

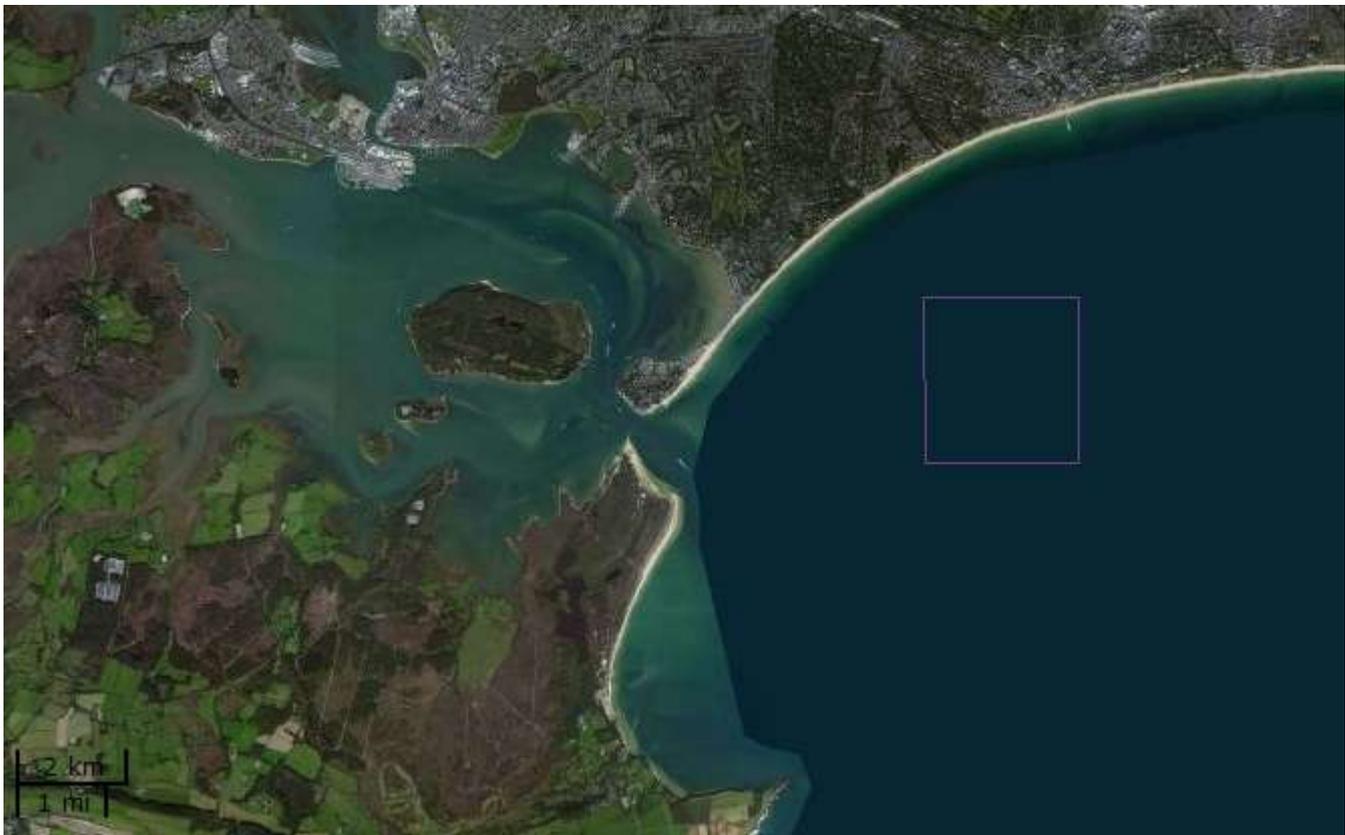
Poole Rocks MCZ

Seasearch Site Surveys 2014

This report summarises the results of surveys carried out during 2014 by Seasearch divers in the Poole Rocks MCZ (designated in November 2013). The aim of the surveys was to continue to add detail of the habitats and species found within the area. Particular attention was paid to the Habitat and Species FOCI identified in the Ecological Guidance on the designation of MCZs, and to surveying undived sites within the area.

