Molluscs:
Of the 21 mollusc species identified painted topshells (Calliotoma zophyphorum) and nested dogwhelks (Hina reticulata) were the most common shells recorded. Nudibranchs recorded included yellow edged polycera (Polyzona farraniana), Laima clavigera, Coryphella lineata, Coryphella boweni and Fabellina pedata. Other species recorded included the cuttlefish (Sepia officinalis), queen scallops (Aequipecten opercularis), sea lemon (Archidoris pseudaria) and the European cowrie (Trivia monacha).

Echinoderms:
Of the 14 species recorded, the spiny starfish was most abundant (Marthasterias glacialis) followed by the cotton spinner (Haliclona forstallii) and the common sea urchin (Echinus esculentus). The common starfish (Asterias rubens), the shore urchin (Psammechinus miliaris) and the beautiful crevice sea cucumbers (Aska leferevi and Powsania sacsaica) were also recorded.

Fishes:
Ballan wrasse (Labrus bergylta), rock cook (Ctenolabrus exelius), pollock (Pollachius pollachius) and tompot blenny (Psammodromus gattorugine) were the most commonly recorded fish species. More unusual species recorded included the sea horse (Hippocampus sp.), black-faced blenny (Tripterygion delaisi), longspined sea scorpion (Uroscystus rubrioticus), fifteen-spined stickleback (Spinachias spinachiae), the snake pipefish (Entelurus aequoreus), sea bass (Dicentrarchus labrax) and cod (Gadus morhua).

Cnidaria:
The most recently recorded anemones were jelly anemone (Corynactis viridis) and elegant anemones (Sagartia elegans). More rarely reported anemones include the daisy anemone (Ceramium jenkinsii) and the yellow-cluster anemone (Parazoanthus axinelet), and Sagartigenia lenticulata. Hard corals recorded in most abundance were Devonshire cup corals (Caryophyllia smithii) and scarlet-and-gold cup corals (Balanophyllia regia). The very rare sunset cup coral (Elinopora trivat) was recorded at Crown Sound off the Isles of Scilly. Soft corals recorded included deadman’s fingers (Ailousmum digitatum), red fingers (Ailousmum glareosum) and the pink sea fan (Eunicella verrucosa). Pink sea fans were recorded at 13 sites during Seasearch dives and 18 pink sea fan surveys were conducted. The hydroid known as the antenn hydroid (Nemertesia antennis) was frequently recorded as was Obelia geniculata. No jellyfish were reported.

Crustaceans:
The most abundantly recorded crustaceans of the 13 species recorded were the velvet swimming crab (Neocrangon ruber), spider crab (Maja squinado) and edible crab (Cancer pagurus). Rarely recorded crustaceans included the long-legged spider crab (Mannostroctes rostrato), the barbour crab (Lecosolen incrustans) and crabfish (Palinurus elephas). Lobster (Homarus gammarus), spiny squat lobster (Galathea societa) and Galathea squamifera were also recorded.

These survey dives were conducted as part of the national Seasearch Programme. Many volunteers took part in these surveys during 2006, too many to mention here but thanks to all involved. Seasearch is a volunteers’ 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.

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St Agnes

Two Seasearch dives were carried out around St. Agnes both at Bawden's Rock. The habitats recorded were predominantly rocky wall, rocky reef and boulders on sand/gravel. A string of lobster pots was noted on the reef. Fish species recorded included the leopard-spotted goby, pollack (Pollachius pollachius), long-spined sea scorpion (Taurulus bubalis), lemon sole and butterfish. The most abundantly recorded crustaceans include the edible crab (Cancer pagurus), velvet swimming crab and spider crab (Maja squinado). Molluscs reported included the painted topshell (Calliostoma zizyphinum), the pink sea fan nudibranch ( Tritonia nitidhormi), sea lemon and Flabellina pedata. In the Cnidarian family, red fingers (Akyanum glomeratum), pink sea fans (Eunicella verrucosa), yellow-cluster anemone ( Parazoanthus axineiello) and Sargassogenetan undatus were recorded here. Pink sea fan surveys were also carried out off Bawden’s Rock during 2006.

Penzance and Lands End (and St. Ives and Portreath)

Only two areas were surveyed here. Logan’s Rock is a rocky reef with sand gullies extending down to 25m. In Lamorna Cove the survey area included the harbour wall, boulders and cobbles and sand. Some of the more common species encountered include deadman’s fingers, jewel anemones, common starfish sea urchins (Echinus esculentus), spider crabs, spiny starfish, Antenna hydroids (Nemertesia antennina), pollack and ballan wrasse. Lesser sandeels (Ammodromytes Tobias) and greater pipefish (Sygnathus acus) were also recorded at Lamorna Cove.

