

SHORENI



**Ulster
Wildlife**



CEDaR
Centre for Environmental
Data and Recording



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'
**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

SHORE SAFETY



- **Dress appropriately:** Don't forget essentials like hats, scarves, gloves, and sunscreen.
- **Check tides and weather:** Visit www.willyweather.co.uk for updates before heading out.
- **Carry a mobile phone:** Always have your phone on hand for emergencies.
- **Exercise caution:** Be careful when entering and leaving the shore, as surfaces can be slippery.
- **Stay safe in the water:** Never wade into water deeper than your shins.
- **Wear appropriate footwear:** Always opt for boots or wellingtons; no bare feet allowed.
- **Avoid hazards:** Steer clear of sharp or dangerous objects, including marine life.
- **Cover wounds:** Ensure any open cuts are properly covered.
- **Practice good hygiene:** Wash your hands with soap and water after your activities.
- **Stay vigilant:** Be aware of hazard signs, such as those indicating cliff falls, and avoid working in those areas.



SEASHORE CODE



- Always return boulders, stones, and seaweed to their original positions.
- Minimize trampling on seaweed and wildlife whenever possible.
- Return animals to their original locations.
- Handle animals gently and with wet hands.
- If you use a bucket or tray for viewing or photography, remember to change the water frequently to prevent overheating.
- Leave no trace—take your litter back with you.



THE SURVEY



- Arrive Early: Arrive one hour before low tide to prepare for your exploration.
- Dive into Discovery: Spend over 15 minutes uncovering the low shore.
- Explore the Middle Ground: Spend another 15 minutes on the mid shore.
- Reach New Heights: Explore the high shore for at least 15 more minutes.

Share Your Discoveries: Upload your photos and identify your finds on

iNaturalist! 

iNATURALIST
LINKS

HINTS AND TIPS



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Wildlife**



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BRING NATURE BACK



PHOTO TAKING GUIDE

HINTS AND TIPS



- Get close to your subject for detailed shots.
- Utilize a white tray or Tupperware dish to capture clear images of individuals.
- Aim to make the subject as large as possible within the frame.
- Bring a small ruler to provide a sense of scale.
- Ensure your phone's GPS is activated to accurately record the location of your subject.



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BRING NATURE BACK



MEMBERSHIP

HOW YOU CAN HELP!



**Ulster
Wildlife**

- Become a member of Ulster Wildlife and help bring nature back.
- Volunteer with us.
- Adopt an Animal – choose from hedgehog, red squirrel, barn owl or shark.
- Sign up for our email updates.
- Follow us on social media.



SHORENI

BRING NATURE BACK



**SPECIES
ID
GUIDE**

KEY



**Ulster
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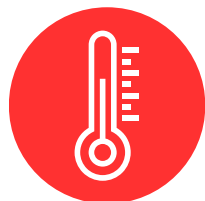
Northern Ireland Priority Species

Species of particular importance around Northern Ireland



Invasive alien species

Non-native species which harm ecosystems



Climate change indicators

Species that are moving or changing their distributions due to climate change



Upper shore species

Species found at the highest point of the intertidal zone



Mid shore species

Species found at the middle point of the intertidal zone



Low shore species

Species found on the lowest point of the intertidal zone when the tide is out

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CONFUSION SPECIES

BRING NATURE BACK





Wireweed

Sargassum muticum

See key on title card:



**Ulster
Wildlife**

Colour: Light brown to yellow

Where to look: In rockpools all over the shore and on rocks on the lower shore where it grows rapidly

Key features:

- A 'wire-like' stem with long stringy branches
- Branches are covered in numerous small leafy appendages and berry-like floats
- Its form can either be long and narrow or large and bushy



Full length: up to 200cm



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CONFUSION SPECIES: Wireweed
(*Sargassum muticum*)

