



# MARINE SPECIES OF THE DAY



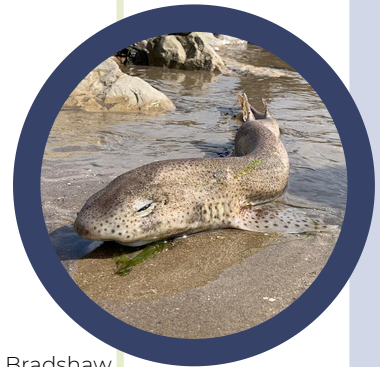
Here is a little bit of information about a few marine species



OYSTERCATCHERS are beautiful birds with distinctive black and white feathers and a bright red bill. Around 110,000 pairs breed in the UK but in the Winter the population is boosted by migrant birds. They're most commonly seen on the coast but can be found inland as well. They feed on cockles and other shellfish, using their strong bill to break them open. Listen out for their loud 'peeping' call. We hold 985 oystercatcher records (last 10 years).

Did you know... we have over 40 species of shark in the UK?! SMALL-SPOTTED CATSHARKS live in shallow waters, particularly when they're young. They're carnivores, feeding on molluscs, crabs and fish. Look out for their black spots and rough skin. Adults sometimes wash up on beaches but you're more likely to spot their egg cases (mermaid's purses). Look out for long (rather than square) shaped egg-cases with tendrils (stringy bits on the end) and without thick edges. They can be a range of colours from pale yellow to black. Make sure when you're recording you write 'Egg Case' as the record type so we know what you've seen. We hold ONLY 25 RECORDS of this species from the last 10 years!

(c) Helen Bradshaw



(c) Elina Doss

The brilliantly named SEA POTATO is a type of urchin. Urchins belong to a group of animals called Echinoderms, which also includes starfish. Urchins have a hard shell called a 'test' which surrounds their body. For the sea potato this is light coloured and covered in tiny, hairy looking spines (looking a bit like a potato!). Empty sea potato tests often wash up on sandy beaches so keep a look out. Sometimes you might even find hundreds of empty tests together. When recording enter 'test' for the record type and note down if you find lots altogether.

We hold 39 sea potato records since 2010 making it by far our MOST RECORDED ECHINODERM..

EGG WRACK is a species of seaweed named for its egg-shaped 'bladders'. These bladders are filled with air and allow the fronds of the seaweed to float when in the water. One bladder grows each year, so you can count how old the seaweed is by counting the bladders on 1 frond. Whilst usually found growing on sheltered, rocky shores, broken bits of this seaweed are also often found washed up on other beaches. We hold a mere 4 records of this species (last 10 years)- we think there definitely should be more, can you help?





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COMMON WHELKS are one of the larger marine snails you're likely to see. They're carnivores, feeding on other molluscs and worms. You might find empty common whelk shells or (most likely) you might spot their egg masses. These look a bit like sponges and are made up of loads of egg cases in a blob, which would have contained baby common whelks. Their carnivorous lifestyle begins at an early age, as the first thing they tend to do is patrol the other egg cases and eat their brothers and sisters! We hold only 66 common whelk records, making it our 2nd most recorded marine mollusc. Given how common it is to find their egg cases in this area we definitely think there should be more records.

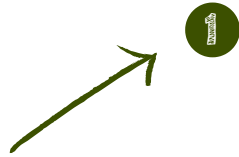
(c) Jeff Buck [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)

SAND MASON WORMS build a protective tube case using sand to live inside. Whilst the tide is out, the worms themselves (which can grow up to 30cm long) live under the sand but the tops of the tubes can be seen poking out, often with a branched end. When underwater the worms feed using tentacles placed on this branched end. You might find tubes poking out of the sand which will have worms inside, or you might find the empty tubes washed up on the beach. Both of these can be recorded. We hold just 4 records of this species since 2010. There should definitely be more



(c) Natasha Murwill

For the #MyPatch campaign we're looking for any records of garden wildlife, or wildlife seen out your window. There are a few ways you can send us this information...



1

Sign up to iNaturalist and become a member of the [project](#). Add observations through the app or website and any which fit the criteria will automatically be added to the campaign



2

Email us with what you've seen: [info@record-lrc.co.uk](mailto:info@record-lrc.co.uk). Make sure you include all the details. Or send us paper records.



3

If you already use Rodis, iRecord or other recording platforms you can carry on with these if you'd like and we will pick up your records as we normally do

