

Pwll y Môr Rockpool ID Guide

Use this guide to identify the species in the Pwll y Môr rockpool!



Anemones



Beadlet anemone

Actinia equina

Up to 5cm in diameter. A stocky anemone with short thick tentacles. Usually dark red in colour but can be green or orange. The anemone retracts its tentacles when disturbed or at low tide, leaving a jelly-like blob. Beadlet anemones are highly territorial, fighting each other with their blue stinging cells.



Snakelocks anemone

Anemonia viridis

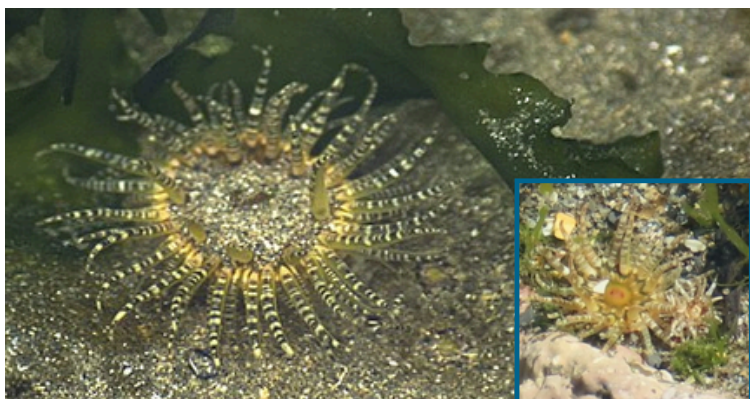
Up to 5cm in diameter. Distinctive anemone that does not completely retract its tentacles. Numerous long tentacles that can be green with a pink/purple tip, or uniformly grey/brown. Tentacles are home to algae which act in a symbiotic relationship with the anemone.



Dahlia anemone

Urticina felina

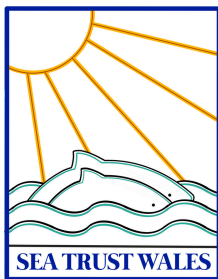
Up to 15cm in diameter. A large, colourful anemone with many short, thick tentacles. The tentacles can be plain or striped and come in a variety of colours. Fragments of sand and shell stick to warts along the anemones body, camouflaging them in the rockpool.



Gem anemone

Aulactinia verrucosa

Up to 6cm in diameter. Bright white tentacles spotted or banded with grey. The disk is patterned and can be various colours. It never has pieces of sand or shell attached. It has distinctive white rows of warts on the column.



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Strawberry anemone

Actinia fragacea

Up to 10cm in diameter. Larger than the beadlet anemone. Bright red with distinct green spots, making it look like a strawberry! Retracts its tentacles at low tide or when disturbed.



Daisy anemone

Cereus pedunculatus

Up to 7cm wide. A large anemone found in deep pools or in crevices. Up to 100 tentacles in a plum/brown colour. Trumpet shaped column that often covered in sediment.

Gastropods



Common limpet

Patella vulgata

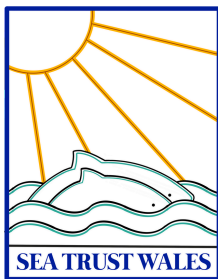
Up to 6cm long. Commonly seen on British rocky shores. Grey coloured conical shells that are found clamped onto rocks. A limpet's tongue is the strongest biological substance on Earth!



Common periwinkle (Edible periwinkle)

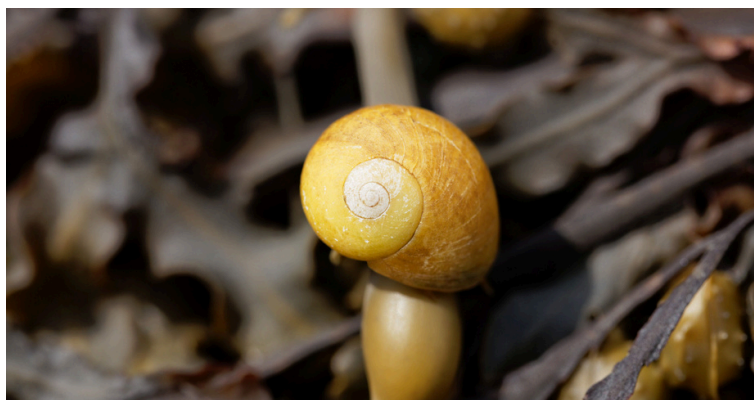
Littorina littorea

Up to 5cm in height. The largest British periwinkle. Tends to be dark brown/black in colour but can be more grey/red. Sharp conical shell, usually patterned with darker spiral lines. Shell appears more smooth in older animals.