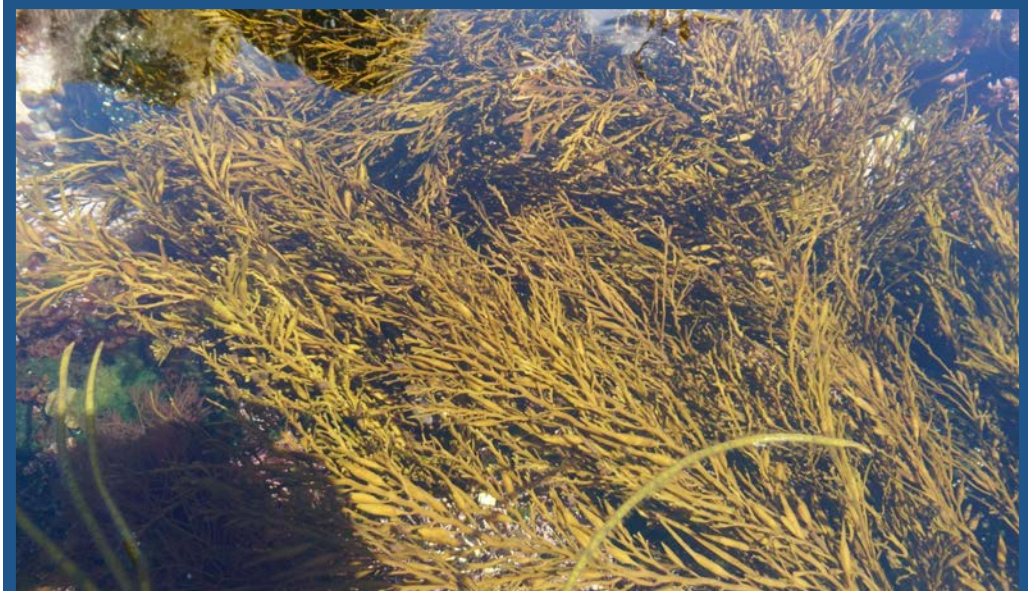
Sea - Oak

Halidrys siliquosa

See key on title card:

**Ulster
Wildlife****Colour:** Olive-green to brown**Where to look:** Found mid shore in rockpools and on the lower shore**Key features:**

- Main stem and branches are flattened
- Stems branch alternately
- Stems have oblong air bladders
- Tough and leathery texture



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Full length: up to 120cm**SHORENI****BRING NATURE BACK**





Wakame

Undaria pinnatifida

See key on title card:



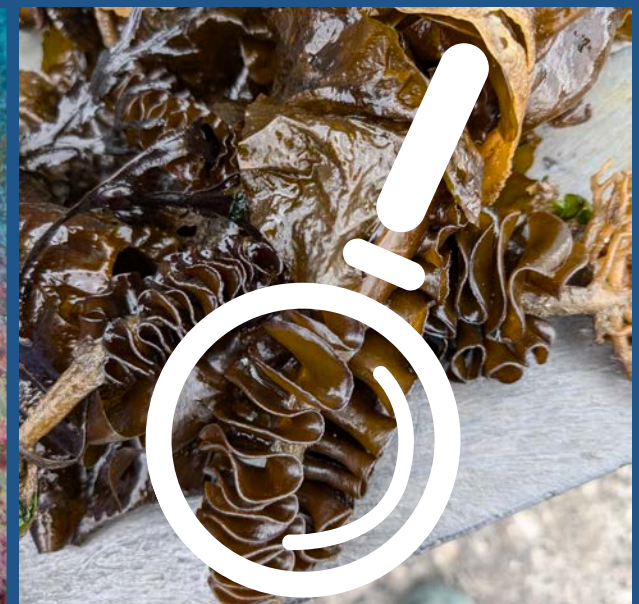
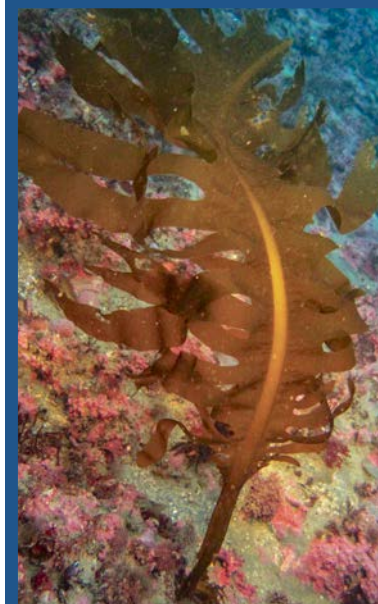
**Ulster
Wildlife**

Colour: Brown

Where to look: Any hard surface below the high tide mark to 15m deep

Key features:

