

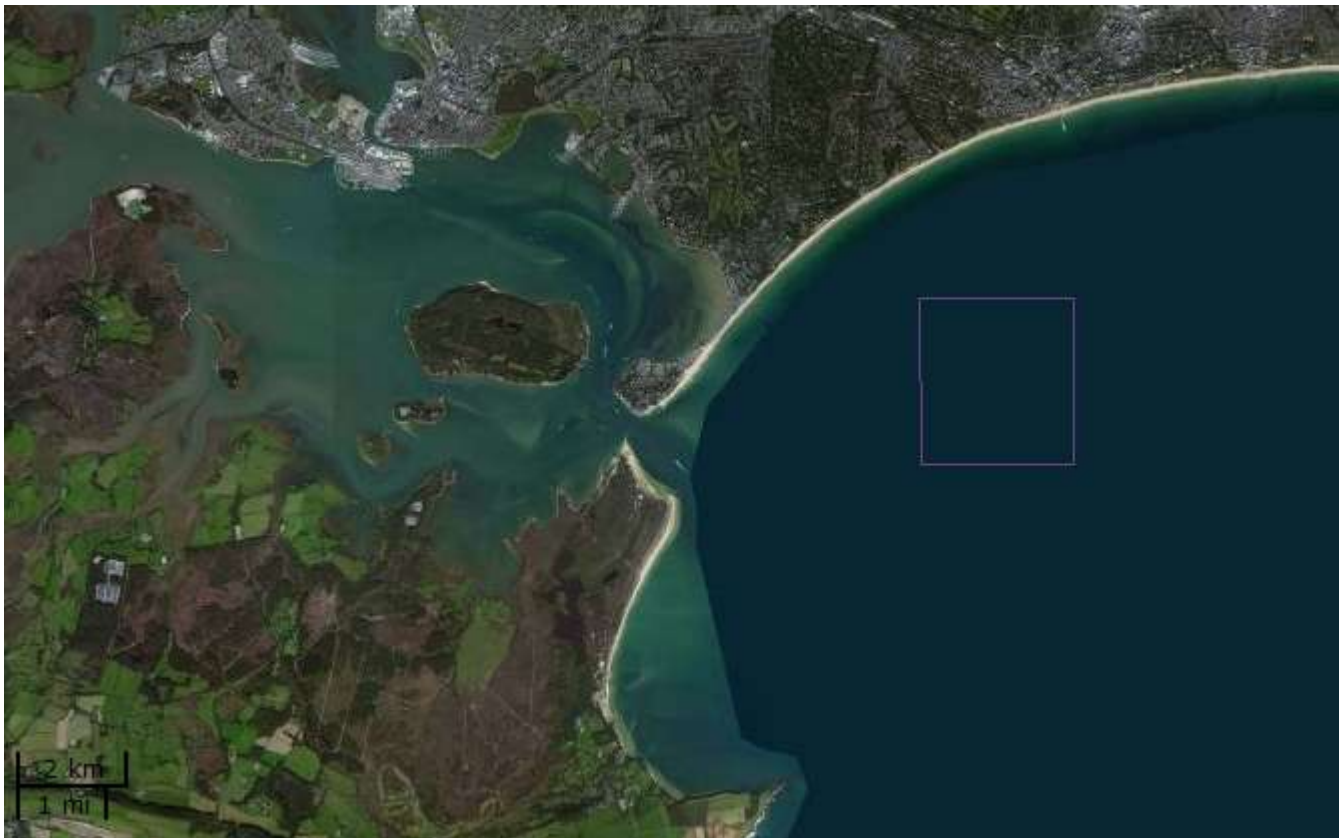
Poole Rocks MCZ

Seasearch Site Surveys 2013

This report summarises the results of surveys carried out during 2013 by Seasearch divers in the newly-designated Poole Rocks MCZ. The aim of the surveys was to continue to add detail of the habitats and species found within the area. Particular attention was paid to the Habitat and Species FOCI identified in the Ecological Guidance on the designation of MCZs, and to surveying undived sites within the area.