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Flat periwinkle

Littorina obtusata/fabalis

Up to 1.5cm in height. Can be a variety of colours – orange, white, striped, but are commonly a bright yellow or brown. The spiral shell has a flat apex. They are often found within seaweed. There are two species of flat periwinkle, but you cannot identify which it is without dissection!



Flat topshell (Purple topshell)

Steromphala umbilicalis

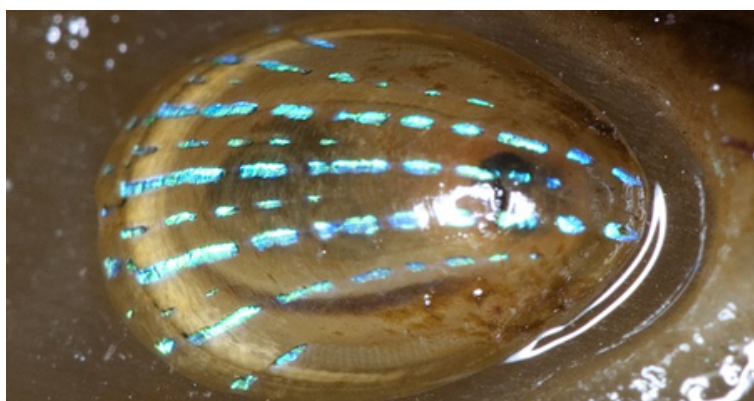
Up to 2cm in height. Mostly flat shell with alternating bands of grey and purple/pink bands. "Candy stripe" pattern in bands along the shell.



Dog whelk

Nucella lapillus

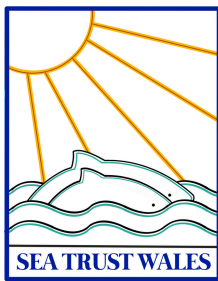
Up to 6cm in height. An active predator which feeds on barnacles and mussels. They have a conical shell which can be white/yellow in colour.



Blue-rayed limpet

Patella pellucida

Up to 2cm in length. Much smaller than the common limpet! Oval shaped translucent shell with an apex at the anterior. The shell is covered with 2–8 bright blue broken bands, giving the limpet its name! They are found at low tide attached to kelp.



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Painted Topshell

Calliostoma zizyphinum

These top shells have a tall, conical shell that can reach up to 3cm high. The shell can be yellow, pink or purple in colour with bands of pink and purple. The shell is also always clean. The snails have an extendable foot that cleans the shell.



Thick (Toothed) Topshell

Phorcus lineatus

Up to 2cm in height, these snails have a conical and swirled shell that is grey with a brown zig-zag pattern and mother of pearl on the inside. They can be distinguished from other snails due to the tooth on the inside of the shell.



Sand mason worm

Lanice conchilega

These worms use grains of sand and bits of shells to build a protective case to live in. The top of the tube sticks out of the sand. The tops can be covered with a fan like structure built from sand and shell.

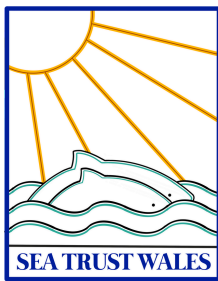
Bivalves



Common mussel

Mytilus edulis

One of the most familiar molluscs, mussels can be found on rocky and sandy shores all over the UK. They are a triangle shape in a blueish/grey colour and have concentric lines. They often form dense mussel beds on rocks.



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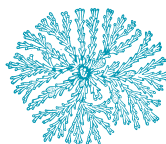


Cockle

Cerastoderma edule

These are a medium sized mollusc (up to 5cm long), with a clam like shell that is round and has many ridges. The shell can be colours of yellow, cream or brown and is white on the inside.

