

Secrets of the Solent – Weave-A-Fish!

Secrets of the Solent is a National Lottery Heritage Fund-supported project led by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust which is celebrating and protecting the amazing people and wildlife that share our waters. The project has been running for one year, and has another three years to go.

The Solent is a special place, with a truly astonishing diversity of species and habitats under its surface. Sadly, this vital environment is under threat from climate change, pollution, habitat loss, and overexploitation. Perhaps an even greater threat is a lack of understanding: many local people are unaware of the incredible marine animals we have living here, or the rare and precious habitats that harbour them.

We want to raise the profile of the Solent's marine life, and increase the appreciation and understanding of this environment amongst its key user groups and coastal communities. To achieve this we are using creative engagement mechanisms, such as art, interpretation and multi-media communications. This is where your help and talents come in - we want to celebrate the species of the Solent through a series of local exhibitions and yarn-bombing events!



Credit: Tara Schirn 2019

What we need from you

Could you knit an octopus, crochet a cuttlefish, or sew a seabass? We're seeking local crafters to choose a species in the Solent that inspires them and create it using textiles. Whether you're crafting alone, as part of your studies, or in a local group, we'd love to hear from you.

Once your species is complete, post it to the Trust with the following:

- 1) Your name
- 2) Time it took to make
- 3) What species it is
- 4) The reason why you chose this species

We'll use your piece in exhibitions and yarn-bombing events during 2020 - it will have a tag attached in recognition of your contribution and why you took part.



What we can do for you

You might be wondering if you need to know a lot about our local marine species, or to have patterns ready. Not at all! In this information pack you'll find details of many different species, as well as knitting patterns to help you get inspired.

If you're participating in a group we're happy to come and give a marine talk with props and pictures about the local species to inspire your choices. We also have a budget to contribute towards the materials of crafting for groups.

For those who like to follow knitting patterns we have some available for free from the Kent Wildlife Trust, who have been running their own marine project called Guardians of the Deep:

<https://guardiansofthedeep.org/coastal-connections/>

If you want a challenge and like to come up with your own knitting or crafty patterns, we would love to share these with others to help them take part - please send them in to us and we can get them up on our website.

Please send your textile marine art and/or patterns to :

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust,
Beechcroft House,
Vicarage Lane,
Curdridge,
Hampshire,
SO32 2DP

Please also feel free to send questions, ideas, and patterns to our Community Engagement Officer, Emily Stroud, on emily.stroud@hiwwt.org.uk or 01489 774446.

Please find examples of Solent marine species below.



Picture credits: Kent Wildlife Trust / Guardians of the Deep

I'm a broad-clawed porcelain crab.



Credit: Paul Naylor 2008 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Broad-clawed porcelain crab

Scientific Name: *Porcellana platycheles*

Habitat: Intertidal and likes to live under boulders and large stones (cliffs, beaches, wetlands & mudflats) .

Average Size: 15mm

Average Life span: 2 years

Diet: They feed by filtering plankton and other edible materials out of the water

Fascinating Fact: They are able to shed their limbs in order to escape attack, and are also covered in tiny hairs.

I'm a thresher shark.



Credit: Thomas Alexander 2013

Name: Thresher Shark

Scientific Name: *Alopias vulpinus*

Habitat: Deep water but also shallow water too.

