 1kg of oily fish and the camera battery charged. The BRUV will be deployed from a tender/kayak as close to the selected square's centroid location as possible, with coordinates recorded in-situ with a GPS unit. All deployments will be undertaken during a rising high neap tide, with the camera facing into the open water. The BRUV will be left in-situ for approximately two hours.

After the BRUV has been collected, the recorded videos from the camera will then be assessed. For each deployment, species data will be assessed from five minutes after the BRUV has settled on the seabed. This allows for disturbances left by the tender/kayak to reduce and to let the sediment which may have plumed from the placement of the BRUV to settle. After this interval, every fish species (or other marine species) which enters the video frame will be recorded. The Max-N value will be calculated: the exact number of individuals which can be seen at any one time of a

video. Each fish will also be identified in terms of age and sex, based on size, colour and any other physical characteristics.

Once all species are recorded, each species will be assigned to a functional group, calculated from literature. A functional group encompasses species with similar life history traits and respond to environmental fluctuations in a similar way within a given habitat.

Location(s):

Hanaine Bay and Longis Bay.

Survey timeframe:

Annually, during the survey month of September.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Fish species presence/absence, abundance and life stage.
- Associated intertidal habitat/localised area description.

Timeline/data analysis:

Data analysis and subsequent report writing will be undertaken between November (2026) – February (2027).

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre.

Additional Information

References

Clarke, M. 2023a. *BRUV project for AWT*. Alderney: Alderney Wildlife Trust.

Clarke, M. 2023b. Investigating the presence of invasive non-native species in Alderney's inter-tidal and biosecurity measures to adopt. Exeter: University of Exeter.

Storer, L. 2000. *Evaluating BRUV methods for key, small-scale biodiversity projects within data-deficient sites*. MSc Project. York: University of York.

Responding to callouts and collection and treatment of injured or stranded animals within the Ramsar site

Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf

4.13

Aim(s) and intended outcome(s)

To receive call outs from members of the public or AWT and give appropriate advice, information, triage and either advise the animal to be brought to the clinic, or collect animals which require medical intervention where moving or handling may endanger either the animal or the handler.
To care for any wildlife found in such a manner as to ensure its eventual rehabilitation and release, where possible to the area it was found or an appropriate alternative

Methodology

All mammals, birds and marine life species covered within and outside the Ramsar site across Alderney. Calls during daytime via the clinic landline number, and during OOH to be fielded via the 24/7 on call phone manned by RVNs.
Details to be taken by the caller of location and condition of the animal, if possible with the use of photographs and/or "what 3 words". If safe to do so, and required then the animal to be brought to the clinic, otherwise AAW staff to collect the animal where safe to do so, or to monitor until capture is possible without endangering either the animal or the handler.
Animals in the clinic to have detailed records of weight, injury or illnesses and triage assessment completed, before diagnosis made by the veterinary surgeon and treatment provided and regular reassessments at least daily. Ongoing medication and treatment always must consider the long term welfare of the animal including post-release as the priority.

1. Any unsuccessful treatments or decline in condition to be discussed with the veterinary surgeon, and records to be kept on file for a minimum of six years

Additional information

Only species and cases originating or located within the Ramsar site will be reported within the Ramsar reports, other detailed reports of island-wide wildlife cases will be maintained at the clinic in the same manner.

References
Walsh, P., A. de Nevo, D. J. Halley, I. W. M. Sim, and M. P. Harris. 1995. Seabird monitoring handbook for Britain. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Community

Method / Action title
Beach cleans at Clonque, Hanaine and Platte Saline
Action Plan Objective Number from 2024 plan (see page 9-12, Action Plan 2024) Alderney-Ramsar-Action-Plan-2024.pdf
5.3.1
Aims(s) and intended outcome(s)
To undertake public beach clean events and record collected litter waste, following the Marine Conservation Society's (MCS) beach clean survey method.
- **Method(s) including:** - **The species, habitat(s), feature(s), etc, studied/affected** - **The location(s)** - **Date and time range(s)** - **The study or action design, including (where relevant) what will be measured, whether samples are taken, any control variables measured, treatments, requirement to handle wildlife, data collection method, etc.** - **The protocol and timeline for analysis of data.** - **Data archiving and public access protocols.**

Method:

The beach clean survey method follows the MCS beach litter survey technique (see here: https://www.mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do/join-a-beach-clean/). The method comprises of recording collated litter (type and abundance) along a 100 m section of a beach with members of the public, alongside a general beach clean event.

Location(s):

Beach cleans are carried out across accessible bays on Alderney, such as Longis Bay. Within the Ramsar Site, beaches such as Clonque Bay, Platte Saline and Hanaine Bay are cleaned and surveyed.

Survey time range:

In general, one-two times per bay/beach annually.

Parameters measured:

- General survey metadata (e.g. date/time/weather conditions).
- Litter type and abundance.
- Overall number and weight of bagged litter.

Data archiving:

Information for this survey is held within the Alderney Biodiversity Centre. The results are submitted to the MCS beach clean national database.

Additional Information

N/A

References

MCS. 2024. [Online:] *Beach Cleans*. [Available at:] https://www.mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do/join-a-beach-clean/ [Accessed: 19/12/2024].