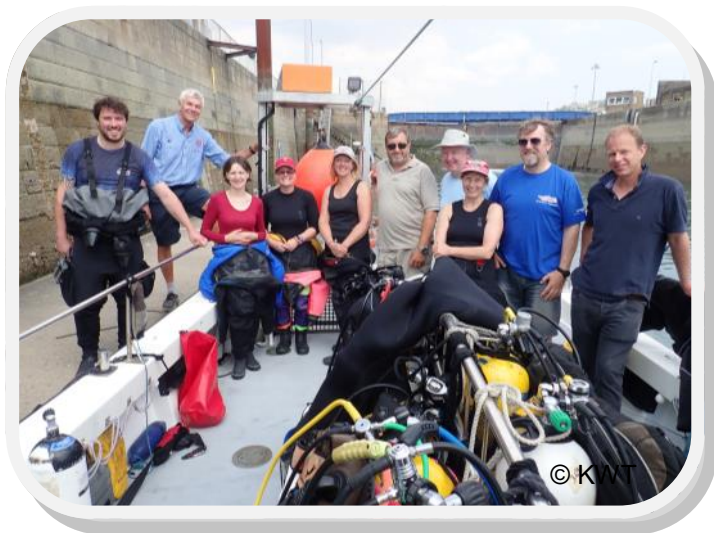




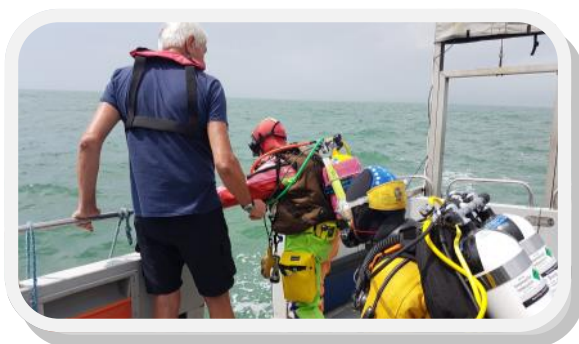
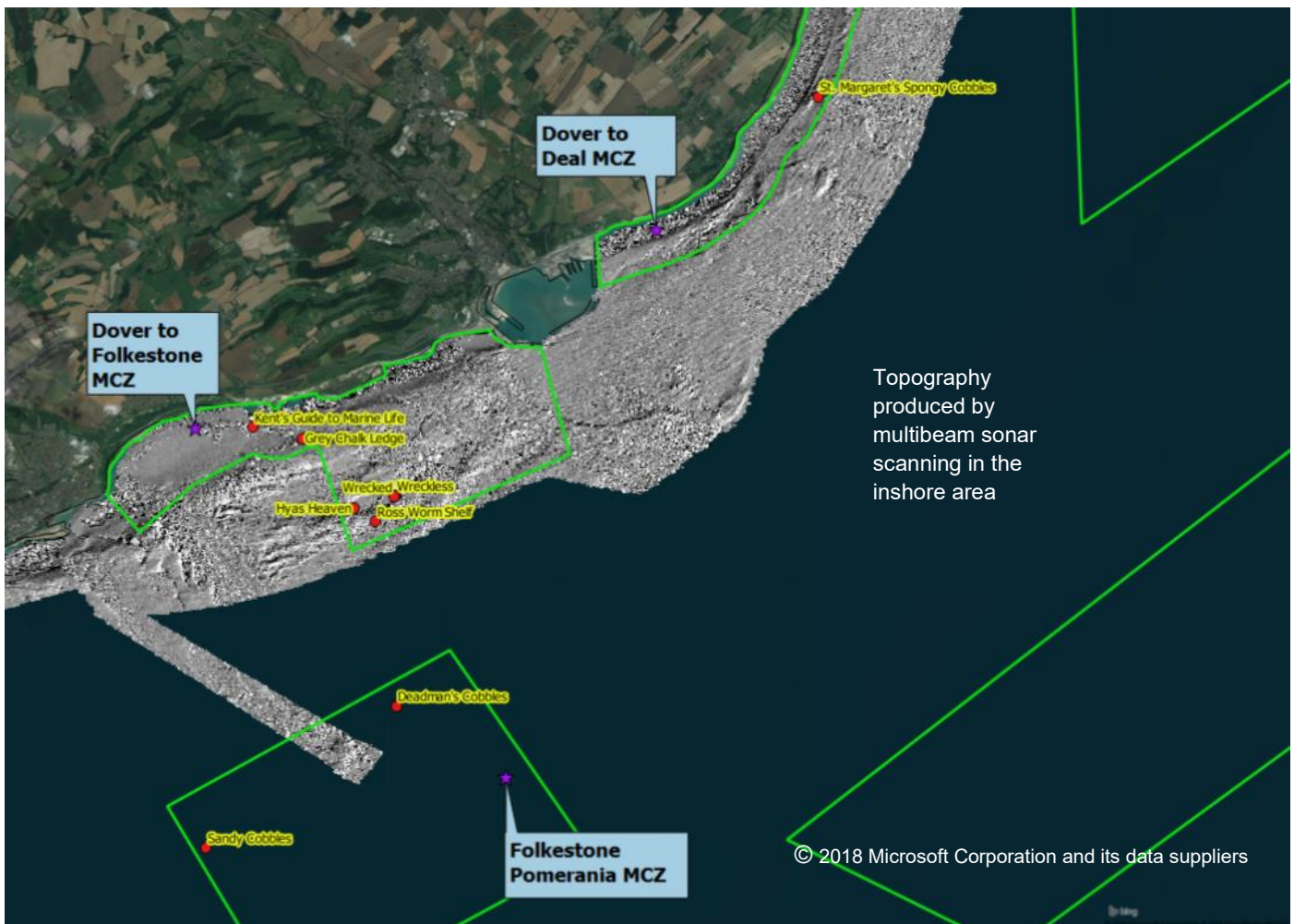
Kent Seasearch Summary Report 2018