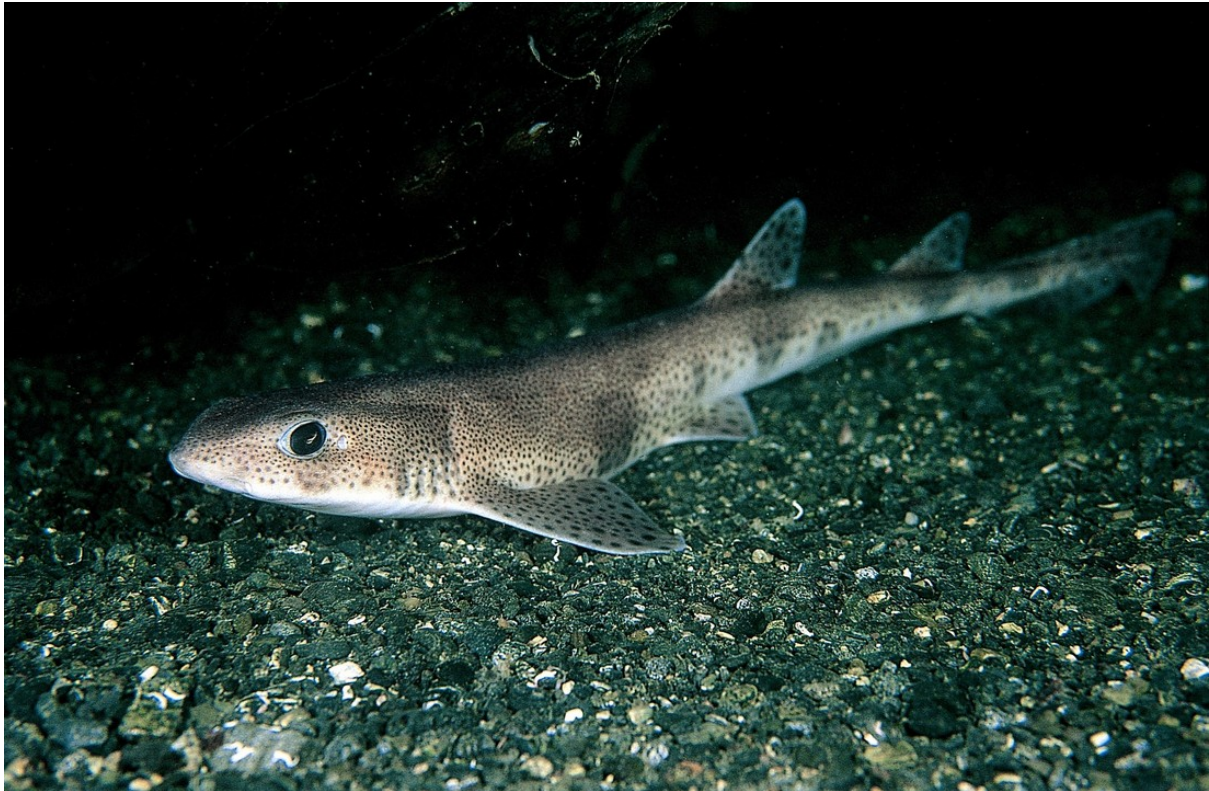
Average Size: 6m

Average Life span: 20 years

Diet: Schooling fish, cephalopods, crabs & shrimp.

Fascinating Fact: They use their whip-like tail to stun prey then eat them. They also have 28 rows of teeth and visit the coast of the Isle of Wight during the summer. This species is classed as endangered.

I'm a small-spotted catshark.



Credit Paul Naylor 2014 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Small-Spotted Catshark

Scientific Name: *Scyliorhinus canicula*

Habitat: Shallow sub-littoral to the edge of the continental shelf to depths of at least 300 m

Average Size: 75 - 100 cm

Average Life span: 12 years

Diet: Crabs, molluscs & small fish

Fascinating Fact: Tooth-like skin that was used as sandpaper historically

I'm a harbour seal.



Credit: Chas Spradbery 2009 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Harbour Seal

Scientific Name: *Phoca vitulina*

Habitat: Coastal waters, sandbanks, beaches, reefs & protected tidal rocks

Average Size: 2m

Average Life span: 20 -35 years

Diet: Fishes, squid, whelks, crabs & mussels

Fascinating Fact: The pups can swim when they're only a few hours old

I'm a Snake Locks Anemone



Name: Snake Locks Anemone

Scientific Name: *Anemonia viridis*

Habitat: Snakelocks anemones live attached to rocks on the low shore and in shallow seas down to about 12m

Average Size: Diameter: up to 8cm with tentacles up to 15cm long

Average Life span: over 10 years

Diet: Their tentacles are normally bright green with purple tips and are home to a kind of algae which produces energy from sunlight. As such Snakelocks anemones live in the sunniest spots on the shore and unlike other anemones, they rarely retract their tentacles in order to make the most of the sunlight. In addition to the energy captured from the photosynthetic algae, they use their long stinging tentacles to capture prey such as prawns, small fish and sea snails.

Fascinating Fact: Snakelocks anemone cells contain a special protein that makes them glow fluorescent green under ultraviolet light!

I'm a Sand Mason Worm.



Credit Emily Stroud 2019 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Sand Mason Worm

Scientific Name: *Lanice conchilega*

Habitat: Intertidal and sub-tidal sediments

Average Size: Worm, length: 30cm, Tube, length: 45cm but only 5cm above the seabed

Average Life span: 1-2 years

Diet: Plankton

Fascinating Fact: Makes a tube out of sand grains and shell fragments, they're perfect food for flatfish and wading birds.

I'm an Atlantic mackerel.



Credit: Titus Tschardtke

Name: Atlantic Mackerel

Scientific Name: *Comber scombrus*

Habitat: Arrive in UK waters in the summer & likes shallow ocean water.

Average Size: 60 cm

Average Life span: 15 years

Diet: Small fishes and prawns

Fascinating Fact: This species does not possess a swim bladder & females release up to 450,000 eggs a season

I'm a short snouted seahorse.



