

### Ross Worm *Sabellaria spinulosa* (BAP Habitat)



Worms which construct hard but delicate tubes with sand grains. These tubes collectively form a thin crust, helping to stabilise otherwise mobile habitats. In places, the colonies develop into extensive, reef-like structures standing several centimetres above the seabed.

These reef formations provide valuable stable habitats for other species, but are fragile.

### Seagrass / Eelgrass *Zostera* (BAP Habitat)



A grass-like plant with long, narrow, green leaves. There are three species in the UK, two of which live intertidally, and can be found in south east England. The third, larger-leaved, species lives subtidally and there are no current records of it around Kent and Sussex.

Seagrass beds form important sheltered habitats for many species, including juvenile fish.

### Please tell us if you see any of these species, and include the essential information:

- \* Species name.
- \* Date found.
- \* Location found (OS map reference or GPS position).
- \* Your name, address, e-mail address and telephone number.
- \* If possible, please include a photograph of the specimen.

**Send to: Kent Seasearch, Kent Wildlife Trust**, Tyland Barn, Sandling, Maidstone, Kent. ME14 3BD. 01622 662012 or e-mail [info@kentwildlife.org.uk](mailto:info@kentwildlife.org.uk)

or download the record form from [www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk).

**Seasearch** is a national project for recreational divers to record seabed habitats and species on their dives, thereby helping towards their conservation. Seasearch is run in Kent by Kent Wildlife Trust and in Sussex by East Sussex County Council. For more information, contact Kent Wildlife Trust or visit [www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk) or [www.seasearch.org.uk](http://www.seasearch.org.uk).

This leaflet has been produced as part of **BEACHES AT RISK**, a transnational project working to find a balance between coastal development and the wildlife and natural beauty that make our coasts so important.

[www.geog.sussex.ac.uk/BAR](http://www.geog.sussex.ac.uk/BAR)

**Kent Wildlife Trust** 2008  
KWT Charity No: 239992



## If you see these species on your dives around Kent or Sussex, please tell us where and when!



**These animals and plants are of particular interest.**

Some are rare in south east England, some have been introduced from other parts of the world, while others are spreading, possibly due to warming sea temperatures. Some are protected under the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

**Recording these species will help us track changes occurring in our seas, and assess the effects of climate change and invasive non-native species on our wildlife.**



This project is part-financed  
by the European Union



## Greater Pipefish *Syngnathus acus* Snake Pipefish *Entelurus aequoreus*

Related to seahorses, pipefish are long, thin, tube-like fish with elongated snouts.



The greater pipefish has a hump on its head behind its eyes, while the snake pipefish has a smooth head with a reddish line running from the snout through its eye to its gills, and a series of light coloured rings along its orangey body.

Snake pipefish have recently increased in number, perhaps due to warming seas.

## Seahorses *Hippocampus hippocampus* and *Hippocampus guttulatus*



There are two species of seahorse in the UK, which can be difficult to tell apart. The short-snouted seahorse has a short and upturned snout which is less than a third of the head length. The spiny seahorse has a longer snout and a 'mane' of appendages on its neck.

Given legal protection in 2008 under the Wildlife & Countryside Act, these elusive creatures have been recorded in a few locations around Kent and Sussex.

## Grey Trigger Fish *Balistes carolinensis*



A brownish-green to grey fish up to 40cm long, with a flattened body and a beak-like mouth with fleshy lips. The first dorsal fin can be locked upright and released with the second, trigger, fin.

Originally a Mediterranean species, it is increasingly being recorded around the UK, including Sussex and Kent.

## Ray and Skate eggcases - Mermaids' purses



Skates and rays lay their eggs individually in tough leathery cases known as mermaids' purses, with a 'horn' at each corner. Each species has a distinctively shaped case. Dogfish eggcases are similar, but are longer and thinner and have curly tendrils rather than horns.

While mermaids' purses are often found washed up on the shore, very few records exist of live eggcases on the seabed. (Photographs welcomed, but do not touch them!)

## Native Oyster *Ostrea edulis*

Oysters are robust bivalve molluscs with a rough, scaly shell surface.



The native oyster is roughly circular. Its upper valve is relatively flat, its saucer-shaped lower valve fixed to a hard surface.

The Pacific oyster grows more rapidly than the native. Originally introduced to be farmed, it is now spreading around the SE coast and may displace native species.

## Pacific Oyster *Crassostrea gigas*



The Pacific oyster is roughly oval-shaped with a wavy-edged shell growing to the shape of the substrate, and often with purple patches.

## Ross / Potato Crisp Bryozoan *Pentapora foliacea*



A colonial bryozoan growing in thin brittle plates resembling beige/orange potato crisps joined together into a complex three-dimensional structure. The rounded colonies grow up to about 25cm across.

This species was previously recorded only as far east as Eastbourne, but Kent Seasearch has recently confirmed its presence around Dover.

## Snakelocks Anemone *Anemonia viridis*



A greenish or grey anemone with long tentacles, often tipped in pink, which are rarely withdrawn into the column.

Living on the shore and in shallow water, these anemones are common in the south and west of the British Isles. They have been recorded as far east as Beachy Head in Sussex, but not yet around Kent.

## Jewel Anemone *Corynactis viridis*



Small anemones of many different colours, usually in patches of one variety. Each tentacle has a knob at the end.

## Devonshire Cup Coral *Caryophyllia smithii*



A small solitary hard coral in various colours, with knobbed ends to its tentacles. The ribs of its stony skeleton are visible.

Both species are found on wrecks off Sussex, but have yet to be recorded in Kent.