Physical Features of the Area

The Poole Rocks recommended MCZ site is an inshore site of ca. 4km² lying just to the east of the entrance to Poole Harbour (image below taken from jncc.defra.gov.uk/mczmap):



The site consists of several small patches of reef (exposed rugged sandstone bedrock surrounded by medium to large boulders) at depths of 6-11m, rising to a height of 1-5m above the surrounding seabed of mixed sediment with cobbles and *Crepidula* beds. Unsurprisingly in sediment-dominated Poole Bay, the site is overlaid with a layer of silt which creates circalittoral conditions at infralittoral depths. There are many deep crevices in and around the boulders, providing cover for crustaceans and the large shoals of fish in the area, which have attracted human activities such as potting and angling.

Features of the Marine Life

The rocks are densely covered with short animal turf (dominated by encrusting and cushion sponges, bryozoans and hydroids) and foliose and filamentous red algae. Uncommon and/or protected species such as the native oyster

(*Ostrea edulis*) and Couch's goby (*Gobius couchi*) are regularly reported within this area, albeit in small numbers, whilst solitary pink sea fans (*Eunicella verrucosa*) have been recorded at similar habitats in Poole Bay. Large shoals of fish (usually bib, *Trisopterus luscus*, and pollack, *Pollachius pollachius*) are observed in the vicinity of the reefs, and various wrasse species (including Baillon's wrasse, *Symphodus bailloni*, a Lusitanian species that is becoming more common in the English Channel) build nests amongst the rocks. Black bream (*Spondylusoma cantharus*) nests – areas of bedrock swept clean of the overlying silt - are frequently seen during the breeding season.



At least a dozen angling boats were observed over the patch reefs during our survey dive in May 2013 (above). Anecdotal reports have placed as many as 28 boats over a bream nesting area off Purbeck. There is no closed season for bream fishing in the Southern IFCA district.

Bream nests (above and below right), showing the cleared area with dense aggregations of eggs on the exposed bedrock (June 2013). The male is responsible for guarding the nest until the eggs hatch. At this stage, most of the fertile eggs have hatched or are very close to hatching, and only the dead ones (yellow or white in the close-up photo below left) remain.





Typical Poole Bay patch reef scenes – rugged bedrock outcrops with encrusting sponges, bryozoans and foliose red algae, with a surrounding seabed of silted *Crepidula* shells.

Native oysters (*Ostrea edulis*; one of the species FOCI for this MCZ) are regularly seen on dives in the Poole Rocks MCZ, albeit in low numbers.



Human Uses

Potting and intensive angling activities are attracted by the fish and crustacean populations; impacts in the form of lost fishing equipment (line, hooks, rope), ground tackle and other litter are often seen at this site.

Benefits of Protection

The circalittoral rocky reef habitat is characterised by high species diversity and the surrounding sediments of Poole Bay provide an important nursery ground. Local potting and angling activities would both indirectly benefit from an increased population in this area.

Acknowledgements

This report has been compiled by Charlotte Bolton of the Dorset Wildlife Trust based on Seasearch survey records made by Lin Baldock, Alison Bessell, Charlotte Bolton, Jon Chamberlain, Emma Collins, Kathryn Dawson Hayes, Matt Doggett, James Lucey, Andy Marsh, Nick Owen, Fiona Tibbitt, Nigel Topham and Polly Whyte, and observation records made by Gordon Bird and John Parkin. Photos as credited; copyright is retained by the photographers. Seasearch would like to thank the volunteer divers for their records and also Mike Markey of Poole Diving (www.poolediving.co.uk) for taking us to the sites.

Report published by Dorset Wildlife Trust (www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk) for Seasearch (www.seasearch.org.uk).

Technical Appendix

This Appendix contains more detailed information about the surveys undertaken and records made. It includes:

- dive details
- habitat sketches
- biotope list
- species list

The data has been entered into the Marine Recorder database and is available in Snapshot format on request.