Clockwise from top left: Small spotted catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula* in the Dover to Folkestone Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ); crystal seaslug *Janolus cristatus* in the Dover to Folkestone MCZ; Kent Seasearch divers ready to go; a hermit crab sits on a bed of bryozoans in the Dover to Folkestone MCZ.

Kent Seasearch surveys in 2018

Kent Seasearch divers surveyed the seabed at 9 different locations and at depths from 10m to 27m. A total of 6 diving days were organised, only one of which had to be cancelled due to strong winds making diving impossible. Around **150** different species were identified, and a total of **550** biological records made. The most commonly recorded species was the common starfish *Asterias rubens*, followed by deadman's fingers *Alcyonium digitatum*, antenna hydroid *Nemertesia antennina*, chocolate finger sponge *Raspailia ramosa*, and hornwrack *Flustra foliacea*. All of the organised surveys took place in Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) that are marked in green on the map.



Dover to Deal MCZ

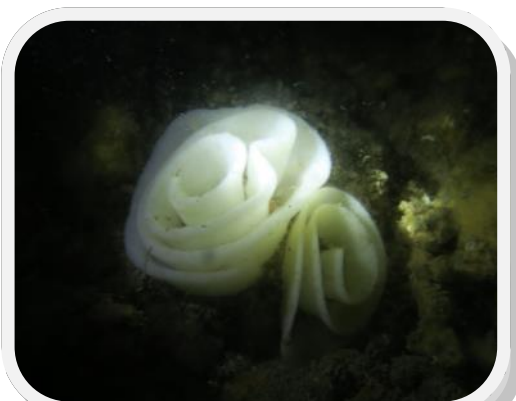
St Margaret's Spongy Cobbles

51° 09.405N , 01° 24.438E

Lying just to the north east of St Margaret's Bay, this site was characterised by cobbles covered in numerous sponges with occasional anemones including dahlia anemones *Urticina felina* and *Sagartia* sp.. The depth was around 18m.

Sponges were the dominant cover and included breadcrumb sponge *Halichondria panicea*, mermaid's glove sponge *Haliclona oculata* and goosebump sponge *Dysidea fragilis*.

Mobile life included common starfish *Asterias rubens* and small spotted catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula*, and nudibranch egg whorls were also frequently seen.



Top right: Mermaid's glove sponge *Haliclona oculata* and the bryozoan *Abietinaria abietina* at St. Margaret's Spongy Cobbles © Fiona White

Right: Seaslug egg whorls at St. Margaret's Spongy Cobbles © Debbie Phillips

Dover to Folkestone MCZ



Hyas Heaven

51° 04.891N , 01° 16.354E

Lying a little over 1 mile out from the end of Samphire Hoe near Dover, this site at 24m consisted of a fairly flat terrain of cobbles and occasional boulders with a poorly sorted mix of sand, broken shell and pebbles between.