- Large brown seaweed or kelp
- Branched holdfast (attachment point), flat broad midrib
- Blades are broad, flattened, with wavy edges, and the frond (leaf) resembles a hand
- Frilly reproductive bodies can be found at the base of the stipe (stem) in mature specimens

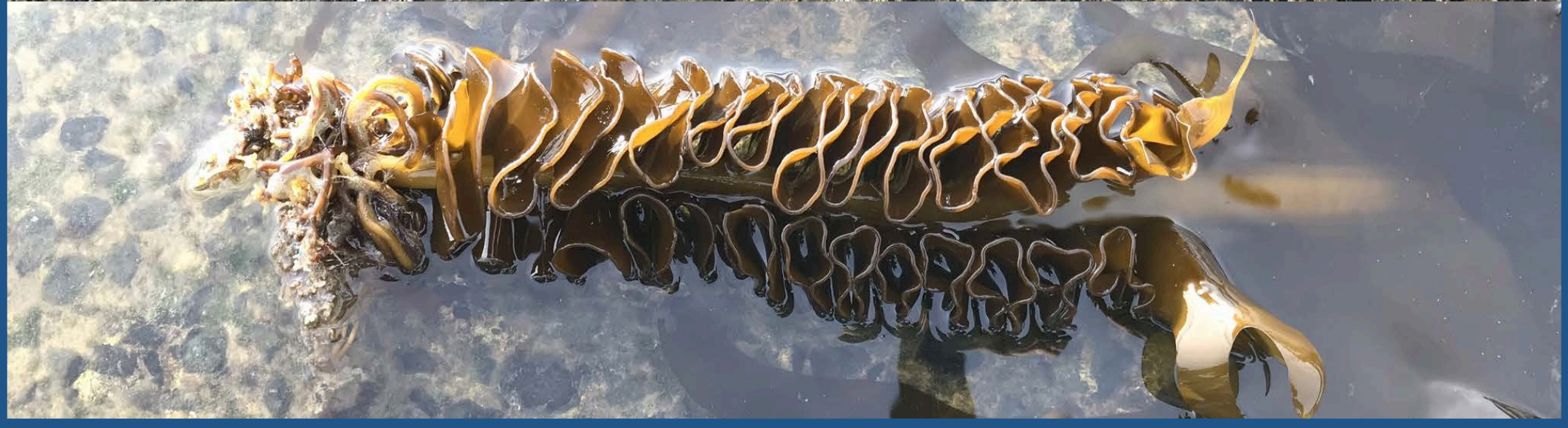


Full length: up to 1 - 3m



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Jack Alcorn, some rights reserved (CC BY-NC)
Nicola Baines, some rights reserved (CC BY-NC)







Dabberlocks

Alaria esculenta

See key on title card:



Colour: Light to dark brown

Where to look: Found on exposed rocky shores on low spring tides

Key features:

- Spear-shaped frond (leaf) with a distinctive midrib
- Frond is thin, delicate and easily torn
- Short flexible stipe (stem)
- Claw-like holdfast (attachment point)



Full length: up to 150cm



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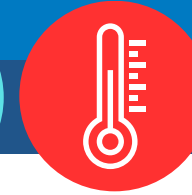




Sugar Kelp

Saccharina latissima

See key on title card:



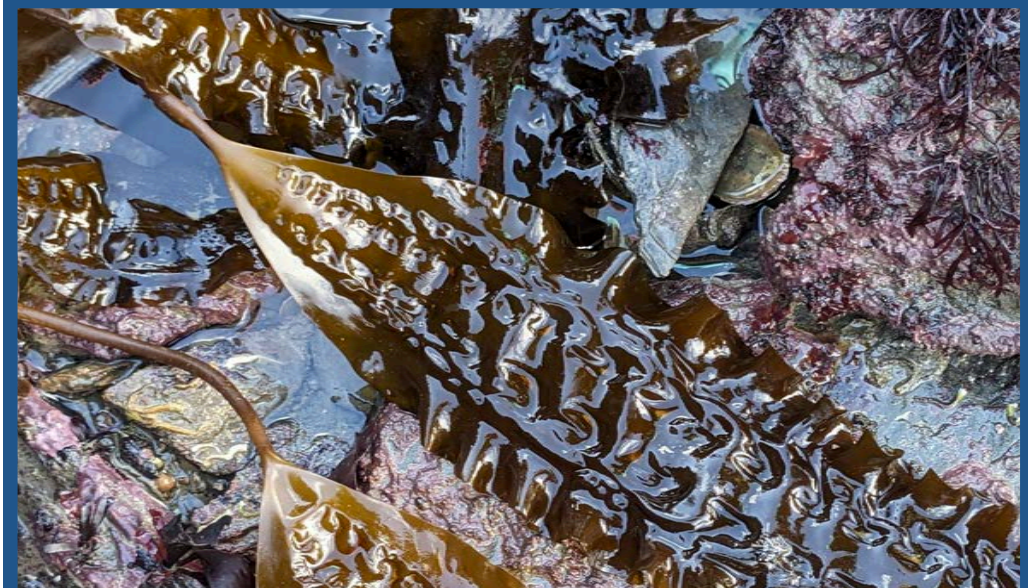
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Colour: Brown