Designated features and management approach:

Broad Scale Habitats: Subtidal mixed sediments (maintain in favourable condition); moderate energy circalittoral rock (maintain)

Species FOCI: Native oyster, *Ostrea edulis* (recover to favourable condition); Couch's goby, *Gobius couchi* (recover)

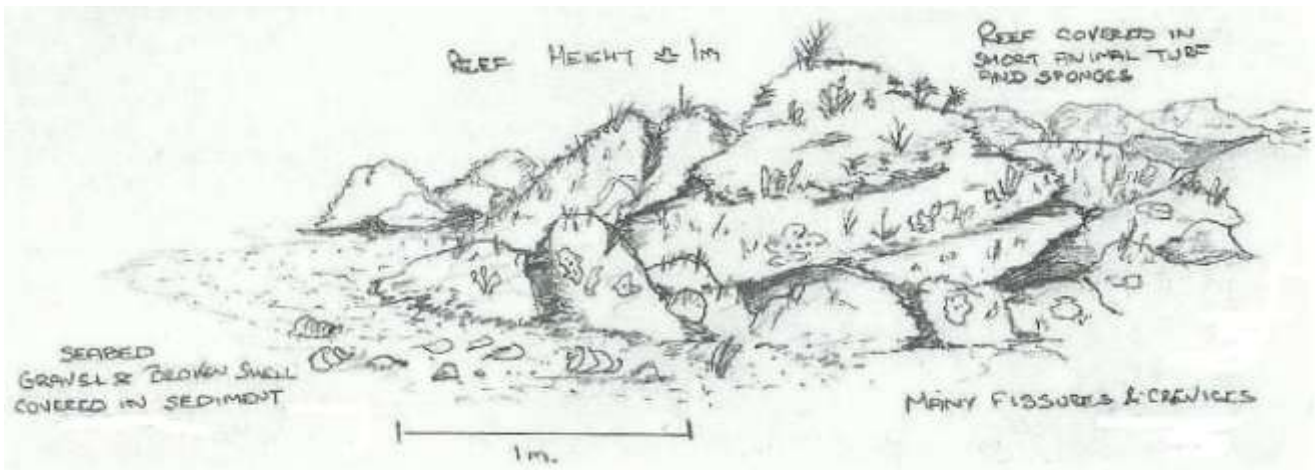
Dive details

Date	Site/Position	Surveyor(s)	Form(s)
18/05/2013	Patch reefs 50.694, -1.875	Lin Baldock, Alison Bessell, Emma Collins, James Lucey, Andy Marsh, Nick Owen, John Parkin, Nigel Topham	DT13/021, DT13/025, DT13/029, DT13/036, DT13/044, DT13/134
19/05/2013	"EA21" reef 50.686, -1.873	Emma Collins, James Lucey, Andy Marsh, John Parkin, Nigel Topham	DT13/031, DT13/038, DT13/136
01/06/2013	"EA18" reef 50.684, -1.885	Lin Baldock, Charlotte Bolton, Jon Chamberlain, Matt Doggett, Polly Whyte	DT13/051, DT13/132
30/06/2013	Lobster Rock 50.685, -1.893	Jen Ashworth, Kathryn Hayes, Fiona Tibbitt	DT13/057
06/08/2013	Pollack Rock 50.678, -1.889	Lin Baldock, Gordon Bird, James Lucey, Nigel Topham	DT13/072, DT13/074, DT13/100