The cobbles and boulders were covered in a silty hydroid and bryozoan turf along with oaten pipe hydroids *Tubularia indivisa*, hornwrack *Flustra foliacea* and pumice bryozoan *Cellapora pumicosa*.

Common starfish *Asterias rubens* were noticeably present along with the anemone *Sagartia troglodytes* within the sediment and crystal seaslugs *Janolus cristatus* across the survey area. An unusual observation was the presence of a sunstar *Crossaster papposus* which is not commonly recorded in Kent.

Left from top to bottom: Double spiral worms *Bispira volutacornis*, mermaid's glove sponge *Haliclona oculata* and a sea lemon *Doris pseudoargus* © Elaine Purse; the white form of the anemone *Cerianthus lloydii* © Debbie Phillips; a sunstar *Crossaster papposus* © Elaine Purse



Top: A branching sponge and Sagartia anemone at Wreckless © Fiona White



Above: The nudibranch *Polycera faeroensis* at Wreckless © Fiona White

Wreckless

51° 05.031N , 01° 17.081E

At the western edge of the deeper section of this MCZ, this site comprised a level mixed ground seabed of pebbles, sand and shell fragments with cobbles and occasional small boulders at a depth of around 25m.

Cobbles and boulders were covered in a prominent tall turf of deadman's fingers *Alcyonium digitatum* and antenna hydroid *Nemertesia antennina*. The mixed sediment areas were covered in a silty turf of hydroids and bryozoans interspersed with small white anemones and *Sagartia* anemones.

Whilst recorded only as occasional or rare, a range of sponge species were observed including chocolate finger sponge *Raspailia ramosa*, purse sponge *Sycon* sp. and spiky lace sponge *Leucosolenia* sp.

Several species of nudibranch were recorded at this site including *Polycera faeroensis* and *Facelina bostoniensis*.

Wrecked

51° 05.017N , 01° 17.053E

Located very close to the site named "Wreckless" this site was chosen to investigate an interesting looking feature identified from the detailed bathymetric data for the area. The feature turned out to be a previously undiscovered wreck lying at a depth of 21m.

The steel wreck sat upright on a seabed of pebbles and was covered in a dense turf of oaten pipe hydroids *Tubularia indivisa* and orange anemones *Diadumene cincta*.



Above: Branched antenna hydroid *Nemertesia ramosa* and bryozoans cover a boulder at Ross worm shelf © Dave Wood



Above: Dahlia anemone *Urticina felina* at Ross worm shelf © Dave Wood

Ross Worm Shelf

51° 04.748N , 01° 16.738E

An interesting site with small boulders lying on a muddy seabed with occasional cobbles and gravel. An extensive shelf of tightly packed tubes was initially thought to be created by ross worm *Sabellaria spinulosa*, but subsequent examination of the photos suggests they were pods created by the amphipod *Ampelisca*.

Hydroid and bryozoan turf covered the boulders along with plumose anemones *Metridium dianthus* and sponges including shredded carrot sponge *Amphilectus fucorum*. Potato crisp bryozoan *Pentapora foliacea* and nodding hydroids *Cormorpha nutans* were recorded over the muddy mixed ground seabed.

Grey Chalk Ledge

51° 05.660N , 01° 15.463E

Located 0.5 miles south west of the artificial platform at Samphire Hoe, this survey was on piddock bored chalk bedrock with some quite steeply sided, narrow gullies. The upper surfaces and sides of the chalk gullies had abundant attached life, most notably plumose anemones *Metridium dianthus*, oaten pipe hydroids *Tubularia indivisa* and hornwrack *Flustra foliacea*.

An area *Ampelisca* pods creating an extensive mat was observed with numerous brittlestars *Ophiura albida* and occasional *Sabellid* worms.



