

Aerial Photography © Teignbridge District Council. Data/image courtesy of the Southwest Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme. The data sets are supplied under the Open Government Licence. The bathymetric data were derived using data from DORIS (DORset Integrated Seabed survey), a project involving Dorset Wildlife Trust, The Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Channel Coastal Observatory and the Royal Navy, with major funding from Viridor Credits Environmental Company. Other partners include Natural England, Dorset Strategic Partnership, the National Oceanography Centre and University of Southampton. Not to be used for navigation.

Dorset Seasearch Dive Report - Christchurch Ledge & Ballard Drift 13 August 2016

A stiff breeze took us over to Christchurch Ledge from Swanage on Swanage Charter's dive boat Viper in time for slack water. Five dive pairs explored various parts of the east facing scarp slope of the Ledge at a site some 4.5km south east of Hengistbury Head. Depths ranged from 10m bsl on top of the Ledge to 18m bsl at the foot of the slope. The second dive was a 900m north easterly drift in the shelter of Ballard Down just north of Swanage. A diverse range of seabed types were mapped, some of the rocky ledges dominated by colourful sea squirts.



Christchurch Ledge
Mobile sand, gravel and cobbles at the base of the scarp slope at 18m bsl.



Christchurch Ledge
Boulders dominated by Hornwrack (*Flustra foliacea*) at the bottom of the Ledge.



Christchurch Ledge
Shoals of small pout swarm over the reef colonised by scour tolerant fauna of sponges, sea squirts and anemones. Red seaweeds were a feature towards the top of the reef.



© Lin Baldock, 2016

Christchurch Ledge
Rugged boulders and bedrock towards the top of the reef.



© Lin Baldock, 2016

Ballard Drift



© Mike Markey, 2016



© Mike Markey, 2016



© Mike Markey, 2016

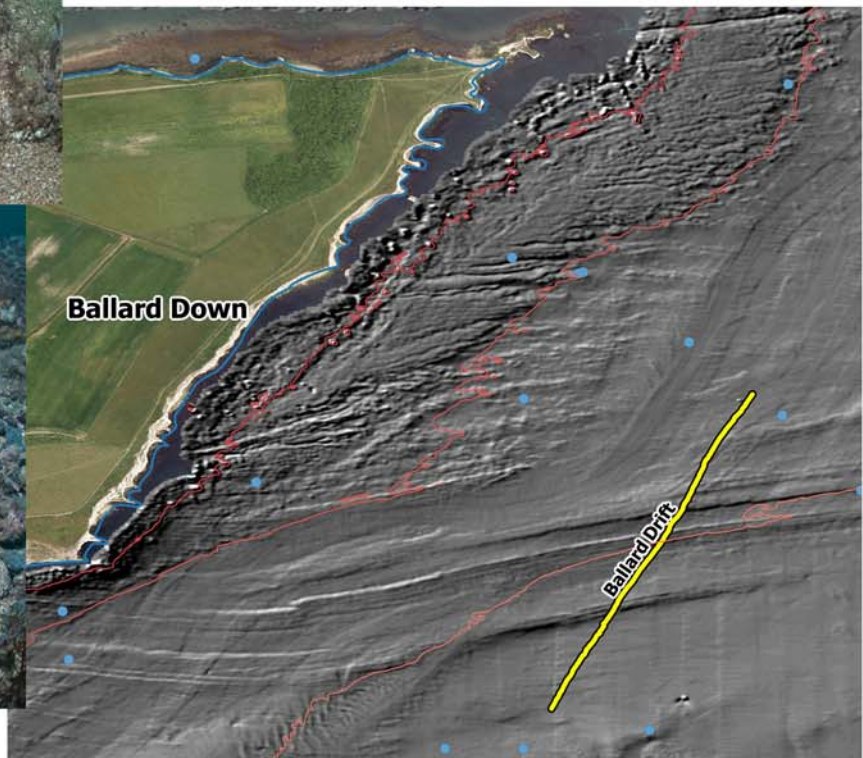


© Lin Baldock, 2016

text



© Lin Baldock, 2016



Ballard Down

Ballard Drift



Ballard Drift
Bedrock encrusted with Ross worm tubes (*Sabellaria spinulosa*), sea squirts and sponges.



Ballard Drift
A spider crab (*Maja brachydactyla*) sitting on a mat of soft, muddy amphipod tubes built by tiny *Ampelisca* species. These mats can swamp mixed sediments, cobbles and low bedrock reef.



Ballard Drift
Red Gurnard (*Aspitrigla cuculus*)

Right: an individual *Ampelisca* (length ~4mm)

Below: a section through an amphipod mat showing the thousands of tubes of which it is made.