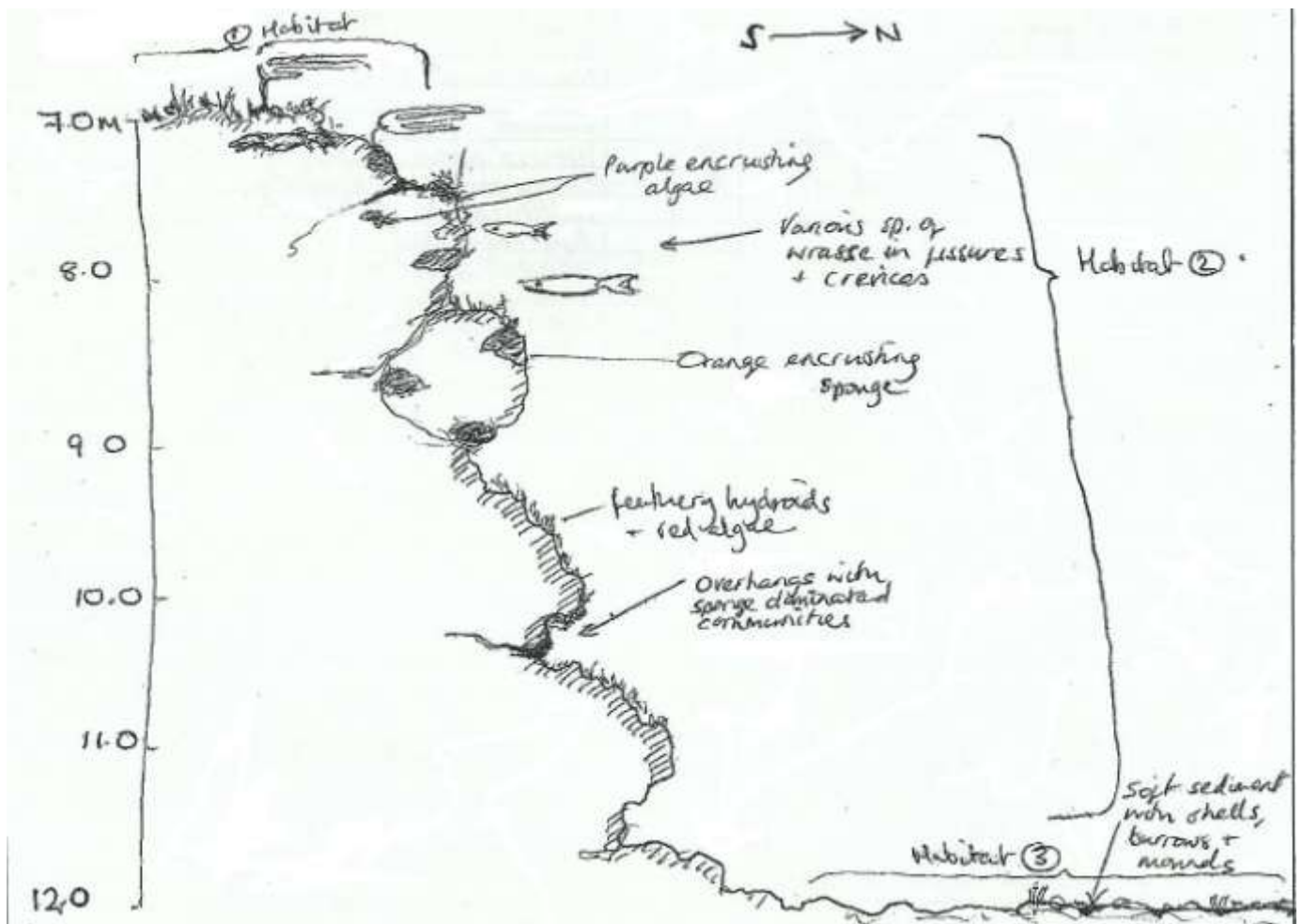


Habitat sketches

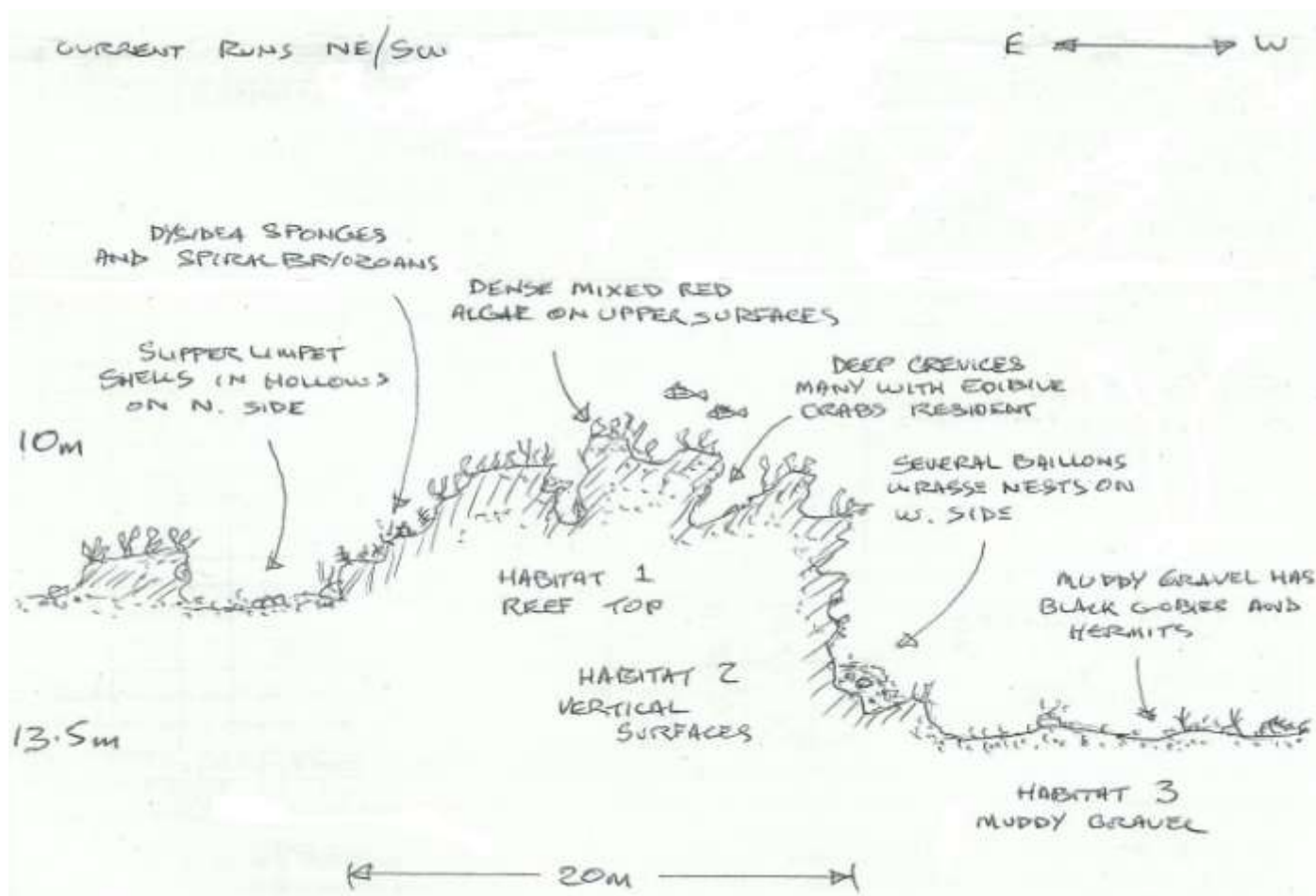
1. "EA21" reef (DT13/136; Andy Marsh)



2. Lobster Rock (DT13/057; Fiona Tibbitt)



3. Pollack Rock (DT13/074; James Lucey)



Sublittoral Habitats/Biotopes recorded

Description	MNCR 04.05 Biotope Code†	Location*
Circalittoral mixed sediment	SS.SMx.CMx	5
Circalittoral muddy sand	SS.SSa.CMuSa	1,3,4
Mixed faunal turf communities	CR.HCR.XFa	1,2,3,4
<i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> encrusted circalittoral rock	CR.MCR.CSab.Sspi	1
Dense foliose red seaweeds on silty moderately exposed infralittoral rock	IR.MIR.KR.XFoR	4,5

† The Marine Habitat Classification for Britain & Ireland (v04.05): jncc.defra.gov.uk/marinehabitatclassification

* Sites are labelled as follows; 1 = Patch reefs (18/5/2013); 2 = "EA21" reef (19/5/2013); 3 = "EA18" reef (1/6/2013); 4 = Lobster Rock (30/6/2013); 5 = Pollack Rock (6/8/2013)

Species List

* Sites are labelled as follows; 1 = Patch reefs (18/5/2013); 2 = "EA21" reef (19/5/2013); 3 = "EA18" reef (1/6/2013); 4 = Lobster Rock (30/6/2013); 5 = Pollack Rock (6/8/2013)

‡ Abundance recorded on the SACFOR scale, plus P for 'present' if no abundance recorded.