Physical Features of the Area

The Poole Rocks MCZ site is an inshore site of ca. 4km² lying just to the east of the entrance to Poole Harbour (image below taken from jncc.defra.gov.uk/mczmap):



The site consists of several small patches of reef (exposed rugged sandstone bedrock surrounded by medium to large boulders) at depths of 6-11m, rising to a height of 1-5m above the surrounding seabed of mixed sediment with cobbles and *Crepidula* beds. Unsurprisingly in sediment-dominated Poole Bay, the site is overlaid with a layer of silt which creates circalittoral conditions at infralittoral depths. After the storms of winter 2013/2014 the silting was noticeably heavier than usual. There are many deep crevices in and around the boulders, providing cover for crustaceans and the large shoals of fish in the area, which have attracted human activities such as potting and angling.

Features of the Marine Life

The rocks are densely covered with short animal turf (dominated by encrusting and cushion sponges, bryozoans and hydroids) and foliose and filamentous red algae. Uncommon and/or protected species such as the native oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) and Couch's goby (*Gobius couchi*) are regularly reported within this area, albeit in small numbers, whilst solitary pink sea fans (*Eunicella verrucosa*) have been recorded at similar habitats in Poole Bay. Large shoals of fish (usually bib, *Trisopterus luscus*, and pollack, *Pollachius pollachius*) are observed in the vicinity of the reefs, and various wrasse species (including Baillon's wrasse, *Symphodus bailloni*, a Lusitanian species that is now established in Dorset) build nests amongst the rocks. Black bream (*Spondylisoma cantharus*) nests – areas of bedrock swept clean of the overlying silt - are frequently seen during the breeding season.



General habitat shots (top row, above left) showing the rugged ironstone reef environment covered with encrusting sponges, bryozoans/hydroid turf and red algae and attracting various wrasse species, and the surrounding soft muddy seabed (above right) with associated fauna of ascidians and *Crepidula fornicata*.



The storms and prolonged wet weather of winter 2013/2014 produced an even siltier environment than usual in Pool Bay, the effects of which can be seen above.



Native oyster (*Ostrea edulis*), recorded at low abundances on the Pool Bay reefs, is one of the species FOCI for the site.

Couch's goby (*Gobius couchii*) is also recorded in low abundances but is probably under-recorded due to its resemblance to the more common black goby and shy habits (lurking under the rock outcrop).



Baillon's wrasse (*Symptodus bailloni*, above left with nest) and rock cook (*Centrolabrus exoletus*, above right) are still

relatively unusual sightings in Poole Bay compared to other wrasse species, though the former are now recorded year-round and are no longer considered an exotic visitor.



Phoronids (horseshoe worms) can cover large patches of the reef; a closer look reveals their full beauty.



Cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*) are exploited as a commercial species in Dorset.



Here's another very small well-disguised species (*Scalpellum scalpellum*) that may be found lurking at the base of antenna hydroid (*Nemertesia antennina*) stalks along with the Doto nudibranchs...

Human Uses

Potting and intensive angling activities are attracted by the fish and crustacean populations; impacts in the form of lost fishing equipment (monofilament line, hooks, rope), ground tackle and other litter are often seen at this site.

Benefits of Protection

The circalittoral rocky reef habitat is characterised by high species diversity and the surrounding sediments of Poole Bay provide an important nursery ground. Local potting and angling activities would both indirectly benefit from an increased population in this area.

