The table to the right shows the number of species recorded on each taxonomic group and some of the most commonly recorded species.

**Cnidarians**
Lion’s Mane Jellyfish were abundant and the surveyors were grateful for the clear water with only one mild sting recorded over the weekend! The Burrowing Anemone *Cerianthus lloydii* was common in all the sand/gravel areas surveyed but other anemones were scarce. Hydroids were common in the boulder areas.

**Molluscs**
Scallops were reasonably common close to the rocky areas but scarce in the more open areas. Burrowing bivalves seemed to be common with numerous siphons and burrows seen at the surface of the sediment.

**Crabs and Lobsters**
Swimming Crabs and Hermit Crabs were common with Edible Crabs and Squat Lobsters frequent.

**Fishes**
Several large shoals of young fish swam through the survey area but usually too quickly for the surveyors to identify the species. However, Goldshinny Wrasse and Two Spot Gobies were common with occasional Dogfish, Dragonet and Butterfish also recorded.

**Algae**
Red algae in particular were very abundant at Sites 5 and 6 with many more species present than recorded.

Seasearch is a volunteer underwater survey project for recreational divers to contribute towards the conservation of the marine environment. Financial support for the project during 2005 has been given by:

This seasearch survey was organised by Owen Paisley, Seasearch coordinator for West Scotland with assistance from the NE Kintyre Consortium.

Seasearch Surveyors were: Eric Marshall, Jane McGuire, Tom McGuire, John Rees and Joyce Wilson.

All photographs and text by Owen Paisley.
At Site 1, the divers crossed bedrock down to 15 metres when the seabed changed to boulders which as depth increased became smaller until the seabed at 22 metres was predominantly gravel. The bedrock was covered in Sugar Kelp park with a rich under storey of red algae. The rich cover of red algae continued down to around 20 metres, attached to the numerous boulders and cobbles. Young fish were plentiful both in the water column and amongst the kelp. Five species of starfish were recorded as well as Spider Crabs, Edible Crabs and Velvet Swimming Crabs. Lightbulb Tunicates were common on the boulders and Cerianthus Anemones were found in the deeper areas.

As at Site 1, the divers found a rocky reef dropping steeply to around 11 metres which was replaced by boulders grading into cobbles and sand which continued sloping downwards. Sugar Kelp park dominated the shallower water giving way to mixed red algae on boulders and short animal turf of Lightbulb Tunicates and hydroids on the cobbles. Burrowing Cerianthus Anemones were common in the sand.

Following a one day Observer Training Course in Oban, five of the participants and one of the tutors mounted a mini-expedition to a previously unsurveyed area of the Kilbrannan sound. Over the weekend of the 16th and 17th July 2005, a total of six dives at two sites in the NW part of Kilbrannan Sound were surveyed. In general, the sites appeared to be remarkably rich in life with red and brown algae being particularly abundant. This may be in part be due to the opportunistic and seasonal nature of many red algae and the severity of winter storms.

At both sites the seabed was an almost level gravel/sand plan covered in abundant red algae with occasional clearings and widely separated individual Sugar Kelp plants. The area gave the appearance of an underwater meadow with the sunlight streaming through the clear water and the colourful algae making for very pleasant diving. Encrusting red algae was also common with numerous examples of “Hedgehog Stones” scattered about.