

Blue Seas Protection SharkLab LIVE!

by Neeve O'Flynn-Mundin – Shark Lab Technician

If you are interested in the marine life found in the coastal waters around the Isle of Wight and would like to get involved with surveying then read on for more info....

Shark Lab LIVE are running regular Citizen Science BIOBLITZ beach surveys each month along the beautiful shorelines of Sandown, Lake and Shanklin and are looking for help with looking for shark eggcases (Mermaid's Purses) plus evidence of Seagrass along our shoreline.

Why Hunt for Eggcases?

This is the season to find shark eggcases and surveying the shoreline will help the SharkLab Team to assess the quantities of Shark Ray Skates and Cat Sharks (Dog Fish) which have potentially hatched into The Bay this year.

Undulate, Spotted and Thornback Rays – related to sharks are globally endangered and their eggcases have all be found as part of the survey work in The Bay.

Through surveying and counting Mermaid's purses / eggcases that wash up along The Bay monthly, the SharkLab team can assess the health of the population living locally, log the annual count, add to both our database and feed into the national scheme run by The Sharks Trust.

Does Seagrass Grow in Sandown Bay?

We want to answer this question, as juvenile rays need shelter and develop so seagrass is a perfect habitat for them. But does it grow in The Bay and if not, why not? All sightings of seagrass will be photographed and uploaded onto The Project Seagrass citizen science website SeagrassSpotter.org to help scientists from Swansea University collate the data.

Practicalities: Suitable for all! The monthly surveys are led by Blue Seas Protection SharkLab crew. Families, groups, individuals, including people with limited mobility or health challenges are particularly welcome, as the majority of the surveys are conducted directly beside the promenade, cafes with nearby toilet facilities.

We also run Adult Only weekend surveys to cover headland and remote areas. All equipment will be provided, so please ensure you book a place for yourself, your group or family so we can provide the right amount of equipment. Please wear waterproof boots, and weather appropriate clothing, as we may be scrambling over rocks + rock pools as well. Bring a camera to snap your finds!

Surveys dates and times are scheduled monthly depending on low tide times, so please contact the SharkLab to express your initial interest so we can update you with the confirmed Survey dates, times and location brief. Please include a contact first name + tel.no along with number of children under 18yrs / Adults who would like to attend to:

Email: SharkLabBSP@gmail.com

Tel. Office: 01983 400767



Seagrass: *Zostera noltii* - Southend-on-sea

Image: [tguardiner](https://www.seagrassspotter.org/) SeagrassSpotter.org

Examples of: Noltii (left) which lives in shallow waters and Marina (right) which prefers deeper seas. Both have been found in patches around the Isle of Wight, we want to find more so...

Join us on our search to Find Noltii and Marina!



Seagrass: *Zostera marina* – Gwynedd

Image: Ben Jones SeagrassSpotter.org