

Skerries Bank and surrounds MCZ Seasearch Surveys 2014

Report by Chris Webb

Surveys were carried out by Devon Seasearch on April 12-13th and July 26th (targeting around Start Point) and on June 22nd and July 26-27th (targeting around Prawle Point). The seven sites were chosen to fill in gaps in previous Seasearch surveys conducted from 2006 to 2013 and are shown in the table below.

Skerries Bank and surrounds MCZ Survey Positions and Records						
Site Name/Location	Date	Latitude (degrees, decimal minutes)	Longitude (degrees, decimal minutes)	Observation Forms	Survey Forms	Photographs Submitted
Start Point Race Southern Reef	12.04.14	50 12.904	03 38.229W	2	1	
Start Point Race Northeastern Reef	12.04.14	50 13.541	03 38.085W		2	
Eight Metre Spike	13.04.14	50 12.998	03 38.246W	1	1	
Prawle Gardens	22.06.14	50 11.756	03 43.300W		2	3
Cherrick Rocks	26.07.14	50 12.985	03 38.473W		3	
Reliance Gulleys	27.07.14	50 12.209	03 44.167W		2	1
Lannacombe Wall	27.07.14	50 12.669	03 40.639W		3	1

Habitats Recorded:

1. Designated Broad-scale habitats

Infralittoral rock was surveyed at 3 sites (Eight Metre Spike, Cherrick Rocks and Lannacombe Wall) with **high or moderate energy kelp biotopes** recorded.

Moderate energy circalittoral rock was surveyed at the deeper (21-28 m BCD) sites of Prawle Gardens (photographs below) and the Start Point Race Southern Reef where a feather star and dahlia anemone biotope (CR.MCR.EcCr.UrtScr) occurred at both sites.



Subtidal coarse sediment was surveyed at 5 sites (Start Point Race Northeastern Reef, Prawle Gardens, Cherrick Rocks, Reliance Gulleys and Lannacombe Wall).

Subtidal sand was present at the Lannacombe Wall site.

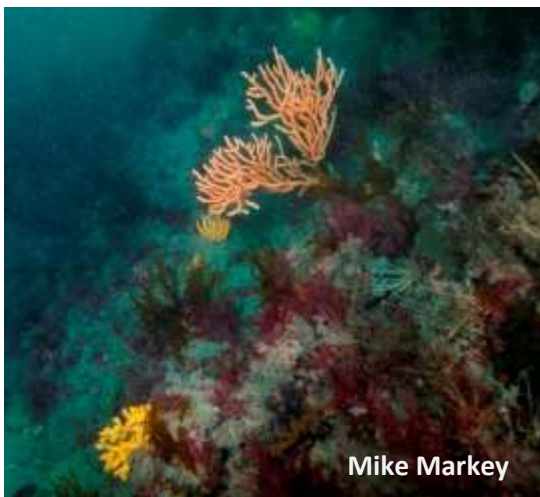
2. Additional Broad-scale Habitats

High energy circalittoral rock habitat was found at six of the seven circalittoral rock sites surveyed reflecting the moderately strong tidal streams present in this area. Shallower rock (10-20 m BCD) was surveyed at 5 sites (Start Point Race Northeastern Reef, Eight Metre Spike, Cherrick Rocks, Reliance Gulleys and Lannacombe Wall) with various biotopes of the high energy biotope complex CR.HCR.XFa (mainly mixed faunal turf communities) present. Deeper at Prawle Gardens, the mixed faunal turf communities (CR.HCR.XFa) also occurred plus the tide-swept prominent bedrock with oaten pipe hydroids *Tubularia indivisa* biotope (CR.HCR.FaT).

Species Recorded:

1. Designated Species FOCI

The pink sea fan *Eunicella verrucosa* was found at Start Point Race Southern Reef, Reliance Gulleys (left photograph below) and Lannacombe Wall (right photograph below, showing juveniles present).



2. Additional Rare, Scarce or Unusual Species

The scarce (as listed in the JNCC Rare/Scarce Species List) sponge *Axinella damicornis* was found at Cherrick Rocks. The common sunstar *Crossaster papposus* (shown below) was found at Prawle Gardens and is unusual this far south.



Survey Data

The following table gives details about the records produced:

Summary of Priority Habitats and Species Recorded			Number of records from Survey forms from these sites							Photographs Submitted
Designated Broad-scale Habitat	Biotope Complex/ Biotope		Start Point Race Southern Reef	Start Point Race Northeastern Reef	Eight Metre Spike	Prawle Gardens	Cherrick Rocks	Reliance Gulleys	Lamacombe Wall	
BSH	Subtidal coarse sediment	SS.SCS.CCS		2		2	3	2	2	
BSH	Subtidal sand	SS.SSa.CFiSa							1	
BSH	Moderate energy circalittoral rock	CR.MCR.EcCr.UrtScr	1			1				2
BSH	Moderate energy infralittoral rock	IR.MIR.KR.Lhyp			1				1	
BSH	High energy infralittoral rock	IR.HIR.KFaR.LhypR					2			
Additional Broad-scale Habitat										
BSH	High energy circalittoral rock	CR.HCR.FaT				2				
		CR.HCR.XFa		3	1	1	4	4	2	
Designated Species FOCI			Number of Survey/Observation Form records from these sites							
SOCI	Pink sea fan <i>Eunicella verrucosa</i>		2					1	2	2

Data validated by Chris Webb and Chris Wood.

Data entered into Marine Recorder by Sally Sharrock: Survey Reference MRMCS01500000066.

Data verified by Chris Wood.

Survey forms from Rob Adams, Lin Baldock, Andrew Grant, Sally Sharrock, Rod Sterland, Chris Webb and Chris Wood. Observation forms from Fiona Hampton-Matthews, Simon Hampton-Matthews and Will Maclennon.

Boat skippering by Danny Daniels, Laurie Fraenkel and Tony Hoile.