Acknowledgements

This report has been compiled by Charlotte Bolton of the Dorset Wildlife Trust based on Seasearch survey records made by Lin Baldock, Charlotte Bolton, Rik Girdler, James Lucey, Fiona Ravenscroft, Rob Spray, Nigel Topham and Richard Yorke, and observation records made by Clare Allen, Elspeth Berry, Mark Harrison, Mark Hodgson, Bryan Knight, Abbi Scott and Richard White. Photos as credited; copyright is retained by the photographers. Seasearch would like to thank the volunteer divers for their records and also Mike Markey of Poole Diving (www.poolediving.co.uk) for taking us to the sites.

Report published by Dorset Wildlife Trust (www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk) for Seasearch (www.seasearch.org.uk).

Technical Appendix

This Appendix contains more detailed information about the surveys undertaken and records made. It includes:

- dive details
- habitat sketches
- biotope list
- species list

The data has been entered into the Marine Recorder database and is available in Snapshot format on request.

MR Survey Name:

“2014 Seasearch Survey of Poole Rocks MCZ”

MR Survey Reference:

MRLRC01500000004

Designated features and management approach:

Broad Scale Habitats: Subtidal mixed sediments (maintain in favourable condition); moderate energy circalittoral rock (maintain)

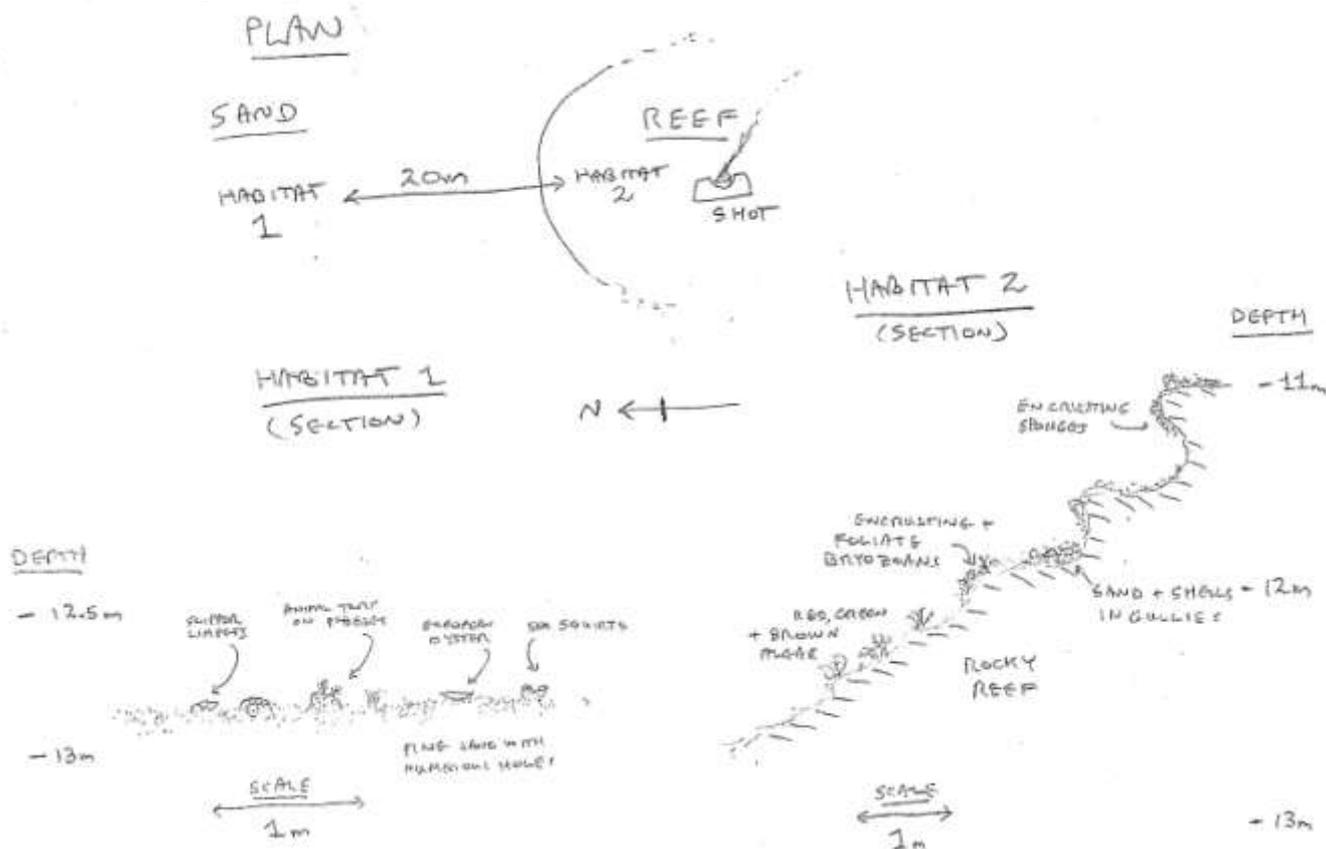
Species FOCI: Native oyster, *Ostrea edulis* (recover to favourable condition); Couch’s goby, *Gobius couchi* (recover)