No. of unique species recorded (not all to species level) = 166

1. Porifera (sponges)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance‡	Notes
<i>Amphilectus fucorum</i>	Shredded carrot sponge	1,2,3,4,5	O-R	
<i>Aplysilla sulfurea</i>		1	P	
<i>Dercitus bucklandi</i>	Black tar sponge	5	O	
<i>Dysidea fragilis</i>	Goosebump sponge	1,2,3,4	F-R	
<i>Endectyon delaubenfelsi</i>		1	R	
<i>Halichondria</i> sp.		3	O	
<i>Halichondria panicea</i>	Breadcrumb sponge	2	R	
<i>Haliclona</i> sp.		1,5	R	
<i>Haliclona fistulosa</i> (?)		3	R	
<i>Haliclona oculata</i>	Mermaid's glove	3	O	
<i>Hemimycale columella</i>	Crater sponge	1,2,4,5	F-O	
<i>Hymeniacion perleve</i>		1,2,3,5	C-P	
<i>Mycale</i> sp.		1	O	
<i>Mycale</i> cf. <i>macilenta</i>		1	P	
<i>Pachymatisma johnstonia</i>	Elephant hide sponge	1,2,5	F-R	
<i>Polymastia boletiformis</i>	Yellow hedgehog sponge	5	R	
<i>Polymastia penicillus</i>	Chimney sponge	3	R	
<i>Raspailia ramosa</i>		1,3,5	O-R	
<i>Stelligera rigida</i>		1,2,3,5	O-R	
<i>Suberites carnosus</i>		3	R	
<i>Tethya citrina</i>	Golf ball sponge	2,3	R-P	
Porifera indet. crusts	Encrusting sponges	1,2,3,5	F-O	

2. Cnidaria (anemones, hydroids, corals)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance‡	Notes
<i>Amphisbetia operculata</i>		2	P	
<i>Anemonia viridis</i>	Snakelocks anemone	1,5	O	
<i>Caryophyllia smithii</i>	Devonshire cup coral	1	R	
<i>Cerianthus lloydii</i>		4	R	
<i>Clytia hemisphaerica</i>		1	P	
<i>Halecium</i> sp.		3	F	
<i>Isozoanthus sulcatus</i>	Ginger tiny or peppercorn anemone	1	R	
<i>Laomedea</i> sp.		3	F	
<i>Laomedea flexuosa</i>		1,2	C-F	

<i>Nemertesia antennina</i>	Antenna hydroid	1,2,3	O-P	
<i>Plumularia setacea</i>		3	R	
<i>Sarcodictyon</i> sp.		1	O	
<i>Sarcodictyon roseum</i> (?)		3,4	O	
<i>Sertularella gaudichaudi</i>		1	C	
<i>Tubularia indivisa</i>	Oaten pipe hydroid	3,5	O-R	

3. Annelida (segmented worms)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Bispira volutacornis</i>	Double spiral worm	1,2,3,4,5	F-R	
<i>Eupolymnia nebulosa</i> (?)	Strawberry worm	3,4	O-R	
<i>Lanice conchilega</i>	Sand mason worm	1,4,5	F-O	
<i>Megalomma vesiculosum</i>		5	O	
<i>Pomatoceros</i> sp.	Keel worms	5	F-R	
<i>Sabella pavonina</i>	Peacock, feather duster worm	1,5	O-R	
<i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> (crust)	Ross worm	1,2,3,5	F-R	
<i>Salmacina dysteri</i>	Coral worm	5	R	
<i>Terebellidae</i>		1,2,3	O-P	

4. Crustacea (crabs, lobsters, barnacles)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Ampelisca</i> sp. (mat)		5	F	
<i>Cancer pagurus</i>	Edible, brown crab	1,2,5	O-P	
Cirripedia	Barnacles	5	R	
<i>Galathea strigosa</i>	Blue striped squat lobster	1	R	
<i>Homarus gammarus</i>	European lobster	1,5	O-R	
<i>Inachus</i> sp.	Sponge spider crab	3	O	
<i>Inachus phalangium</i>	Sponge spider crab	1	R	
<i>Maja squinado</i>	Common spider crab	1,5	O	
<i>Necora puber</i>	Velvet swimming crab	1,2,4,5	O-R	
<i>Paguridae</i>	Hermit crabs	1,5	C	
<i>Pagurus bernhardus</i>	Common hermit crab	3	R	
<i>Palaemon serratus</i>	Common prawn	5	R	
<i>Verruca stroemia</i>	Wart barnacle	1	P	

5. Platyhelminthes (flat worms)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Prostheceraeus vittatus</i>	Candy striped flat worm	1,3	R	

6. Mollusca (snails, bivalves, nudibranchs)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Archidoris pseudoargus</i>	Sea lemon	3	R	