© Lin Baldock, 2009



© Lin Baldock, 2015

First Dive details:

Site name: Christchurch Ledge East

Position: 50° 41.31'N 001° 41.46'W (dive boat GPS, WGS84)

Overview: Rugged reef of pitted bedrock and boulders coming up to about 10m from a more level seabed of mobile, medium sand with gravel at 18m. Reef with varied scour tolerant fauna, mixed algae becoming prominent at about 12m.

Interesting/unusual species: none noted.

Human impact: angling and potting in the vicinity.

Second Dive details:

Site name: Ballard Down Drift

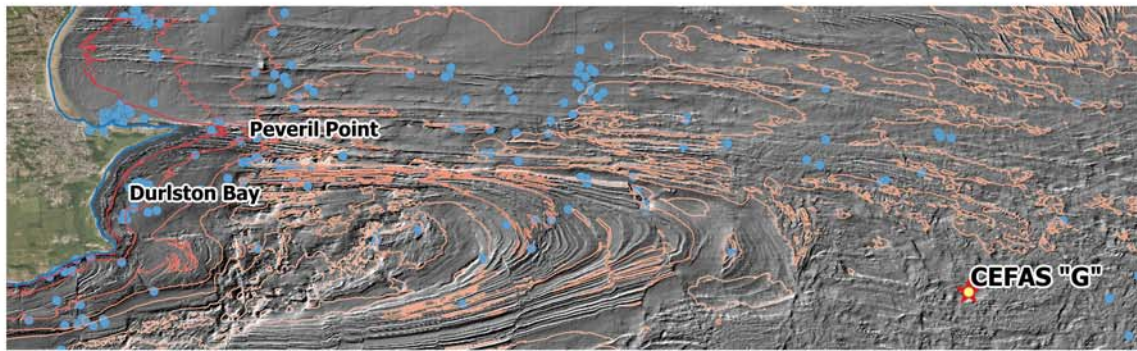
Position: **Start:** 50° 37.65'N 001° 55.36'W **End:** 50° 38.03'N 001° 55.09'W (WGS84, diver towed GPS)

Overview: A north east drift over a variety of seabed habitats: mixed muddy sediment with dead maerl, gravel with abundant *Crepidula*, cobbles and small boulders with faunal turf dominated by sea squirts, low bedrock ledges with faunal turf and algae. *Sabellaria spinulosa* crusts occurred at the shallowest point, and there was a small area of *Ampelisca* mat.

Interesting/unusual species: Red Gurnard (*Aspitrigla cuculus*), large numbers of the non-native Leathery sea squirt (*Styela clava*). Large colonies of Potato Crisp bryozoan (*Pentapora foliacea*).

Human impact: angling and potting in the vicinity.

Thanks to: Martin Jones (skipper, Viper) the organiser Charlotte Bolton and the divers: Lin Baldock, Emma Collins, Des Curran, Mark Harrison, Simon Loveday, Mike Markey, Jess Mead, Josie Pegg, Fiona Ravenscroft, Nigel Topham.



Aerial Photography © Teignbridge District Council. Data/image courtesy of the Southwest Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme. The data sets are supplied under the Open Government Licence. The bathymetric data were derived using data from DORIS (DORset Integrated Seabed survey), a project involving Dorset Wildlife Trust, The Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Channel Coastal Observatory and the Royal Navy, with major funding from Viridor Credits Environmental Company. Other partners include Natural England, Dorset Strategic Partnership, the National Oceanography Centre and University of Southampton. Not to be used for navigation.

Dorset Seasearch Dive Report - CEFAS "G" & Durlston Bay 14 August 2016

A calm sunny morning and an early slack water at CEFAS "G" 6.5km east south east of Swanage gave stunning underwater visibility at this site with huge boulders on bedrock scoured by mobile coarse sand at 28m. This dive has provided useful information by ground truthing a "spotty" seabed type showing up on the DORIS plot in an area of about 9km² giving similar results to Seasearch dives a bit further east in 2005.

Our second dive was in Durlston Bay with mobile sand at 10m coming up to 8m bsl on large boulders with dense seaweed growth.



© Mike Markey, 2016



© Lin Baldock, 2016

CEFAS "G"

Large colonies of Elephant hide sponge (*Pachymatisma johnstonia*) were a very prominent feature at this site.



© Mike Markey, 2016

Bloody Henry starfish (*Henricia* sp) on a sea squirt turf (*Molgula* spp).



© Mike Markey, 2016

The nationally scarce sponge *Adrues fascicularis* and three species of *Polymastia* on sand scoured bedrock

Black Tar sponge (*Dercitus bucklandi*)
Carrot sponge (*Amphilectus fucorum*)
surrounded by bryozoan and tunicate turf.