Where to look: Found attached to rocks in the lower shore and sub-tidally

Key features:

- Its long, flat, strap-like blades have distinctive crinkled edges
- The blades are thick and tough and are attached to the rock by a string holdfast (attachment point)
- Generally found in sheltered areas



Full length: up to 150cm



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Oarweed

Laminaria digitata

See key on title card:



Colour: Dark browny-green

Where to look: Found attached to rocks in the lower shore and sub-tidally

Key features:

- The fronds are flat and spilt into long finger-like projections (resembles a hand)
- The fronds are attached to a flexible stipe (stem) that does not break easily and is held onto the rocks by a holdfast that resembles roots
- The stipe is generally smooth and free of other organisms growing on it



David Spencer Muirhead, some rights reserved (CC BY-NC)

Full length: up to 2m



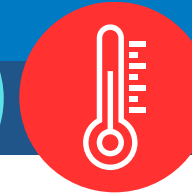




Cuvie

Laminaria hyperborea

See key on title card:



**Ulster
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Colour: Brown

Where to look: Found attached to rocks in the lower shore and sub-tidally

Key features:

- Frond (leaf) is broad and is finger-like
- Fronds lack a midrib
- Stipe (stem) is tough and stiff, often covered in other organisms
- Claw-like holdfast (attachment point)



Full length: up to 3.6m



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Bladder Wrack

Fucus vesiculosus

See key on title card:



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Colour: Brown-green

Where to look: Found from the upper shore down to the lower shore

Key features:

- The fronds have air sacs called 'bladders'
- Fronds branch where there are paired bladders
- Ribs are present down the middle of the blades



Full length: up to 90cm



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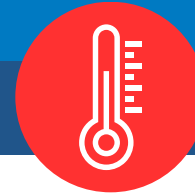




Spiral Wrack

Fucus spiralis

See key on title card:



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Colour: Olive green to light brown

Where to look: Found attached to wrack on the upper shore

Key features:

- The fronds (leaves) have characteristic spiral with an obvious midrib
- Fronds are evenly forked
- Dark yellow reproductive bladder-like structure may be present at the ends



Full length: up to 20cm



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Serrated Wrack

Fucus serratus

See key on title card:



Colour: Olive green to light brown

Where to look: Found on the middle and lower shore

Key features:

- Fronds have a distinctive serrated edge
- Lumpy reproductive bodies can be found on the end of fronds
- Fronds branch regularly (dichotomously)



Full length: up to 60cm



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Egg Wrack

Ascophyllum nodosum

See key on title card:



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Colour: Olive green to light brown

Where to look: Found attached to rocks and boulders on the low shore in sheltered sites

Key features:

- Fronds are tough and leathery
- Egg-shaped air bladders at intervals along the main stem and side branches
- Each air bladder along one strand represents a year of growth!



