



BALTIC SEABIRD PROJECT

PROJECT SUMMARY FIELD SEASON 2013



Baltic Seabird Project started in 1997 and is sponsored by WWF Sweden. With increased knowledge of seabird ecology we get a finer picture of larger ecosystem interactions linked with natural as well as anthropogenic factors in the Baltic Sea. Common Murres have been ringed at Stora Karlsö since as early as 1913.

Main studies Stora Karlsö 2013

Common Murre (*Uria aalge*):

- Breeding
 - Diet studies (feeding duration, etc)
 - Survival (re-observed ringed birds)
 - Telemetry studies*
 - Behavioral studies
- + Ringing, weighing, and DNA samples from approx. 3000 murre chicks

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*):

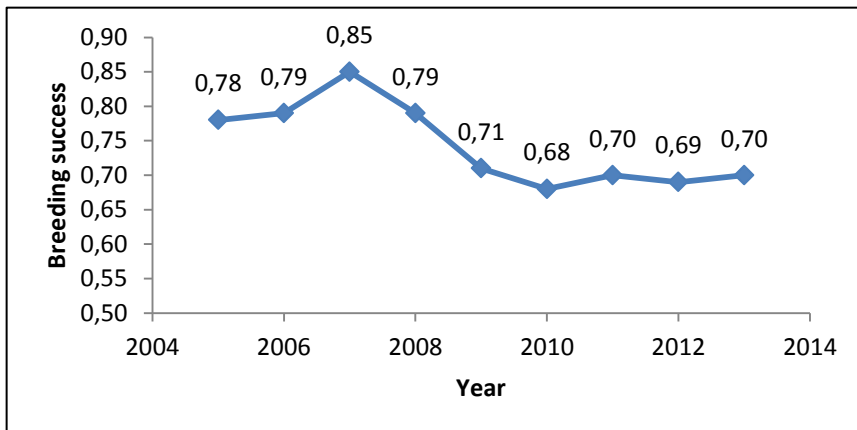
- Number of breeding pairs
- #### Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus fuscus*):
- Number of breeding pairs
 - Telemetry studies*

*In collab. with CANMove/
Lund University



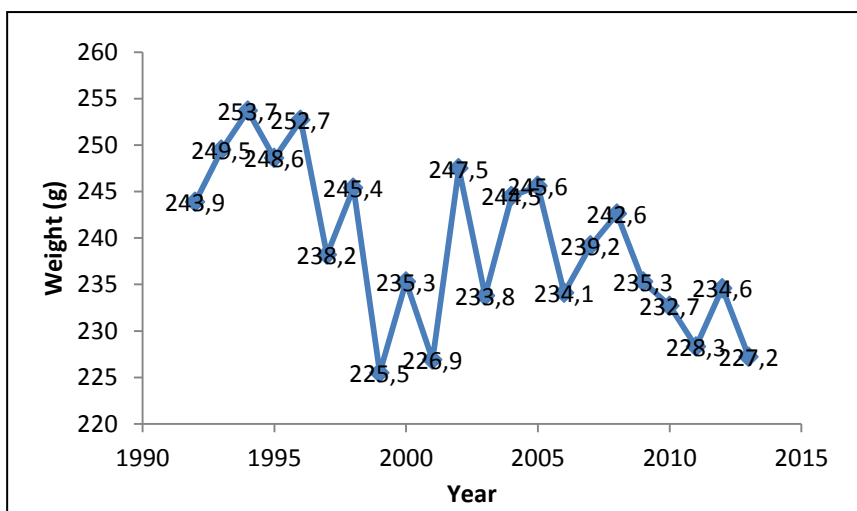
Main results Common Murre

Breeding success* Common Murre 2013: 0,70



*Breeding success gives in % how many of the pairs within the study that tried to breed also succeeded in rearing a fledged chick at least 15 days old.

Change in weight* in Common Murre chick when fledging



*Mean weight. Note: Mean weight for 2013 is the lowest recorded in 11 years.

Diet studies Common Murre:

- Number of pairs for all days: 68
 - Observed feedings: 337
 - Spratt (*Sprattus sprattus*) & Herring (*Clupea harengus*): 96% of diet
- #### Re-obs. of ringed murre individuals:
- Occasions of observation: 97
 - General observations: 1137
 - Unique individual observations: 767
 - Foundation for present and future survival studies

Telemetry, Common Murre:

8 light-loggers from previous years retrieved (and 3 from Razorbills). Data suggest that the murres spend late summer/autumn in southern Baltic Sea, then returning back north.

