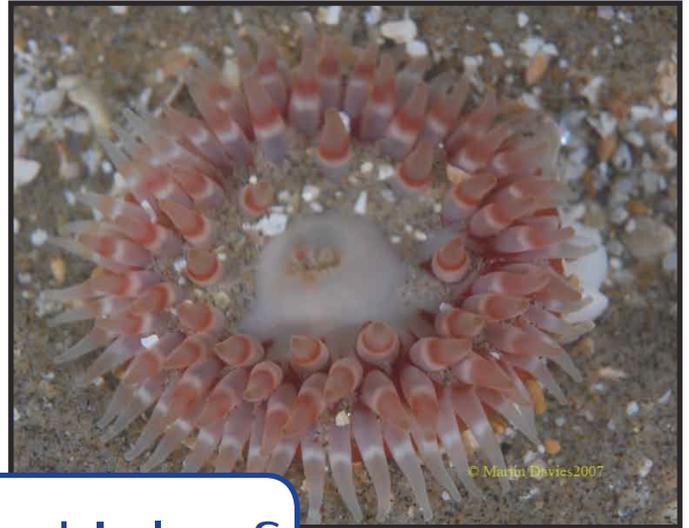


Dahlia anemone
by Martin Davies



Dahlia anemone
by Martin Davies

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust Seasearch Summary



Tompot blenny
by Rachel Boschen



Velvet swimming crabs
by Ceri Jones.



Spiral worm
by Martin Davies



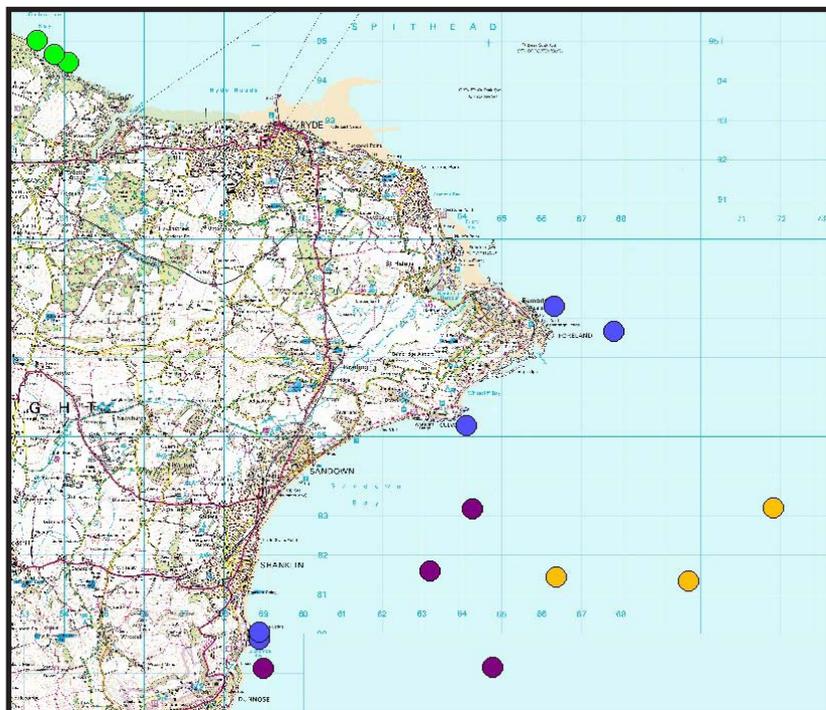
Eyelash worm
by Martin Davies

Seasearch Summary 2007

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

During 2007 Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust continued to deliver Seasearch dives throughout the Solent and around the Isle of Wight. Areas surveyed included **wrecks, reefs** and shallow **seagrass meadows**. Several Seasearch dives also took place in areas of **sand and gravel**, to survey the seabed prior to aggregate extraction taking place. The following summary highlights species observed by Seasearch divers.

GPS points of seasearch dives, Isle of Wight



- Sand and Gravel
- Wrecks
- Reefs
- Seagrass

● Sand and Gravel

Several dives took place on or near sand and gravel seabeds. The aggregates industry extracts sand and gravel for use in the construction industry, which has particular importance in the South East of England.