Dive details

Date	Site/Position	Surveyor(s)	Form(s)
13/5/2014	SW Outer Poole Patch 50.6901 -1.8803	Lin Baldock, Sarah Curtin, James Lucey, Abbi Scott, Polly Whyte	DT14/017 DT14/030 DT14/101
21/6/2014	Wrasse Reef 50.6836 -1.8976	Lin Baldock, Charlotte Bolton, Rik Girdler, Bryan Knight, Nigel Topham, Richard Yorke	DT14/063 DT14/064
2/8/2014	Lobster Rock (east end) 50.6850 -1.8941	Clare Allen, Lin Baldock, Elspeth Berry, Charlotte Bolton, Rik Girdler, Mark Hodgson, Fiona Ravenscroft, Nigel Topham, Richard White, Richard Yorke	DT14/092 DT14/094 DT14/095 DT14/096 DT14/098 DT14/168
3/8/2014	Long Reef 50.6875 -1.8900	Lin Baldock, Elspeth Berry, Rik Girdler, Mark Hodgson, Kevin Jones, Fiona Ravenscroft, Nigel Topham, Richard White, Harvey Wilson, Richard Yorke	DT14/100 DT14/156 DT14/159 DT14/190



3. Long Reef (Nigel Topham; DT14/156)



Sublittoral Habitats/Biotopes recorded

Description	MNCR 04.05 Biotope Code†	Location*
Circalittoral mixed sediment	SS.SMx.CMx	1,3
<i>Crepidula fornicata</i> with ascidians and anemones on infralittoral coarse mixed sediment	SS.SMx.IMx.CreAsAn	2
Circalittoral muddy sand	SS.SSa.CMuSa	4
Mixed faunal turf communities	CR.HCR.XFa	1,2,3,4
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	CR.MCR	1
Dense foliose red seaweeds on silty moderately exposed infralittoral rock	IR.MIR.KR.XFoR	1,2

† The Marine Habitat Classification for Britain & Ireland (v04.05): jncc.defra.gov.uk/marinehabitatclassification

* Sites are labelled as follows: 1 = SW Outer Poole Patch; 2 = Wrasse Reef; 3 = Lobster Rock (east end); 4 = Long Reef

Species List

No. of unique species recorded (not all to species level) = 127

1. Porifera (sponges)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Amphilectus fucorum</i>	Shredded carrot sponge	
<i>Aplysilla rosea</i>		
<i>Cliona celata</i>	Boring sponge	
<i>Dysidea fragilis</i>	Goosebump sponge	
<i>Hemimycale columella</i>	Crater sponge	
<i>Hymeniacidon perlevis</i>		
<i>Oscarella</i> sp.		
<i>Pachymatisma johnstonia</i>	Elephant hide sponge	
<i>Polymastia boletiformis</i>	Yellow hedgehog sponge	
<i>Polymastia penicillus</i>	Chimney sponge	
Porifera indet. crusts	Encrusting sponges	
<i>Stelligera rigida</i>		
<i>Suberites ficus</i>	Sea orange	
<i>Tethya citrina</i>	Golf ball sponge	