© Lin Baldock, 2016

CEFAS "G"
A dense tunicate turf, largely *Molgula* sp covered the upward facing surfaces.



© Lin Baldock, 2016

CEFAS "G"
Sponge crusts on vertical and overhanging rock surfaces

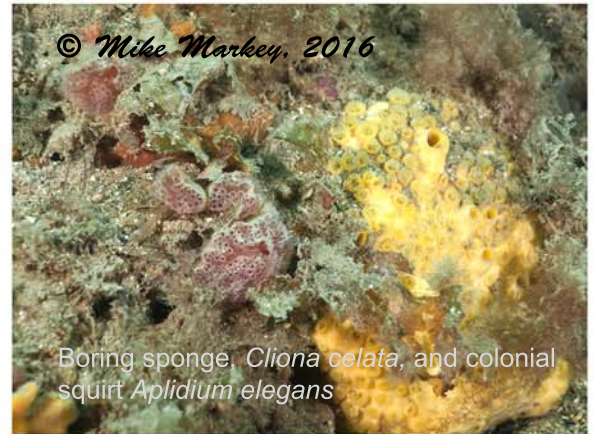
Durlston Bay



Waves of mobile, muddy sand
© Lin Baldock, 2016



© Mike Markey, 2016



© Mike Markey, 2016

Boring sponge, *Cliona celata*, and colonial squirt *Aplidium elegans*

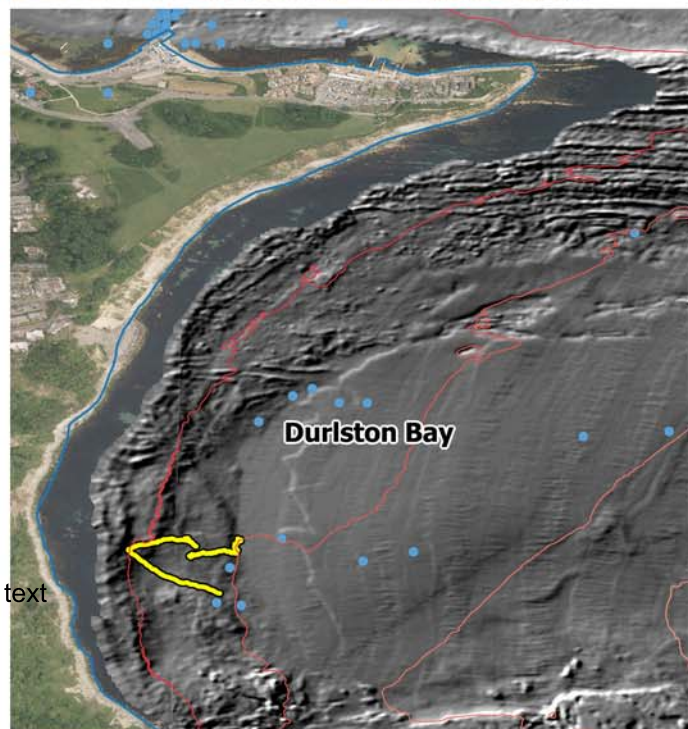


Sea hares, *Aplysia punctata*

© Mike Markey, 2016



Mixed seaweeds on partly buried boulders
© Lin Baldock, 2016



Durlston Bay

text



© Lin Baldock, 2016



© Lin Baldock, 2016



© Lin Baldock, 2016

Boulders with mixed seaweeds surrounded by coarse, mobile sand indicating a site which will be well scoured in rough weather.



© Mike Markey, 2016

First Dive details:

Site name: CEFAS "G"

Position: 50° 35.43'N 001° 51.71'W (dive boat GPS, WGS84)

Overview: Huge boulders and bedrock surrounded by very mobile coarse sand, gravel and pebbles. Prominent fauna large *Pachymatisma johnstonia*. Sponge crusts common and a thick turf of tunicates mostly *Molgula*.

Interesting/unusual species: nationally scarce sponge *Adreus fascicularis*.

Human impact: potting in the vicinity.

Second Dive details:

Site name: Durlston Bay

Position: 50° 35.91'N 001° 57.04'W (mid-point towed GPS, WGS84)

Overview: Waves of coarse, muddy sand with adjacent boulders colonised thickly by algae. Inshore large boulders with coarse sand between supporting a dense growth of mixed algae on upward facing surfaces and animal turf on verticals and overhangs.

Interesting/unusual species: none noted.

Human impact: potting in the vicinity.

Thanks to: Bryan Jones (skipper, Mary Jo) the organiser Charlotte Bolton and the divers: Lin Baldock, Des Curran, Mark Harrison, Simon Loveday, Mike Markey, Roger Parrett, Josie Pegg, Fiona Ravenscroft, Nigel Topham, Richard White.



© Lin Baldock, 2016