

Linney Head, Crow Rock and Stackpole Quay, South Pembrokeshire, Wales 3rd and 4th June 2006



Background

11 divers; 6 Seasearch Surveyors and 5 Observers took part in this survey. No Seasearch data has previously been collected from these sites which are known to be biologically diverse and are popular with local divers. Although the survey was arranged around neap tides the currents are still strong in the area and slack water is not for very long. The substrate at Linney and Crow Rock was mainly rocky reef, carboniferous limestone, and consisted of deep, vertical sided gullies with clean gravel at the base and evidence of scour. Characterising species include *Laminaria hyperborea*, *Pachymatisma johnstonia*, *Cliona celata*, and a number of *Homarus gammarus*.



Vicki Howe



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Site 1 - Crow Rock

On the west side of the rock there were large boulders and a rocky reef forming gullies with clean sand and gravel at base. The gullies were not aligned in any particular direction and were about 4m in depth. Kelp park dominated the more shallow parts of the reef with an abundance of mixed red algae, short and tall animal turf as the depth increased. Recorded species include *Polymastia penicillus*, *Actinothoe sphyrodeta*, *Henricia oculata* and *Raja clavata*. Small pieces of wreckage were present, mainly ammunition shells. Under the overhangs within the gullies a number of lobster, *Homarus gammarus* and edible crabs, *Cancer pagurus* were recorded. The occasional lesser spotted catshark, *Scyliorhinus canicula* was observed resting on the sediment.



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Summary

Approximately 10 more species were recorded in the South Pembrokeshire area compared to last year. In particular a number of Cnidaria including the tiny yellow cluster anemone, a variety of different hydroids, for example *Hydrallmania falcata* and the moon jellyfish, *Aurelia aurita*. Among the nudibranchs observed were *Janolus cristatus* and *Limacia clavigera*. One pair of divers were also fortunate to watch a pair of large Ballan wrasse performing an intricate mating ritual off Crow Rock.

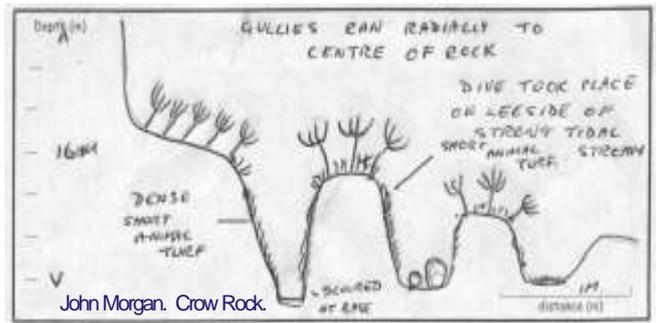


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| Phylum/Class | Common Name | Number of species | Common name of some species recorded | Species Name |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------|---|---|
| Porifera | Sponges | 12 | Golf ball sponge Purse sponge Goosebump sponge | <i>Tethya citrina</i> <i>Scypha ciliate</i> <i>Dysidea fragilis</i> |
| Cnidaria | Anemones, corals and hydroids | 16 | Yellow cluster anemone Snakelocks anemone Oaten pipe hydroid | <i>Parazoanthus axinellae</i> <i>Anemonia viridis</i> <i>Tubularia indivisa</i> |
| Crustacea | Crabs, lobsters and shrimp | 5 | Spiny spider crab Common prawn Velvet swimming crab | <i>Maja squinado</i> <i>Palaemon serratus</i> <i>Velvet swimming crab</i> |
| Mollusc | Snails, sea slugs and bivalves | 11 | Grey topshell Dead men's finger sea slug | <i>Gibbula cineraria</i> <i>Tritonia lineata</i> |
| Bryozoa | Sea mats | 5 | Finger bryozoan Spiral bryozoan | <i>Alcyonidium diaphanum</i> <i>Bugula</i> sp. |
| Phoronida | Small "worms" | 1 | Horse shoe worm | <i>Phoronis</i> sp. |
| Polychaeta | Bristleworms | 6 | Eyelash worm Sand mason worm | <i>Myxicola infundibulum</i> <i>Lanice conchilega</i> |
| Echinodermata | Starfish, sea urchins and sea cucumbers | 6 | Cushion star Common starfish Crevice sea cucumber | <i>Asterina gibbosa</i> <i>Asterias rubens</i> <i>Aslia lefevrei</i> |
| Tunicata | Sea squirts | 6 | Light bulb sea squirt Orange sea squirt White perforated sea squirt | <i>Clavelina lepadiformis</i> <i>Stolonica socialis</i> <i>Lissoclinum perforatum</i> |
| Pisces | Fish | 12 | Greater Pipefish Ballan wrasse Common Skate | <i>Syngnathus acus</i> <i>Labrus bergylla</i> <i>Raja batis</i> |
| Algae | Seaweeds | 16 | Sea beech Rainbow weed Sugar kelp | <i>Delesseria sanguinea</i> <i>Drachiella spectabilis</i> <i>Laminaria saccharina</i> |
| Total number of species | | 96 | | |

Site 2 - Linney Rock

Rocky reef with large, steep sided gullies (1-2m deep) characterised by kelp forest, *Laminaria hyperborea*, on the horizontal surfaces and short animal turf on the sides. Overhanging ledges with coarse sand and gravel at the base and many spider crabs, *Maja squinado* throughout the area. A number of fish species including *Pollachius pollachius* - pollack, *Centrolabrus exoletus* - rock cook and *Dicentrarchus labrax* - bass were noted.



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Thank you to the divers including Steve Bound, Sheena Davies, Leon Hopkins, Vicki Howe, John Morgan, Kevin Munn, Andrew Powell, Glyn Powell, Helen Spring and to Hywel Dyer (RIB). Boat Charter Steve Lewis. Report prepared by Vicki Howe.



Seasearch is a volunteer underwater survey project for recreational divers who wish to contribute to conserving the marine environment.

Site 3 - Stackpole Quay

Rocky reef dived to a maximum depth of 8m. Sandy at base of reef and inbetween boulders with kelp forest and mixed algae. A number of fish were recorded on this dive including *Pollachius pollachius*, *Syngnathus acus* greater pipefish, *Scyliorhinus canicula* spotted catshark and a common skate *Raja batis*. A very tiny cluster of *Parazoanthus axinellae*, yellow cluster anemone, was recorded on the underside of a small boulder. Anchor chains and mesh boxes containing spider crabs, *Maja squinado* were noted just out from the harbour.

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