Credit: Paul Naylor 2007 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Short snouted seahorse

Scientific Name: *Hippocampus hippocampus*

Habitat: Shallow water & sea grass meadows.

Average Size: 15cm

Average Life span: 1-5 years

Diet: Small shrimp and plankton.

Fascinating Fact: Females transfer eggs to males, who then self-fertilise and give birth to the young

I'm a european sea bass.



Credit: Vouliagmeni 2015

Name: European Sea bass

Scientific Name: *Dicentrarchus labrax*

Habitat: Arrive in UK littoral waters and in winter spawn off shore.

Average Size: 1m

Average Life span: 25 years

Diet: Shrimp and crustaceans, squid & smaller fish.

Fascinating Fact: Can live in brackish water.

I'm a bottle-nosed dolphin.



Credit : Holterscan 2010

Name: Bottle-nosed dolphin

Scientific Name: *Tursiops truncatus*

Habitat: Prefer coastal and inshore regions.

Average Size: 4m

Average Life span: 45-50 years

Diet: Fishes, squids, and crustaceans

Fascinating Fact: Very acrobatic and friendly around people. They also possess unique nicks and notches on their dorsal fin which helps identify individuals

I'm an oystercatcher.



Credit: Dave Kilbery 2008 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Oystercatcher

Scientific Name: *Haematopus ostralegus*

Habitat: Deep water but also shallow water too.

Average Size: 45cm in length with an 83cm wingspan.

Average Life span: 12 years

Diet: Shellfish, cockles, mussels, oysters, and worms

Fascinating Fact: Makes a loud and distinctive 'peep-ing' call. Has a flattened bill to help open shell fish.

I'm a dog whelk.



Credit Jon Oakley 2009 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Dog whelk

Scientific Name: *Nucella lapillus*

Habitat: Intertidal shore and sublittoral

Average Size: 6 cm

Average Life span: 7 years

Diet: Barnacles and mussels

Fascinating Fact: They bore through shells with a special tooth, and then inject an enzyme that digest their prey, which they then suck up with their proboscis.

I'm a common cuttlefish.



Name: Common Cuttlefish

Scientific Name: *Sepia officinalis*

Habitat: Live in deeper water but comes into shallow water to breed in spring. They attach their eggs to seaweed and sea grass.

Average Size: 45cm

Average Life span:

Diet: Molluscs, crustaceans, fish & other cuttlefish.

Fascinating Fact: They're capable of changing the colour and texture of their skin. They also possess three hearts and green blood. Also their ink was used for centuries by artists.

I'm a ballan wrasse.



Credit Paul Naylor 2011 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Ballan wrasse

Scientific Name: *Labrus bergylta*

Habitat: Inshore rock pools and rocky coasts.

Average Size: 30 cm

Average Life span: 30 years

Diet: Mussels, cockles, limpets & winkles.

Fascinating Fact: There are no external differences between sexes. Ballan Wrasse can also change their gender depending on conditions.

I'm a common cockle.



Credit Jon Oakley 2009 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Common Cockle

Scientific Name: *Cerastoderma edule*

Habitat: Intertidal, sometimes sub-tidally. The top few centimetres of sediment.

Average Size: 5 cm

Average Life span: 5-6 years

Diet: Feeds on plankton.

Fascinating Fact: 10,000 individuals may live in just one square metre.

I'm a plaice.



Credit: Paul Naylor 2014 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Plaice

Scientific Name: *Pleuronectes platessa*

Habitat: Sandy Sea beds

Average Size: 50 cm

Average Life span: 40-50 years

Diet: Molluscs and worms.

Fascinating Fact: They camouflage themselves against the sea bed in order to ambush their prey.

I'm a slipper limpet.



Credit Jon Oakley 2009 / Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Name: Slipper Limpet

Scientific Name: *Crepidula fornicata*

Habitat: Low water mark and the shallow sub-littoral water.

Average Size: 5 cm

Average Life span: 5-10 years

Diet: Mussels, cockles, limpets & winkles.

Fascinating Fact: Live in chains of up to 12 animals, with the female being the oldest and the first in the chain, at the bottom.

I'm an undulate ray.



Credit: [Raja_undulata.jpg: jmerelo](#)

Name: Undulate Ray

Scientific Name: *Raja undulata*

Habitat: Prefers shallow waters, on sandy and muddy floor of the ocean.

Average Size: 90 cm

Average Life span: 20 years

Diet: Fish and squid & crustaceans.

Fascinating Fact: Their name from the undulating motion of the edge of their fins. They're endangered due to overfishing, but are now a Prohibited Species. They are slow breeders, with female being sexually mature at nine years old.