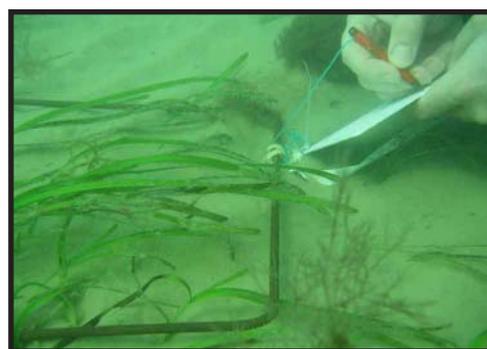
- Site 1** 50° 38.5951 N 000° 59.0605 W
- Site 2** 50° 37.6149 N 001° 00.8943 W
- Site 3** 50° 37.6886 N 001° 03.7182 W

Species found included the reef building ross worm, *Sabellaria spinulosa* which is found in sandy areas and is a priority BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) species. The abundance of this species was

unknown and was simply recorded as being present. The area also had a diverse range of hydroids, bryozoans and corals including species such as oaten pipe hydroid, *Tubularia indivisa*, dead mans finger, *Alcyonium digitatum*, and ross coral, *Pentapora foliacea*. Mobile species included the bloody henry starfish, *Henricia oculata*, squat lobster, *Galathea squamifera*, and common prawns, *Palaemon serratus*.

● Seagrass Beds

As part of the Solent Seagrass project, several seasearch dives took place on seagrass beds in the Solent. The area at Wotton Creek on the North of the Isle of Wight was investigated for abundance and distribution of seagrass *Zostera marina* and its associated species. Large amounts of *Zostera marina* were found at depths of 2 to 4 meters. Species found in the meadows included the eyelash worm, *Myxicola infundibulum*, cuttlefish and cuttlefish eggs, *Sepia sp.*, and several pipefish, *Syngnathidae sp.* A seagrass recording form is now available for divers and non divers to report any sightings of seagrass within Hampshire/Isle of Wight and this can be downloaded from our website www.hwt.org.uk. A 20 minute seagrass DVD film has also been produced which highlights the importance of seagrass and includes footage of many of the volunteers that participated on the seagrass courses and dives.



● Wrecks

HMS Boxer 50° 37.797 N 001° 06.416 W

HMS Boxer was a destroyer that sunk just two miles off the beach at Sandown Bay. This broken shipwreck lies at 18 meters on a sandy seabed. Attached to the wreckage were hydroids, sponges and anemones. Cuttlefish, *Sepia officinalis*, eggs were found in large numbers. Fish included schools of poor cod, *Trisopterus minutus*, and bib, *Trisopterus luscus*. A conger eel, *Conger conger*, was seen as were several large ballen wrasse, *Labrus bergylta*.



Dog whelk by Ceri Jones

● **Wreck - HMS P12** 50° 36.463 N 001° 05.104 W

The HMS P12 is cut in half with the bow and stern sections lying half a mile apart. The larger stern section sits upright on a shingle seabed at a depth of about 18 to 20 meters. The wreck was covered in both short and tall animal turf such as shredded carrot sponge, *Amphilectus (esperioopsis) fucorum*, crater sponge, *Hemimycale columella*, antenna hydroid, *Nemertesia antennina*, and dead mans fingers, *Alcyonium digitatum*. Mobile species included spiny spider crab, *Maja squinado*, edible crab, *Cancer pagurus*, and velvet swimming crab, *Necora puber*. An exciting find was the bloody henry starfish, *Henrica oculata*, which had previously not been recorded in the area on local Seasearch dives. Large amounts of fishing net were found tangled on the wreckage with small schools of bib, *Trisopterus luscus*, found swimming at the top of the wreck.

● **Wreck Camswain** 50° 38.635 N 01° 05.489 W

The camswain lies at 20 meters on the seabed. Parts of this British steamship stand 3-4m off the seabed, while most of the wreckage is spread over a very wide area of seabed. Sponges attached to the wreck include the sea orange, *Suberites ficus*, chimney sponge, *Polymastia penicillus (mamillaris)*, and goosebump sponge, *Dysidea fragilis*, along with anemonies and corals such as the Devonshire cup corals, *Caryophyllia smithii*. Crustaceans such as common lobster, *Homarus gammarus*, and spiny spider crab, *Maja squinado*, were found hidden in the wreckage and also a very large conger eel, *Conger conger*. The muddy sediment around the wreckage contained ross worm, *sabellaria spindosa*, spiral worm, *Bispira volutacornis*, and some slipper limpets, *Crepidula fornicata*. Occasionally, a candy-striped flat worm, *Prostheceraeus vittatus*, and crystal sea slug, *Janolus cristatus*, were spotted. Seasquirts such as the red seasquirt, *Ascidia mentula*, and leathery seasquirt, *Styela clava*, were found attached to the wreck.



Ascidia mentula by Rachel Boschen

● **Louis** 50° 36.491 N 01° 09.997 W

The wreck of the Louis lies at 16 meters on the seabed. The twin boilers are 4m off the seabed, and lead shot is often found scattered on the surrounding sand and gravel. Hidden in amongst the wreckage were velvet swimming crabs, *Necora puber*, and lots of whelks, *Buccinidae sp.* Crystal sea slugs, *Janolus cristatus*, and some football seasquirts, *Diazona violacea*, were found near the boilers. Fish seen include bib, *Trisopterus luscus*, and the leopard-spotted goby, *Thorogobius ephippiatus*.