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Buccinum undatum</i>	Edible whelk, buckie	1,2	O-R	
<i>Calliostoma zizyphinum</i>	Painted topshell	5	R	
<i>Coryphella</i> sp.		2	P	
<i>Crepidula fornicata</i>	Slipper limpet	1,2,3,5	A-R	Non-native species
<i>Hinia reticulata</i>	Netted dog whelk	1,5	F-R	
<i>Janolus cristatus</i>	Crystal sea slug	3	R	
<i>Ostrea edulis</i>	Native/European oyster	1,2,5	R-P	OSPAR / Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) / FOCI species
<i>Polynices</i> sp. (eggs)	Necklace shell	4	R	
<i>Trivia arctica</i>	Northern cowrie	3	R	

7. Phoronida (horseshoe worms)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Phoronis</i> sp.	Horseshoe worm	1	R	

8. Bryozoa (sea mats)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Amathia lendigera</i>		1	P	
<i>Bicellariella ciliata</i>		2,3,5	O-P	
<i>Bugula</i> sp.		4	O	
<i>Bugula plumosa</i>		2,5	F-R	
<i>Crisia</i> sp.	White-clawed sea mosses	4	R	
<i>Chartella papyracea</i>		1,2,3,4,5	C-R	
<i>Disporella hispida</i>		1	P	
<i>Escharella immersa</i>		1	P	
<i>Escharella variolosa</i>		1	P	
<i>Flustra foliacea</i>	Hornwrack	1,3,4,5	C-R	Indicator species
<i>Nolella dilatata</i>		1	P	
<i>Parasmittina trispinosa</i>		3	R	
<i>Pentapora foliacea</i>	Ross coral, potato crisp bryozoan	4	R	
<i>Plagioecia sarniensis</i>		1	P	
<i>Schizomavella linearis</i>		1	P	
Bryozoa indet. crusts	Encrusting bryozoans	1,5	F-R	

9. Echinodermata (starfish, sea cucumbers)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Ophiothrix fragilis</i>	Common brittlestar	1	R	

10. Tunicata (sea squirts)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Ascidia mentula</i>	Red sea squirt	1,2,3,4,5	O-P	
<i>Ascidiella aspersa</i>	Fluted sea squirt	3	R	
<i>Ascidiella scabra</i>		1	R	
<i>Botrylloides leachi</i>		5	R	
<i>Botryllus schlosseri</i>	Star sea squirt	3,5	O-R	
<i>Ciona intestinalis</i>	Yellow-rimmed sea squirt	5	R	

<i>Clavelina lepadiformis</i>	Lightbulb sea squirt	5	O	
<i>Dendrodoa grossularia</i>	Gooseberry sea squirt	1	F	
<i>Morchellium argus</i>	Four-spotted sea squirt	5	R	
<i>Polycarpa pomaria</i>		1,2	R	
<i>Polycarpa scuba</i>	Teapot sea squirt	2,3 (?)	F-P	
<i>Pyura tessellata</i>		1	P	
<i>Styela clava</i>	Leathery sea squirt	2,3,5	R	Non-native species

11. Pisces (fish)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Callionymus</i> sp.	Dragonet	5	O	
<i>Centrolabrus exoletus</i>	Rock cook	5	R	
<i>Conger conger</i>	Conger eel	1	R	
<i>Ctenolabrus rupestris</i>	Goldsinny	1,2,3,4,5	F-O	
<i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>	Bass	1,2,4	R	
<i>Gobius couchi</i>	Couch's goby	3	R	
<i>Gobius niger</i>	Black goby	1,2,3,5	F-P	
<i>Gobius paganellus</i>	Rock goby	5	R	
<i>Gobiusculus flavescens</i>	Two-spot goby	5	O	
<i>Labrus bergylta</i>	Ballan wrasse	2,5	F-R	
<i>Labrus mixtus</i>	Cuckoo wrasse	1,4,5	O-R	
<i>Microstomus kitt</i>	Lemon sole	4	R	
<i>Parablennius gattorugine</i>	Tompot blenny	1,4,5	O-R	
<i>Pholis gunnellus</i>	Butterfish	3	R	
<i>Pollachius pollachius</i>	Pollack	4,5	R	
<i>Pomatoschistus</i> spp.	Sand gobies	3,5	C-O	
<i>Pomatoschistus pictus</i>	Painted goby	1	F	
<i>Raja clavata</i>	Thornback ray	3	R	
<i>Scyliorhinus canicula</i>	(Common, lesser spotted) dogfish, sandy dog, small spotted cat shark, rough hound	1	R	
<i>Scyliorhinus stellaris</i> (eggcase)	Nursehound, bull huss	3	P	
<i>Spondylisoma cantharus</i> (nests)	Black bream	3,5	F-O	
<i>Symphodus bailloni</i> (nest)	Baillon's wrasse	2,3,5	O-P	Lusitanian species, uncommon in English Channel
<i>Taurulus bubalis</i>	Short spined scorpion fish	5	O	
<i>Thorogobius ephippiatus</i>	Leopard spotted goby	1,5	R	
<i>Trisopterus luscus</i>	Bib, pout, pouting	1,2,4	F-R	
<i>Trisopterus minutus</i>	Poor cod	5	O	