Bryozoa



Sea mat

Membranipora membranacea (top)
and *Electra pilosa* (bottom)

A lacy-like mesh growing on seaweed/hard surfaces. Sea mats can cover huge sections of seaweeds on rocky shores. They are a colony of animals called zooids. These tiny animals live together, feeding on phytoplankton. These animals are Bryozoa or Sea mosses.

We have two different species of sea mats. *Membranipora membranacea* has rectangular boxes whilst *Electra pilosa* has oval boxes.

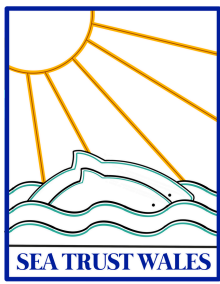
Crustaceans



Barnacles

Cirripedia sp.

Found attached to hard surfaces, usually rocks. They are small and white/grey in colour. There are many species of barnacle which are difficult to tell apart.



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Polyplacophora

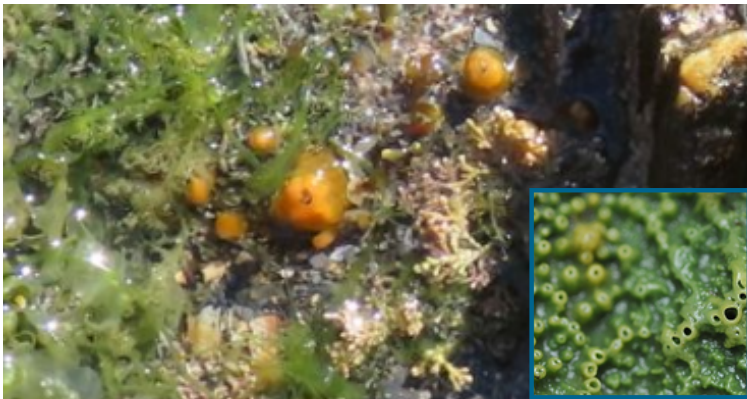


Common chiton

Lepidochitona cinerea

Up to 25cm. Oval animal that is found attached to rocks. The most commonly found chiton in the UK. Variable in colour. The shell plates are surrounded with a banded girdle.

Sponges

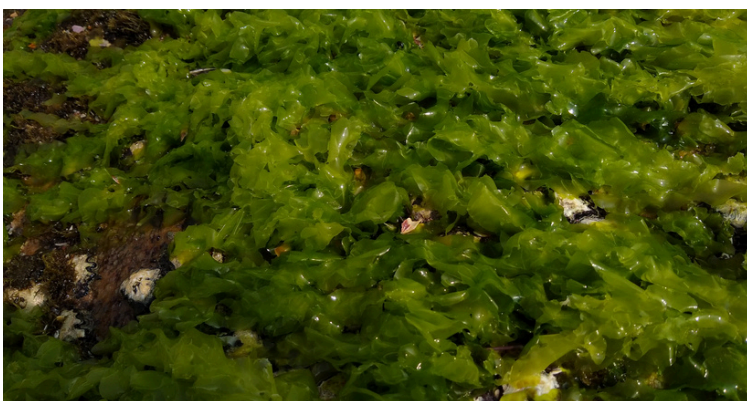


Breadcrumb sponge

Halichondria panicea

This animal is an encrusting sponge commonly found on rocks, especially rocky overhangs. It comes in different colours including green and yellow, with various forms. It can look tall and chimney-like, or flat!

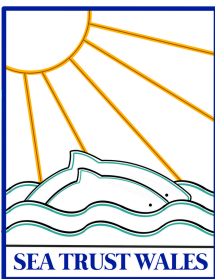
Green seaweeds



Sea lettuce

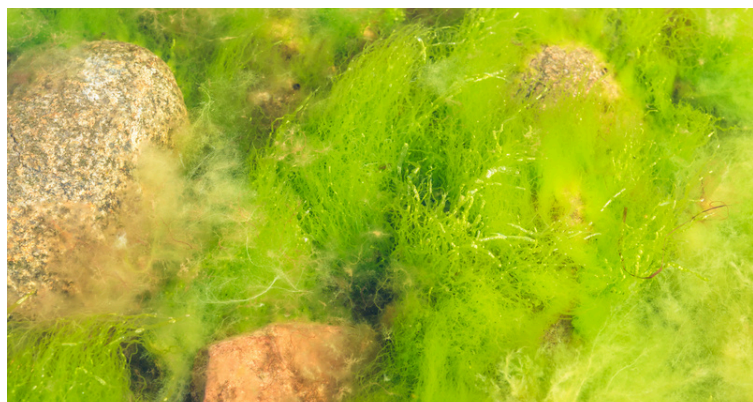
Ulva lactuca

An unmistakable bright green and translucent seaweed. Lives attached to rocks or other surfaces. The seaweed can also live in rockpools once detached from its holdfast, creating floating colonies. Sea lettuce is eaten in laverbread!