Reefs

● **Bembridge ledges** 50° 41.399 N 01° 03.684 W

Bembridge ledges is a popular drift dive ranging from 8 to 10 meters with rocky reef and mixed ground of cobbles, pebbles and sand. Lots of mixed seaweeds were present with the occasional pipefish seen. The kelp parks consisted of *Laminaria sp.* with blue ray limpets, *Helicon pellucidum*, attached to the fronds. Japweed, *Saragassum muticum*, was also frequent. Several crustaceans were seen including velvet swimming crabs, *Necora puber*, and lobsters, *Homarus gammarus*.



Blue ray Limpets
by Ceri Jones

● **Culver cliff** 50° 39.47 N 001° 06.82 W



Painted top shell by Martin Davies

Culver Cliff has a rocky reef from 7 to 9 meters with mixed ground. Seaweeds such as red rags, *Dilsea carnosa*, and red fringe weed, *Calliblepharis ciliata*, cover the reef. Stalked jellyfish, *Haliclystus auricula*, were found attached to kelps, *Laminaria sp.* Several crustaceans were found including hermit crabs, *Pagurus bernhardus*, common prawns, *Palaemon serratus*, and common lobsters, *Homarus gammarus*. Molluscs included painted top shell, *Calliostoma zizphinum*, slipper limpets, *Crepidula fornicata*, and blue ray limpets, *Helcion pellucidum*. Two thornback rays, *Raja clavata*, were seen on the sand and gravel seabed.

● **Bembridge Hole** 50° 37.688 N 001° 03.718 W

The rocky reef started at 13 meters and was covered in mixed red seaweeds and animal turf. The seabed then descended to a maximum of 17 meters which was composed mostly of sand and gravel. Lots of fish were seen including tompot blenny, *Parablennius gattorugine*, sand gobies, *Pomatoschistus minutus*, juvenile bib shoals, *Trisopterus luscus*, and some large ballen wrasse, *Labrus bergylta*. Life found in the sediment included spiral worm, *Bispira voluticornis*, and sand mason worms, *Lanice conchilega*.

● **Yellow ledge** 50° 36.895 N 001° 10.059 W



Potato Crisp Bryozoan by Martin Davies

The rocky reef seabed started at 9 meters and was covered in mixed seaweeds and encrusting pink algae. Elephant hide sponge, *Pachymatisma johnstonia*, and shredded carrot sponge, *Amphilectus furcorum*, were frequently found. The gullies between the bedrock consisted of mixed ground with empty piddock shells, *Pholadidae sp*, in the bedrock. The reef descended to 11 meters with ross coral, *Pentapora foliacea*, scattered between the bedrock outcrops. Short animal turf was common throughout with some snakelock anemonies, *Anemonia viridis*, found attached to the bedrock. Fish, such as ballen wrasse, *Labrus bergylta*, corkwing wrasse, *Crenilabrus melops*, goldsinny, *Ctenolabrus rupestris*, dragonet, *Callionymus lyra*, and two spotted goby, *Gobiusculus flavescens*, were seen throughout the dive.

● **Reef off Dunnose** 50° 36.985 N 001° 10.059 W

The reef was at depths of between 5 and 8 meters with boulders cobbles, pebbles, sand and gravel present. Encrusting pink algae was common on the rocks and boulders with lots of mixed seaweeds such as red fringe weed, *Calliblepharis ciliata*, red comb weed, *Plocamium cartilagineum*, and pod weed, *Halidrys siliquosa*. Fish included tompot blennies, *Parablennius gattorugine*.

Seasearch Summary 2007

In 2007 three Seasearch courses took place within Hampshire, one observer course and two seagrass speciality courses, with a total of 37 participating students. A total of 14 sites were dived under the Seasearch programme, with additional data from 5 individual volunteer dives. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust would like to thank both the dive company. The Dive Connection, and the vessels Wightdiver and Wightwreck for all their assistance with the Seasearch dives. Also a thank you to all the volunteer divers who completed survey forms in 2007.



PHYLUM	Common name	No. of species recorded	PHYLUM	Common name	No. of species recorded
PORIFERA	Sponges	14	ECHINODERMATA	Starfish	1
CNIDARIA	Anemones, corals, hydroids, jellyfish	16	BRYOZOA	Bryozoans	10
ANNELIDA	Segmented worms	9	TUNICATA	Seasquirts	11
CRUSTACEA	Crabs, lobsters	15	PISCES	Fish	25
MOLLUSCA	Shells, seaslugs, cuttlefish	19	PLANTS	Algae and Seagrasses	20

Table of species recorded



Hampshire & Isle of Wight