12. Algae (seaweeds)

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
Rhodophyceae	Foliose red algae	1	R	
<i>Aglaothamnion byssoides</i> (?)		4,5	F	
<i>Asparagopsis armata</i> (Falkenbergia stage)	Harpoon weed	5	C	Non-native species
<i>Bonnemaisonia</i> sp.		5	F	
<i>Brongniartella byssoides</i>	Brongniarts's Thread Weed	4,5	A-F	
<i>Calliblepharis ciliata</i>	Beautiful eyelash, red fringed weed	3,4,5	A-R	
<i>Chondria dasyphylla</i>	Diamond Cartilage Weed	5	O	
<i>Chylocladia verticillata</i>	Juicy Whorl Weed	5	R	
Corallinaceae (crusts)	Coralline algae	1,3,4,5	F-R	
<i>Drachiella heterocarpa</i>	Iridescent Drachiella, rainbow weed	5	O	
<i>Dudresnaya verticillata</i>	Dudresnay's Whorled weed	5	R	
<i>Gracilaria</i> sp.		5	O	
<i>Griffithsia corallinoides</i>	Mrs Griffith's coral weed	5	R	
<i>Halarachnion ligulatum</i>	Sea spider weed	5	F	
<i>Halurus flosculosus</i>	Mrs Griffiths' Little Flower	4,5	O	
<i>Heterosiphonia plumosa</i>	Siphoned feather weed	5	R	
<i>Hypoglossum hypoglossoides</i>	Under tongue weed	5	O	
<i>Monosporus pedicellatus</i>		5	O	
<i>Phyllophora crispa</i>	Sandy leaf bearer	5	O	
<i>Plocamium cartilagineum</i>	Cock's comb, red comb weed	5	A	
<i>Radicilingua thysanorhizans</i>	Creeping tongue weed	5	R	
<i>Rhodymenia ardissoni</i>	Spiky rose weed	5	O	
<i>Rhodymenia holmesii</i>	Holmes's rose weed	5	O	
<i>Schottera nicaeensis</i>	Shaded weed	5	O	
<i>Sphondylothamnion multifidum</i>	Whorled bush weed	5	R	
<i>Spyridia filamentosa</i>	Hairy basket weed	5	R	
<i>Dictyota dichotoma</i>	Divided net weed, brown fan weed	5	O	
Ectocarpaceae		3	R	
<i>Halidrys siliquosa</i>	Sea oak (brown), pod weed	5	R	

Scientific name	Common name	Site*	Abundance±	Notes
<i>Laminaria</i> sp.	Kelp	4	O	
<i>Saccorhiza polyschides</i>	Furbelows	4	R	
<i>Sporochnus pedunculatus</i>	Woolly seed weed	5	F	
<i>Taonia atomaria</i>	Dotted feather weed	5	F	
<i>Bryopsis</i> sp.	Mossy feather weeds	4	O	
<i>Bryopsis plumosa</i>	Mossy feather weed	5	R	
<i>Cladophora</i> sp.	Green branched weeds	5	R	
<i>Derbesia marina</i>	Silky Thread Weed	3	O	
<i>Ulva lactuca</i>	Sea lettuce	5	O	

Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT), Brooklands Farm, Forston, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 7AA; Tel: 01305 264620; Fax: 01305 251120. Registered Charity No. 200222. For more information about DWT, our work and the Seasearch project, please visit www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk or email seasearch@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk

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. For more information on Seasearch and to see all of the partners involved nationally, please visit www.seasearch.org.uk or email info@seasearch.org.uk

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