Full length: up to 150cm



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Oyster Thief

Colpomenia peregrina

See key on title card:



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Colour: Brown

Where to look: Found in rockpools or shallow subtidal

Key features:

- Thin-walled hollow sphere that becomes furrowed as it ages
- Dry, papery texture
- Named oyster thief as specimens attached to oysters can float away with them attached



Full length: up to 7cm



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Common tortoiseshell limpet

Testudinalia testudinalis

See key on title card:



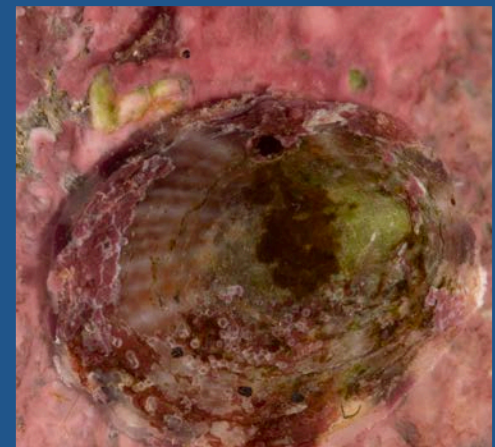
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Colour: Grey, green, off-white or brown with a reddish brown mottling

Where to look: Found on rocks within the middle or lower shore or sub tidally

Key features:

- A very distinctive limpet due to the mottled 'tortoiseshell' like pattern on the shell
- It is also very small when compared to other commonly found limpet species



**White tortoiseshell
limpet**
(*Tectura virginea*)

Full length: up to 2.5cm



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Slipper Limpet

Crepidula fornicata

See key on title card:



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Colour: Pale with reddish brown blotches but often appearing brown or green due to algal covern

Where to look: Lower sandy, muddy shores

Key features:

- Can be found on their own or in long chain-forming groups
- Smooth shell
- Oval shell looks cap-like and bends to the right



Full length: up to 5cm



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Lined Topshell (Toothed)

Phorcus lineatus

See key on title card:



Colour: Variable. Dark green to grey with complex brown/purple zigzag patterns

Where to look: Found on rocks on the middle and upper shore

Key features:

- Large, conical shaped shell
- Distinctive white mother-of-pearl around shell opening
- White bulge in edge of shell opening known as the 'tooth'



Full length: up to 2cm



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Purple Topshell

Steromphala umbilicalis

See key on title card:



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Colour: Grey with broad purple stripes

Where to look: Found on rocks on the middle and upper shore

Key features:

- Large round hole (umbilicus) above opening of the shell in adults (watch out, as juvenile **Grey Topshells** have an umbilicus)
- Flat profile, broader than tall
- Broad purple stripes on top and round lip of the shell opening



Full length: up to 1.5cm high x 2.2cm across



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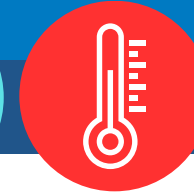




Painted Topshell

Calliostoma zizyphinum

See key on title card:



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Colour: Yellowish-pink with darker pink/red stripes. Pure white form common in Strangford Lough

Where to look: Found under rocks and on seaweed on the lower shore

Key features:

- Conical shell with sharp point and broad base
- Clean shell with spiral grooves and ridges
- The foot (inside) is pinkish-orange with flecks of red pigment



Full length: ~2.5cm high



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Pacific Oyster

Magallana gigas

See key on title card:



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Colour: Variable, yellow-cream, grey, brown or bluish-purple

Where to look: Found on rocks on the middle and lower shore

Key features:

- Wavy lip-line where the two shells meet is flecked with dark purple markings and is much more pronounced than in native oysters
- One half of the shell is almost flat, the second half very domed
- Rough shell margin with 6 or 7 coarse ridges and thick ribs



Full length: 'frilly' shell up to 18cm



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Native Oyster (Flat)

Ostrea edulis

See key on title card:



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Colour: Greyish-white in colour becoming darker with age

Where to look: Found partially attached to hard substrates shallow subtidal or lower shore

Key features:

- Irregular, rough textured shell
- Circular shape that fits comfortably in palm of hand
- Two shells, one flat one concave
- Can be found unattached in the intertidal



Full length: shell up to 15cm



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Horse Mussel

Modiolus modiolus

See key on title card:



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Colour: Large individuals are deep brown in colour and can look weathered with white patches

Where to look: Not likely to find live specimens, shells can be found washed up along the shore

Key features:

- Looks like a large version of a blue mussel
- Often covered in other organisms and algae



Blue mussel
(*Mytilus edulis*)

Full length: shell up to 20cm



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Variegated Scallop

Mimachlamys varia

See key on title card:



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Colour: Variable, purple, red, white, yellow, brown, often patterned

Where to look: Attached to the underside of boulders on the low shore

Key features:

- Oval shaped bivalve
- Both shells are convex
- 25-25 ribs on each shell which have small spiny teeth
- Auricles (ears) (at hinge of shell) unequal



Full length: up to 6cm



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Queen Scallop

Aequipecten opercularis

See key on title card:



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Colour: Pink, brown, orange or yellow with bands, zigzags, rays and spots

Where to look: Small specimens can be found under rocks on the low shore.

