

Photographer: Paul Naylor



### Seagrass beds

- Made up of common eelgrass (*Zostera marina*)
- Nationally scarce
- Stabilises sediment, absorbs wave energy and creates nursery habitats for commercial fish species

Photo: National Lobster Hatchery



### European spiny lobster (*Palinurus elphas*)

- Red-brown in colour
- Long antennae and small hook-like claws
- Can grow to 50cm body length, usually no more than 40cm
- Found on exposed rock faces and rocky seabed

More information on PMFs in Scotland and how they are protected can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website:

[www.nature.scot/professional-advice/safeguarding-protected-areas-and-species/priority-marine-features-scotlands-seas](http://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/safeguarding-protected-areas-and-species/priority-marine-features-scotlands-seas)

More information on the species in this guide can be found on The Marine Life Information Network website:

[www.marlin.ac.uk](http://www.marlin.ac.uk)

## Please report your sightings to:

**Marine Spatial Planning Team**

**Phone: 01595 772000**

**E-mail: [marineplan@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:marineplan@uhi.ac.uk)**

### Please include:

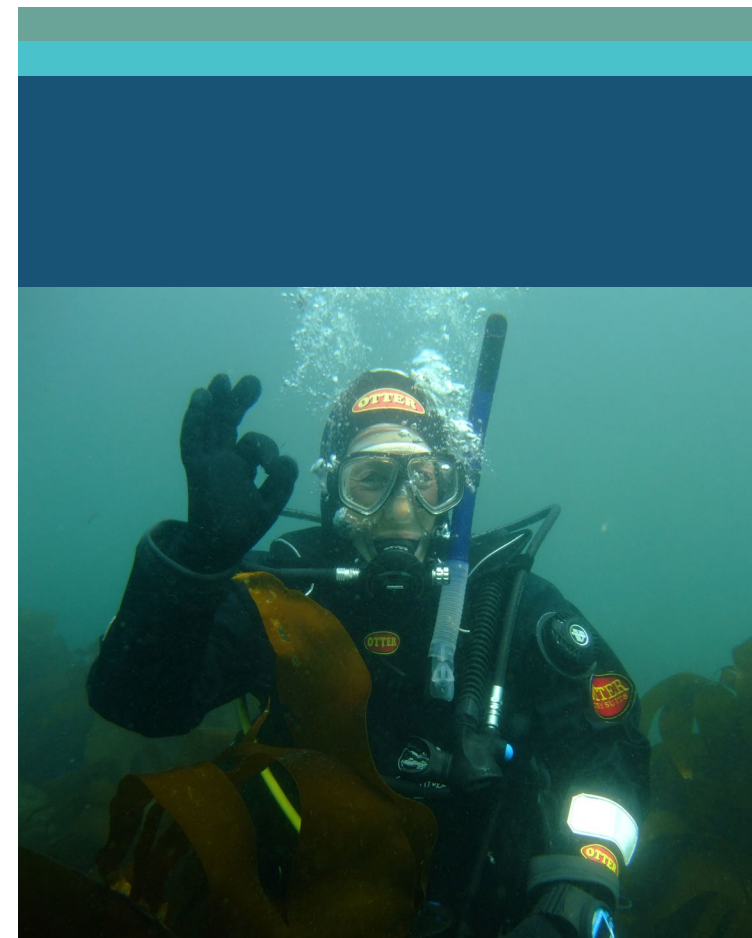
- Species
- Date
- Your name
- Location including co-ordinates
- Depth
- Photograph (if available)



NAFC Marine Centre  
University of the  
Highlands and Islands



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Highlands and Islands



**How to Report Sightings of:  
Priority Marine Features  
(PMFs)**

**Information for Divers**

Front page photographer: Rachel Shucksmith (NAFC Marine Centre)



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### Maerl

- Pink when alive, white when dead
- Grows very slowly
- Create beds which are an important habitat and nursery area for many species
- Prefer areas of tidal flow

Photographer: Rachel Shucksmith (NAFC Marine Centre)



### Horse mussel beds (*Modiolus modiolus*)

- Adults commonly up to 15cm in length, dark brown in colour
- May be found as scattered individuals or in dense beds.

Photographer: Paul Naylor



### White cluster anemone (*Parazoanthus anguicomus*)

- Colonial anemone, each polyp up to 25mm tall, 8mm diameter
- White in colour, sometimes tinted with buff or pink
- Found on rocky overhangs
- Nationally scarce. has been recorded in waters around Papa Stour and Green Holm

Photographer: Paul Naylor



### Native oyster (*Ostrea edulis*)

- Attached to rocks on muddy bottom
- Grows up to 11cm long
- Nationally rare, previously widespread in Shetland
- Recorded in Weisdale Voe

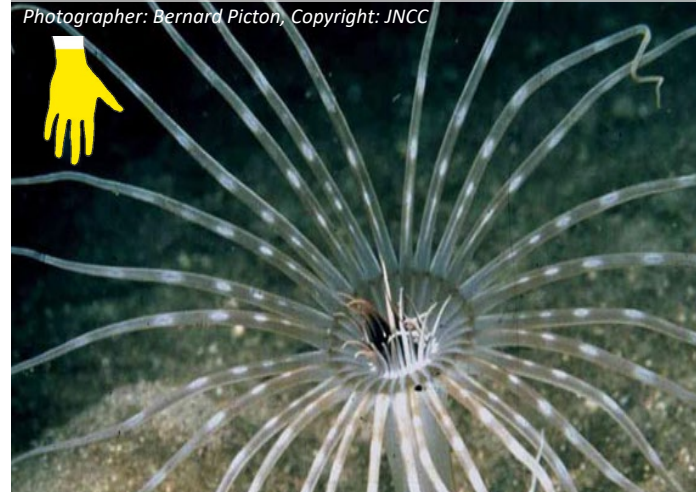
Photographer: Dr Keith Hiscock



### Fan mussel (*Atrina fragilis*)

- Grows up to 37cm in length
- One-two thirds of the shell is embedded in the mud or sand
- Nationally scarce, one of the most endangered molluscs in the UK
- Historic offshore records from around Shetland

Photographer: Bernard Picton, Copyright: JNCC



### Burrowing anemone (*Arachnanthus sarsi*)

- Very large, up to 20cm high
- Lives buried in mud, sand or shelly mud. Found at depths of around 10-36m
- May be nocturnal
- One historical Shetland record from Lunna Kirk
- Not to be confused with the tube anemone (*Cerianthus lloydii*)