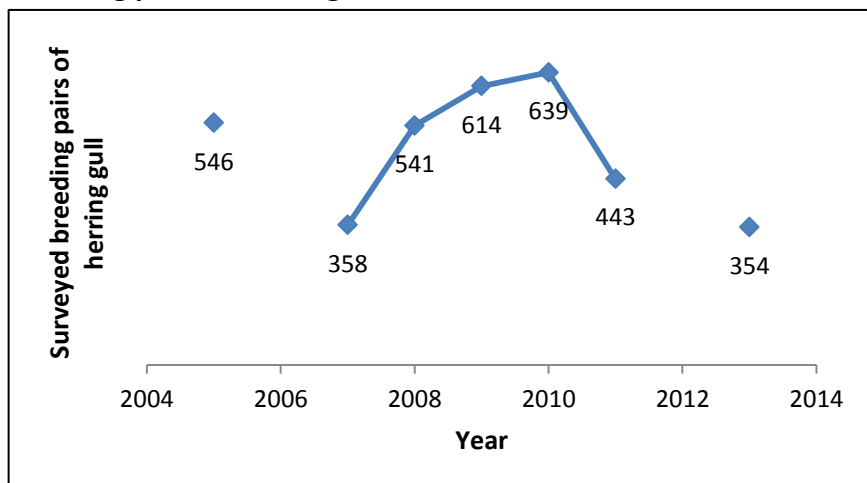


Common Murre (newly fledged) chick Photo: Linnea Törnlund

Please turn!

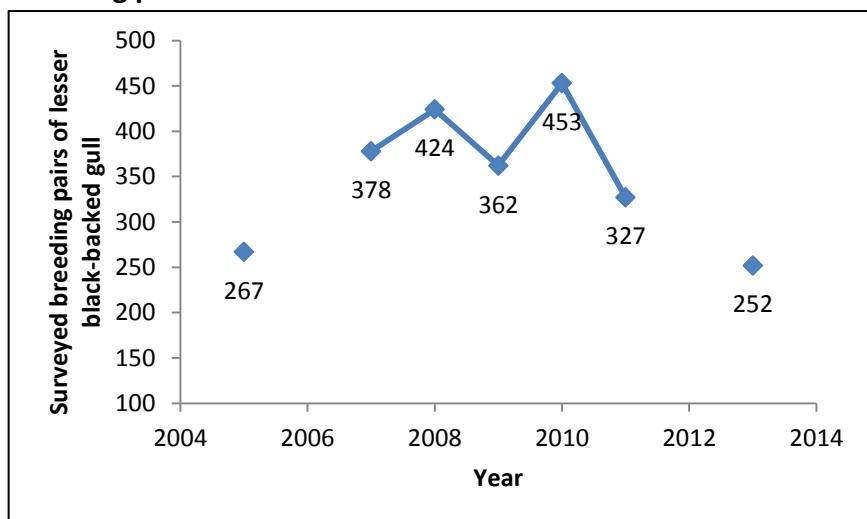
Main results Herring Gull and Lesser Black-backed Gull

Breeding pairs of Herring Gull Stora Karlsö 2005-2013*



* No survey in year 2006 and year 2012

Breeding pairs of Lesser Black-backed Gull Stora Karlsö 2005-2013*



* No survey in year 2006 and year 2012

Telemetry, Lesser Black-backed Gull:

Re-obs. of 5 GPS equipped birds from previous years. Also 5 new birds have been equipped with GPS in 2013. Data suggest that wintering areas of these Lesser Black-backed Gulls include Nile valley, Africa's great lakes, the North African Mediterranean coast and Cameroon. Data also suggest these gulls forage on farmland (Gotland) in spring, then turn marine in summer. In late summer they can be found foraging far in the southern Baltic Sea.

Misc:

- Total field days (all crew): 300+ days
- White (leucism) murre chick ringed!
- Murre ringed in Poland observed among breeding Stora Karlsö murre

St. Karlsö Murre Lab / Artificial breeding ledge for murre 2013:

- Now 19 breeding murre pairs
- New camera technique tested in 2013

Public outreach:

- **12/2:** Public lecture 'Sillgrisslan - Havets budbärare' – Stockholm City Library, broadcasted in SVT Kunskapskanalen
- **25/4:** Lecture for Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management about the research (special focus on by-catch issues)
- **Mid-may:** Hosting international research conference on seabird research
- **8/6:** Interview in Naturmorgon (Swedish Radio P1) 'Stora Karlsö med grisslor, trutar och blommande orkidéer'
- **14/7:** Interview in Nyhetsmorgon (Swedish TV4) 'Svenska pärlor: Sillgrisslan på Gotland'
- **September:** Article in Universitetsnytt 2013:4 (Stockholm) about the research
- **Also:** Continuous information about the research to the involved public during ringing
- **Also:** Continuous information about the research to the Stora Karlsö nature guides
- **Also:** Filmed documentation of the research, done by WWF and the Baltic Sea Centre

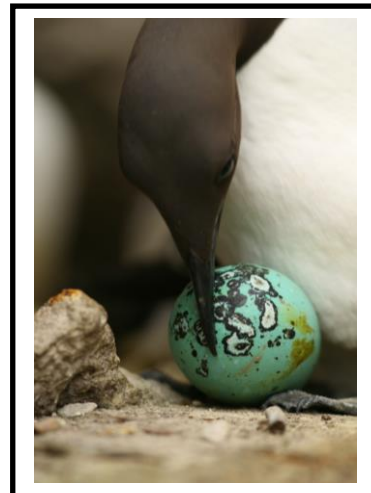


Photo: Aron Hejdström

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