Key features:

- Oval shaped bivalve, broader compared to length than the **Variegated scallop**
- The left valve (shell) is slightly more convex than the right
- 20 ribs on each shell
- Auricles (ears) (at hinge of shell) unequal



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Full length: Up to 9cm







Ocean Quahog

Arctica islandica

See key on title card:



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Colour: Brown-black with white weathering

Where to look: Not likely to find live specimens, shells can be found washed up along the shore

Key features:

- Extremely robust, convex shells
- Numerous concentric rings
- Thought to be one of the oldest organisms on earth!



Full length: up to 12cm



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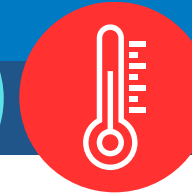




Montagu's Crab

Xantho hydrophilus

See key on title card:



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Colour: Vary considerably in colour but often reddish-brown to yellow with a marbled appearance

Where to look: Under rocks on the lower shore

Key features:

- Bulky crab with five blunt 'teeth' down each side of the carapace (body)
- Lacks 'teeth' between the eyes
- When disturbed it will raise its claws
- Hairless legs



Full length: up to 7cm wide



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Northern Starfish

Leptasterias muelleri

See key on title card:

M

L



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Colour: Variable, pink, violet, green, grey or brown

Where to look: Under rocks and boulders in rock pools from the mid shore down to low shore

Key features:

- A small spiny starfish
- 5 arms that are broad at the base and taper out with paler colouration on the tips
- Upper surface has many knobby spines arranged in rows



Full length: up to 6cm



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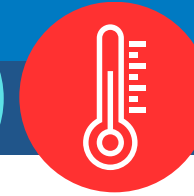




Common Starfish

Asterias rubens

See key on title card:



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Colour: Pale orange or orange-brown

Where to look: Under rocks and boulders in rock pools from the mid shore down to low shore

Key features:

- Lines of white spines on each arm distinguishes from Northern starfish
- 5 tapered arms
- Upper surface has many knobby spines arranged irregularly



Full length: up to 30cm (can be up to 52cm)



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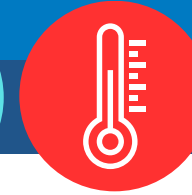




Tiny Cushion Star

Asterina phylactica

See key on title card:



**Ulster
Wildlife**

Colour: Green and orange

Where to look: Under rocks and boulders in
rock pools on the low shore

Key features:

- A very small cushion star
- 5 very short arms
- Distinctive red star in the centre of the upper surface with greenish background



Full length: up to 1.5cm



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Leathery Sea Squirt

Styela clava

See key on title card:



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Colour: Brown

Where to look: Any hard surface at low tide,
attached to mussel/oyster shells

Key features:

- Solitary sea squirt
- Surface leathery with folds and swellings
- Body is long, narrow and club-shaped



Brenton Frigge, some rights reserved (CC BY-NC)

Full length: up to 12cm



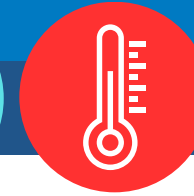




Beadlet Anemone

Actinia equina

See key on title card:



Colour: Usually dark red but can also be green, orange or brown

Where to look: On rocks, in crevices and in rockpools from the mid to low shore

Key features:

- Broad jelly-like base
- Up to 192 thin, short tentacles
- Tentacles retract quickly when disturbed or out of water
- Bright blue spots sometimes present just below outer row of tentacles can confuse it with strawberry anemone that has spots all over base



**Ulster
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Strawberry anemone
(*Actinia fragacea*)

Full length: Up to 6cm



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European Eel

Anguilla anguilla

See key on title card:



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Colour: Transparent or brownish-yellow to black

Where to look: Under rocks and boulders in rock pools from the mid shore down to low shore

Key features:

- Seen on the rocky shore as the juvenile 'glass' eels or 'bootlace' eels which are darker in colour
- Critically endangered species



Full length: up to 1.5m



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