Above right: Mermaid's glove sponge *Haliclona oculata* and a painted topshell *Calliostoma zizyphinum* at Grey Chalk Ledge © Will Martin

Below: The seaslugs *Crimora papillata* feeding on the bryozoan *Chartella papyracea* © Fiona White

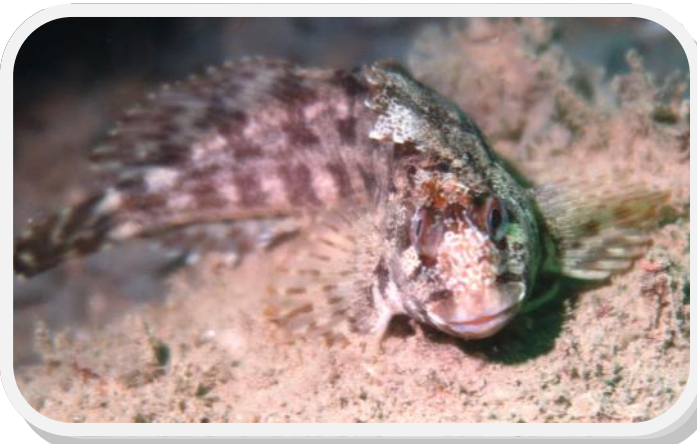


Kent's Guide to Marine Life

51° 05.779N , 01° 14.594E

This site was named because of the sheer variety of life seen. Located close to the Samphire Hoe platform and at a depth of around 12m, the site comprised a mix of very large boulders lying over piddock bored bedrock of soft chalk.

The boulders were covered in dense animal turf, dominated by the bryozoan *Chartella papyracea* with pumice bryozoan *Cellapora pumicosa* and *Molgula* seasquirts. Live piddocks were observed in the soft chalk bedrock and a variety of mobile life across the survey area including velvet swimming crabs *Necora puber*, goldsinny wrasse *Ctenolabrus rupestris* and the seaslug *Crimora papillata* feeding on *Chartella*.



Clockwise from above left: A candystripe flatworm *Prostheceraeus vittatus* © Will Martin; leopard-spotted goby *Thorogobius ehippiatus* © Will Martin; a *Bugula* bryozoan © Fiona White; Tompot blenny *Parablennius gattorugine*.

All taken at Kent's Guide to Marine Life

Folkestone Pomerania MCZ

Deadman's Cobbles

51° 02.726N , 01° 17.093E

Deadman's fingers *Alcyonium digitatum* were the most noticeable feature of this site at 26m depth, growing on cobbles which were covered in keel worms *Spirobranchus* sp.

Between the cobbles was a mixed ground seabed of pebbles and silty gravel with anemones, including the elegant anemone *Sagartia elegans* and dahlia anemone *Urticina felina*.

Many brittlestars *Ophiothrix fragilis* and spindly spidercrabs *Inachus* sp. were seen along with occasional queen scallops *Aequipecten opercularis* and shore urchins *Psammechinus miliaris*.



Above left: Brittlestars, *Ophiothrix fragilis*.



Above right: Cobbles with deadman's fingers, *Alcyonium digitatum* and keel worms, *Spirobranchus* sp.

Both taken by Will Martin at Deadman's Cobbles.



Above: The sand and cobble habitat at Sandy Cobbles © Will Martin

Sandy Cobbles

51° 01.169N , 01° 13.774E

A level seabed at 27m with rippled sand, scattered cobbles and occasional boulders. Keel worm *Spirobranchus* sp. covered the cobbles and boulders but other attached life was sparse, deadman's fingers *Alcyonium digitatum* and erect hydroids including the antenna hydroid *Nemertesia antennina* were the most noticeable.

Shore urchins *Psammechinus miliaris* with little "hats" of broken shell were recorded along with occasional queen scallops *Aequipecten opercularis*.

Training in 2018

Seasearch Observer Course

We ran our annual Seasearch Observer course in April with ten participants, one of whom was a seasoned Seasearch diver taking the opportunity for a free refresher.

Anemone and biotope workshop—Seasearch Surveyor Development Course

This workshop proved very successful with eleven people coming along. It was led by Charlotte Bolton, Seasearch National Co-ordinator, and we spent the morning looking at biotopes—what they are, how they are classified, and what we as Seasearch divers need to be looking out for. Who knew keel worms and barnacles were so important!

In the afternoon we had a great time enjoying photos of anemones and trying to work out what they were. Everyone went away with a much better idea of how to photograph an anemone for identification purposes!



Above: Anemone and biotope workshop participants © KWT

Number of species recorded in each phylum, unusual species and the species most commonly recorded in each group.

Porifera (sponges) - Approximately 13 species, including: chocolate finger sponge *Raspailia ramosa*, goosebump sponge *Dysidia fragilis*, mermaid's glove *Haliclona oculata*, and shredded carrot sponge *Amphilectus fucorum*.