2. Cnidaria (anemones, hydroids, corals)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Actinothoe sphyrodeta</i>	White-striped anemone	
<i>Adamsia carciniopados</i>	Cloak anemone	
<i>Alcyonium digitatum</i>	Dead man's fingers	
<i>Anemonia viridis</i>	Snakelocks anemone	
<i>Cereus pedunculatus</i>	Daisy anemone	
<i>Clytia</i> sp.		
<i>Halecium halecinum</i>	Herring-bone hydroid	
Hydrozoa (turf)	Hydroid turf	
<i>Isozoanthus sulcatus</i>	Ginger tiny or peppercorn anemone	
<i>Laomedea</i> sp.		
<i>Nemertesia antennina</i>	Antenna hydroid	
<i>Sarcodictyon</i> sp.		
<i>Sarcodictyon roseum</i>		
<i>Sertularella</i> sp.		
<i>Sertularia</i> sp.		

3. Annelida (segmented worms)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Bispira volutacornis</i>	Double spiral worm	
<i>Lanice conchilega</i>	Sand mason worm	
Polychaeta (tubes)		
<i>Sabella pavonina</i>	Peacock, feather duster worm	
Sabellidae		
<i>Spirobranchus</i>	Keel worm (used to be <i>Pomatoceros</i>)	
Terebellidae		

4. Crustacea (crabs, lobsters, barnacles)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Ampelisca</i> sp. (tubes)		
<i>Cancer pagurus</i>	Edible, brown crab	
Cirripedia	Barnacles	

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Galathea strigosa</i>	Blue striped squat lobster	
<i>Homarus gammarus</i>	European lobster	
<i>Macropodia</i> sp.	Long-legged spider crab	
<i>Maja squinado</i>	Spiny spider crab	
<i>Necora puber</i>	Velvet swimming crab	
Paguridae	Hermit crabs	
<i>Pagurus bernhardus</i>	Common hermit crab	
<i>Pagurus cuanensis</i>		
<i>Pagurus prideaux</i>		
<i>Scalpellum scalpellum</i>	Stalked barnacle	

5. Platyhelminthes (flat worms)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Prostheceraeus vittatus</i>	Candy striped flat worm	

6. Mollusca (snails, bivalves, nudibranchs)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Buccinum undatum</i>	Edible whelk, buckie	
<i>Calliostoma zizyphinum</i>	Painted topshell	
<i>Crepidula fornicata</i>	Slipper limpet	Non-native species
<i>Doto</i> sp. (eggs)		
<i>Nassarius reticulatus</i> (<i>Hinia reticulata</i>)	Netted dog whelk	
Nudibranchia (white)		
<i>Ocenebra erinaceus</i>	Oyster drill, tingle, sting winkle	
<i>Ostrea edulis</i>	Native/European oyster	OSPAR / Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) / FOCI species
<i>Pecten maximus</i>	King scallop	
<i>Polycera</i> sp.		
<i>Trivia arctica</i>	Northern cowrie	

7. Phoronida (horseshoe worms)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Phoronis</i> sp.	Horseshoe worm	

8. Bryozoa (sea mats)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
Bryozoa indet. crusts	Encrusting bryozoans	
<i>Bugula plumosa</i>	Spiral bryozoan	
<i>Bugula turbinata</i>		
<i>Chartella papyracea</i>		
<i>Crisia</i> sp.	White-clawed sea mosses	
<i>Disporella hispida</i>		
<i>Electra pilosa</i>	Frosty sea mat	
<i>Flustra foliacea</i>	Hornwrack	Indicator species
<i>Parasmittina trispinosa</i>		

9. Echinodermata (starfish, sea cucumbers)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Pawsonia saxicola</i>	Sea gherkin	
<i>Thyone</i> sp.		