Isles of Scilly

Thirteen sites were surveyed during the Seasearch 2006 week including 7 sites which had not previously been surveyed. Sites surveyed included King Cadwallan, Gugh reef, Menawethan, Flat Ledge NE St. Martins, S. Gllstone Reef and Higher Ridge Crow Sound. The dominant habitat type was rocky reef but boulders, sand and coves were also recorded. The most notable record was for a new location of sunset cup corals (Leptosomopsis pruvotii) at Higher Ridge Crow Sound. Many sponges were recorded including Axinella damicornis, Polymastia boletiformis and P. mamilis. Scarlet-and-gold cup corals (Balanophyllia regia), Devonshire cup corals ( Caryophyllia smithii) and red fingers were also recorded. A summary report for this survey is available to download from the website www.seasearch.org.uk

North Cornwall

Four survey dives were carried out in North Cornwall at Penally Hill cove, Boscastle harbour entrance and Smugglers Cave and Foot Cove both near Boscastle harbour. Dominant habitats surveyed were rocky reefs with gullies and boulders, caves and sandy seabed. One of the most interesting findings here was the abundance of the scarlet-and-gold cup coral (Balanophyllia regia), a rare species which is confined to the extreme south and west of the British Isles. It grows in crevices, gullies and on rock faces from low water mark down to about 25m. Also recorded in abundance were Devonshire cup corals ( Caryophyllia smithii), brown crevice sea cucumber ( Asiolefevrei), fried egg anemone ( Actinothoe sphyrodeta), the boring sponge ( Clononatala), crater sponge ( Hemimycale columnella), spider crabs ( Maja squinado), velvet swimming crabs ( Necora puber), spiny starfish ( Marthasterias glacialis), ballan wrasse ( Labrus bergylta) and leopard spotted goby ( Thorogobius ephippiatus).

The Lizard and Manacles

Three survey dives were carried out around the Manacles. Sites surveyed included the Volnay wreck, the Mohengan wreck and Brood’s Mound. Common species recorded include cuckoo wrasse ( Labrus mixtus), ballan wrasse ( Labrus bergyla), goldsinnry wrasse ( Vermola rubripes), gurnard ( Trigopsis minutus), deadman’s fingers, Devonshire cup corals, jewel anemones, potato crisp bryozoan ( Pentapora foliacea), sea urchins, spiny starfish, and common starfish. Rarer species recorded included lobsters ( Homarus gammarus), pink sea fans and conger eel ( Conger conger).

Falmouth and Helford

Four survey dives were undertaken between Dodman Point and Rame Head including the St. Austell Bay area, Fowey and Looe. The dominant habitat type was rocky reef, but other habitats recorded included large boulders, sand & gravel and cobbles. Sites surveyed were the James Egan Lane, Eddystone Rocks, HMS Scylla, Wreck of Niall, Queener Point Reef, Sherbetty Reef, Talland Bay, Tregantle Reef, the Rosehill, Rame Head and the Rannes off Looe Island. Common species recorded were Kelp species ( Laminaria digita and L. hyperborea), red algae species, deadman’s fingers ( Akyanum glutatum), edible crab and pink squat lobster ( Galathea strigosas), cotton spinner ( Holothuria forskali) and brown crevice sea cucumbers ( Asiolefevrei), starfish species and the antenna hydroid. Some of the more unusual sightings included pink sea fans at Udder Rock near Looe, where they had not previously been reported from and a seahorse at Rame Head. Devonshire cup corals were also recorded occasionally. Some recent pink sea fan damage was noted at Tregantle Reef.

South East Cornwall

Nine survey dives were undertaken between Dodman Point and Rame Head including the St. Austell Bay area, Fowey and Looe. The dominant habitat type was rocky reef, but other habitats recorded included large boulders, sand & gravel and cobbles. Sites surveyed were the James Egan Lane, Eddystone Rocks, HMS Scylla, Wreck of Niall, Queener Point Reef, Sherbetty Reef, Talland Bay, Tregantle Reef, the Rosehill, Rame Head and the Rannes off Looe Island. Common species recorded were Kelp species ( Laminaria digita and L. hyperborea), red algae species, deadman’s fingers ( Akyanum glutatum), edible crab and pink squat lobster ( Galathea strigosas), cotton spinner ( Holothuria forskali) and brown crevice sea cucumbers ( Asiolefevrei), starfish species and the antenna hydroid. Some of the more unusual sightings included pink sea fans at Udder Rock near Looe, where they had not previously been reported from and a seahorse at Rame Head. Devonshire cup corals were also recorded occasionally. Some recent pink sea fan damage was noted at Tregantle Reef.