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Gutweed

Ulva intestinalis

This seaweed is a grassy green colour. It is found in many habitats, including in rockpools, sand, and mud. Gutweed is used as a shelter by many rockpool species and can often be seen with lots of air bubbles throughout its front, looking like a "gut"!

Brown seaweeds



Bladder wrack

Fucus vesiculosus

Seaweed with round air bladders on its branching fronds, allowing it to float at the top of the water. Olive brown in colour and often found with Egg wrack.



Egg wrack

Ascophylum nodosum

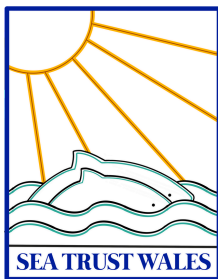
This yellowy brown seaweed has egg shaped air bladders along its long, leather-like fronds. Red seaweeds can be found growing in with the fronds.



Spiral wrack

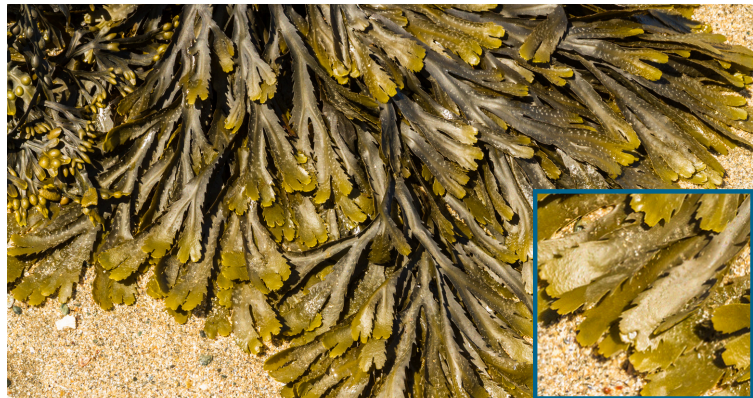
Fucus spiralis

A pale olive brown wrack seaweed with twisted (spiral) fronds with a middle rib. It does not have air bladders and has smooth edges. Spiral wrack can survive out of the water for long periods of time.



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Serrated wrack (Toothed wrack)

Fucus serratus

This seaweed's olive brown fronds have serrated edges. Red seaweeds can often be seen growing on its fronds. The branching fronds are flat (not spiralled) and the seaweed has no air bladders.



Oarweed

Laminaria digitata

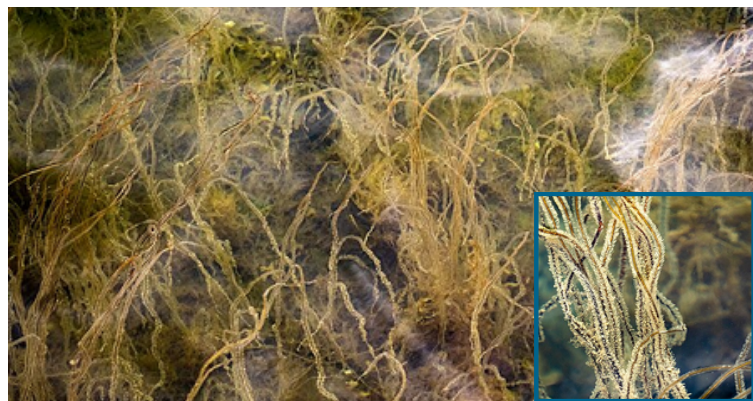
Oarweed is a kelp seaweed found commonly in the UK. They usually grow in dense kelp beds attached to rocks or hard surfaces with their holdfasts. The seaweed is dark brown in colour with long fronds of up to 2m!