10. Tunicata (sea squirts)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Aplidium punctum</i>	Club-head sea squirt	
<i>Ascidia conchilega</i>		
<i>Ascidia mentula</i>	Red sea squirt	
<i>Ascidiella aspersa</i>	Fluted sea squirt	
<i>Ascidiella scabra</i>		
<i>Ciona intestinalis</i>	Yellow-rimmed sea squirt	
<i>Clavelina lepadiformis</i>	Lightbulb sea squirt	
<i>Dendrodoa grossularia</i>	Gooseberry sea squirt	
Didemnidae		
<i>Diplosoma spongiforme</i>		
<i>Molgula</i> sp.		
<i>Perophora listeri</i>		
<i>Polycarpa scuba</i>	Teapot sea squirt	
<i>Styela clava</i>	Leathery sea squirt	Non-native species

11. Pisces (fish)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Callionymus</i> sp.	Dragonet	
<i>Centrolabrus exoletus</i>	Rock cook	
<i>Ctenolabrus rupestris</i>	Goldsinny	
<i>Gobius couchi</i>	Couch's goby	FOCI species
<i>Gobius niger</i>	Black goby	
<i>Labrus bergylta</i>	Ballan wrasse	
<i>Labrus mixtus</i>	Cuckoo wrasse	
<i>Parablennius gattorugine</i>	Tompot blenny	
<i>Pollachius pollachius</i>	Pollack	
<i>Pomatoschistus</i> spp.	Sand gobies	
<i>Pomatoschistus minutus</i>	Common goby	
<i>Pomatoschistus pictus</i>	Painted goby	
<i>Raja microocellata</i> (eggs)	Small-eyed ray	
<i>Scyliorhinus canicula</i>	(Common, lesser spotted) dogfish, sandy dog, small spotted cat shark, rough hound	
<i>Spondyliosoma cantharus</i>	Black bream	
<i>Symphodus bailloni</i>	Baillon's wrasse	Lusitanian species, becoming more common in English Channel
<i>Symphodus melops</i>	Corkwing wrasse	
<i>Taurulus bubalis</i>	Short spined scorpion fish	
<i>Thorogobius ephippiatus</i>	Leopard spotted goby	
<i>Trisopterus luscus</i>	Bib, pout, pouting	
<i>Trisopterus minutus</i>	Poor cod	

12. Algae (seaweeds)

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Dictyopteris polypodioides</i>	Netted wing weed	
<i>Taonia atomaria</i>	Dotted feather weed	
<i>Cladophora</i> sp.	Green branched weeds	
<i>Derbesia</i> sp.	Silky thread weed	
<i>Ulva lactuca</i>	Sea lettuce	
Rhodophyta	Red algae	

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Aglaothamnion tenuissimum</i>		
<i>Brongniartella byssoides</i>	Brongniarts's thread weed	
<i>Calliblepharis ciliata</i>	Beautiful eyelash, red fringed weed	
<i>Chondria dasyphylla</i>	Diamond cartilage weed	
Corallinaceae (crusts)	Coralline algae	
<i>Delessaria sanguinea</i>	Sea beech	
<i>Griffithsia corallinoides</i>	Mrs Griffith's coral weed	
<i>Hypoglossum hypoglossoides</i>	Under tongue weed	
<i>Phyllophora crispa</i>	Sandy leaf bearer	
<i>Polyides rotundus</i>	Discoid fork weed	
<i>Rhodymenia ardissoni</i>	Spiky rose weed	
<i>Rhodymenia holmesii</i>	Holmes's rose weed	

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Seasearch is a partnership between the Marine Conservation Society (MCS), The Wildlife Trusts, statutory nature conservation bodies and others, co-ordinated nationally by MCS and co-ordinated and delivered locally in England by Wildlife Trust and MCS local co-ordinators. For more information on Seasearch and to see all of the partners involved nationally, please visit www.seasearch.org.uk or email info@seasearch.org.uk

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