Cnidaria (hydroids, anemones, corals and jellyfish) - Approximately 24 species, including: deadman's fingers *Alcyonium digitatum*, antenna hydroids *Nemertesia antennina*, dahlia anemones *Urticina felina*, fried egg anemones *Actinothoe sphyrodeta*, and nodding hydroids *Corymorpha nutans*.

Ctenophora (sea gooseberries) - 1 record

Platyhelminthes (flat worms) - 1 species, candy stripe flatworm *Prostheceraeus vittatus*

Annelida (polychaete worms) - Approximately 6 species, including: keel worms *Spirobranchus* sp., sand mason worms *Lanice conchilega* and double spiral worms *Bispira volutacornis*.

Crustacea (barnacles, amphipods, prawns, crabs and lobsters) - Approximately 18 species, including: edible crab *Cancer pagurus*, velvet swimming crab *Necora puber*, hermit crab *Pagurus bernhardus*, and spider crab *Maja brachydactyla*.

Mollusca - Approximately 18 species, including: painted topshell *Calliostoma zizyphinum*, sea lemon *Doris pseudoargus*, and two other sea slugs not often recorded in Kent *Crimora papillata* and *Facelina bostoniensis*.

Phoronida (horseshoe worms) - 2 records

Bryozoa (sea mats) - Approximately 9 species, including: hornwrack *Flustra foliacea*, finger bryozoan *Alcyonidium diaphanum*, orange pumice bryozoan *Cellapora pumicosa*, and *Chartella papyracea*.

Echinodermata (starfish, sea urchins and sea cucumbers) - Approximately 5 species, including: common starfish *Asterias rubens*, the brittlestar *Ophiura albida*, green sea urchin *Psammechinus miliaris* and the sunstar *Crossaster papposus*.

Chordata (seasquirts) - Approximately 12 species, including: the lightbulb seasquirt *Clavelina lepadiformis*, yellow ringed seasquirt *Ciona intestinalis* and the club seasquirt *Aplidium punctum*.

Chordata (fish) - Approximately 12 species, including: small spotted catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula*, bib *Trisopterus luscus*, and goldsinny *Ctenolabrus rupestris*.

Below left: Double spiral worms *Bispira volutacornis* © Will Martin.

Below right: Hermit crab *Pagurus* sp. © Debbie Phillips.



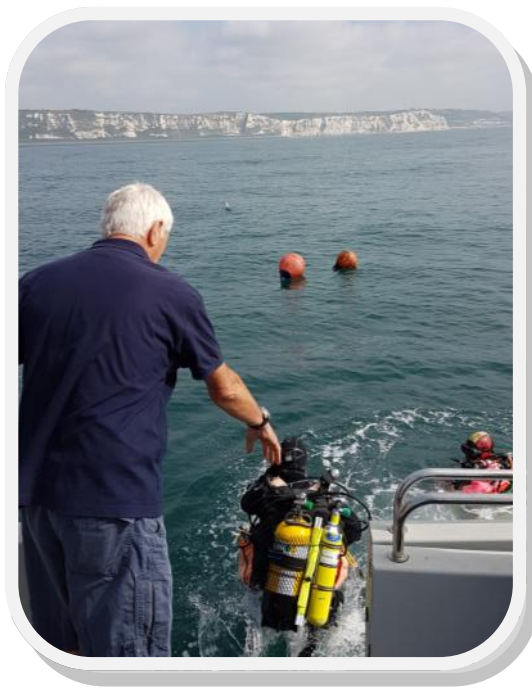
A great big thank you! To all the divers who submitted Seasearch forms and who signed up to and took part in the Kent Seasearch dives during 2018.

2018 Kent Seasearch divers:

Jason Armstrong, Bryony Chapman, Debbie Phillips, Debbie Pippard, Will Martin, Pat McMaster, Fiona White, Dave Wood, Daniel Woodgate, Simon Panteny, Charlotte Bolton, Martin Sigston, Elaine Purse, and Sharon Meadows.

Extra thanks to Jason Armstrong, Will Martin, Dave Wood, Debbie Phillips and Elaine Purse for sharing their dive photos.

And finally, many thanks to Dave Batchelor and Glyn from Neptune, and to Chris Webb and Tom from Maverick for all their help getting us to and from the dive sites, in and out of the water, and looking after us.



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. Kent Seasearch is run by Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT).

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Kent Wildlife Trust is the leading conservation charity for Kent and Medway. Charity No. 239992