Sugar kelp

Saccharina latissimi

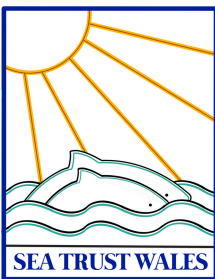
This seaweed grows in a long crinkled belt, growing up to 5m! It grows attached to the rocky seabed. It has a distinctive wavy edge and is dark brownish-green in colour.



Mermaid's tresses (Sea lace)

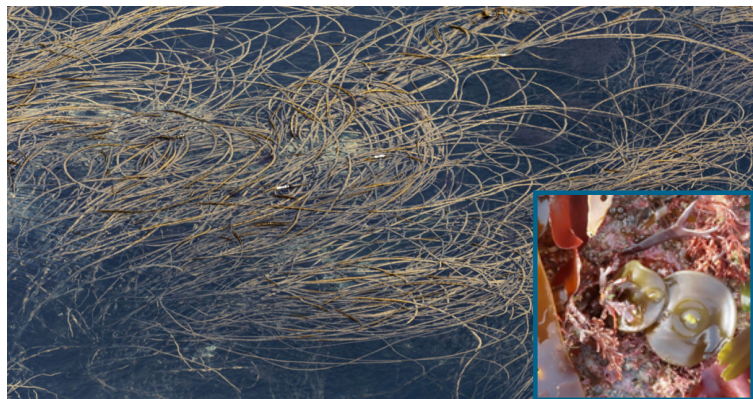
Chorda filum

A brown seaweed with long lace-like fronds. The fronds can grow up to 8m long! This species appears annually, disappearing in Winter.



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Thongweed

Himanthalia elongata

This is a common seaweed that has a two-stage morphology. It begins as small button like thali (bottom right of photo), before long fronds form in Autumn, growing to 2m long.

Red seaweeds



Dulse

Palmaria palmata

This red algae has flat fronds that can grow up to 1m in length. Purplish or brown-red in colour.



Coral weed

Corallina officinalis

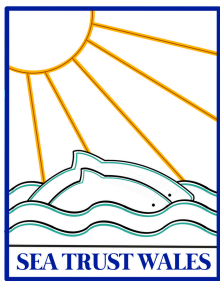
A red algae with branching, calcareous fronds. It can grow up to 12cm high but is usually shorter. Generally a grey-pink or purple-grey colour with white edges.



Wireweed

Sargassum muticum

A red algae with branching, calcareous fronds. It can grow up to 12cm high but is usually shorter. Generally a grey-pink or purple-grey colour with white edges.



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Encrusting coralline algae

Lithophyllum sp.

An encrusting coralline algae that is a smooth pink or light grey in colour. It can become bleached in bright sunlight.



Pepper dulse

Osmundea pinnatifida

This small red algae with tough flattened fronds. Alternate branching. It can vary from brown to yellow. Tastes like garlic!



Clawed fork weed

Furcellaria lumbricalis

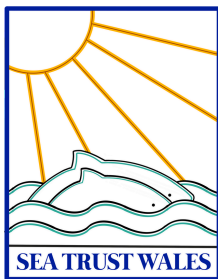
A red-brown/black seaweed with glossy cylindrical fronds. It grows up to 30cm in length. Other green seaweeds can be found mixed in with the fronds.



Siphoned feather weed

Heterosiphonia plumosa

A red seaweed which can appear more black when drying out. It looks flattened and fern-like. The body looks hairy and is up to 20cm in length.



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Cartilaginous cock's comb

Plocamium cartilagineum

This seaweed is bright pink-red in colour growing up to 30cm in length. Branching can vary from very compact or much broader.



False Irish moss

Mastocarpus stellatus

A dark red-brown seaweed up to 17cm in length. It can be bleached in the sun. The fronds are channelled with a thickened edge.



Lance-shaped eyelash weed

Calliblepharis jubata

A tufted seaweed in a brown-red colour. The branches appear long and tendril-like.



Beautiful fan weed

Metacallophyllis laciniata

The fronds can vary in colour from crimson/brown/purple. Can be up to 15cm long and is fan-shaped with overlapping sections. The tips are rounded with tiny fan-like structures.