

Seasearch Training 2016

A Seasearch Observer course was held in April and led by Trudy Russell and Matt Slater. A total of 5 divers were trained. A programme of dives was provided for local volunteers through the summer and a large number of surveys were also carried out by surveyors from outside the county.

Number of Seasearch forms:	36
Number of divers/recorders:	43
Number of species recorded:	565
Number of species records:	4547
Number of biotopes recorded:	46
Number of Biotope records:	269

It has been another great year for Seasearch diving in Cornwall. A highlight for me has been working with underwater photographer Thomas Daguerre on a series of films commissioned by Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts all of which were filmed in Cornish waters and rockpools. We may not get spoilt with crystal clear viz that often but we are always spoilt for marine life especially if you have a good light on your camera and you start learning about seaweeds and squidgy small things!



Matt Slater, Marine Awareness Officer, Cornwall Wildlife Trust



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Seasearch Summary	
Group	Number of Species
alga	90
mollusc	84
Cnidarian	82
sponge	66
bony fish	50
crustacean	36
bryozoan	35
tunicate	34
chromist	32
annelid	22
echinoderm	22
cartilaginous fish	4
ribbon worm	3
flatworm	1
flowering plant	1
fungus	1
horseshoe worm	1
marine mammal	1



Fighting hermits Pagurus prideaux - Matt Slater



Cornwall Seasearch Surveys - Summary Report 2016



Tiny John Dory at Crossroads, Fal estuary, Matt Slater



Trudy Russell photo Matt Slater



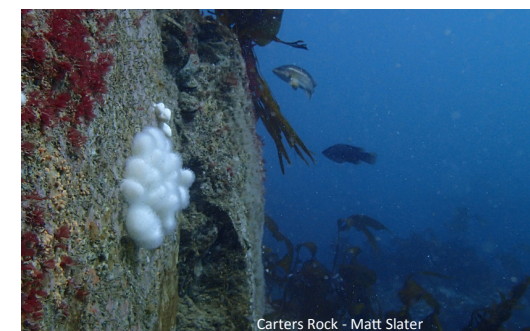
Tom at work—Carters Rock photo Matt Slater



sea hare by Tom Dagurre



Blue striped squat lobster Tom Dagurre



Carters Rock - Matt Slater

These Survey dives were conducted as part of the national Seasearch Programme. Many volunteers took part in these surveys during 2016 and we would like to thank all involved. Seasearch is a volunteer underwater survey project for recreational divers to actively contribute to the conservation of the marine environment. For details of Seasearch visit www.seasearch.org.uk. For details of Seasearch in Cornwall visit www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/seasearch



Scillies dive survey

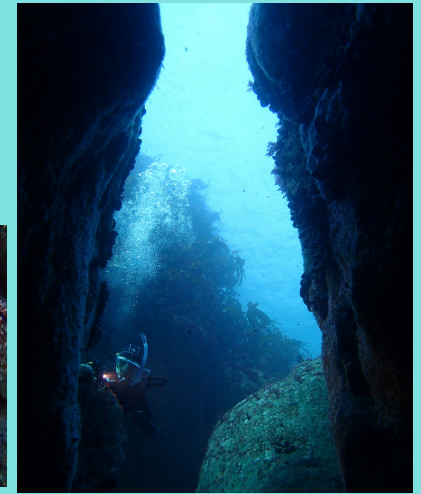
Kate lock and friends did a week trip to the Scillies in September 2016. 10 survey forms plus lots of photos were taken – will feature in BSAC dive magazine. Gravel samples were taken by Jon Chamberlain and sent to Conchological Society for full species list analysis



A nudibranch *Thordisa azmanii* was photographed and collected by Bernard Picton. Bernard is still to confirm record from the specimen but it may be a new record for the UK. Glen King saw a boar fish.

Holywell Rocks

Dive of the year took place at Holywell Bay's Carters Rocks where we were treated to stunning 20m visibility and enjoyed exploring high energy rocky gullies and reefs which extend a long way to the west of the rocks.

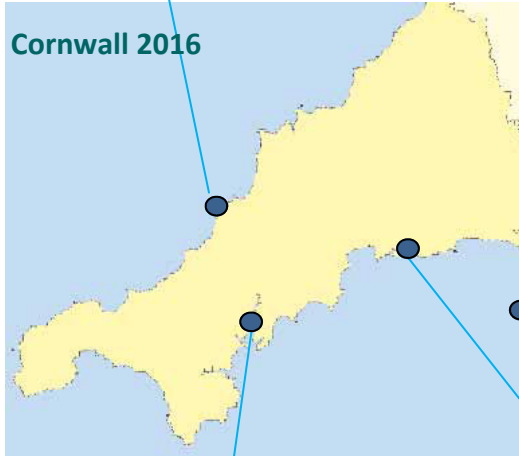


Crawfish sighted

This year we have had several crawfish sightings, and anecdotally we are hearing about more than ever before, it seems that this species is making a comeback. We are urging dive clubs and schools to report sightings direct to us as we hope that this species is here to stay and won't get over exploited as it was in the 1970's and 80's.



Cornwall 2016



Scale eyed wrasse

Devon seasearcher Mike Markey logged a very rare record when he photographed a Scale eyed wrasse *Acantholabrus palloni* at Hand Deeps off South East Cornwall, it was 20cm long making it much larger than a goldsinney wrasse. This species has only been recorded a handful of times in UK waters and we urge divers to keep a look out for it!

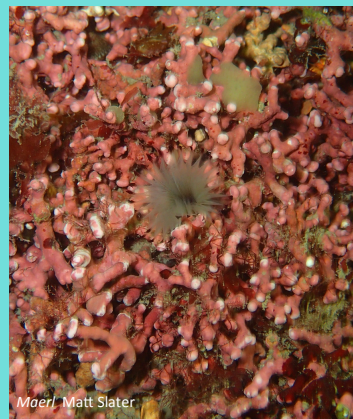


Monitoring Maerl



National Seasearch coordinator Chris Wood led two days of Seasearch surveying exploring the maerl beds of the Fal estuary on both the St Mawes bank where the healthiest maerl bed in the UK was surveyed and on the West side of the harbour where plans exist to carry out a major dredge to allow larger ships access to the docks. The surveys showed the importance of

this area with exceptionally high biodiversity and productivity and numerous rarely recorded species.



Shark buzzes divers at Talland Bay

Seasearch divers carrying out a shore dive at the beautiful Talland Bay near Looe were treated to an exceptionally rare sight of a fleeting glimpse of a 2m long shark as it swam overhead amongst thick shoals of whitebait and mackerel. Although unidentified it was most likely either a porbeagle or a blue shark. Not all the divers actually saw the shark, Daryl



Thorpe was looking at some seaweed at the time!