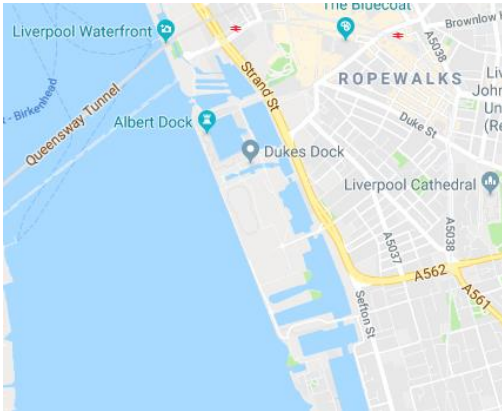


Dukes Dock, Liverpool Marine Life Report 2018



Introduction

Since the opening of The Albert Dock complex for leisure purposes in 1986, the marine life has taken hold and continues to flourish. The main features of the habitat are silty seabed and stone dock walls. Water quality is paramount as this is a public place thus the marine life is very important in helping to achieve this. An aqua gym has been installed in the docks from April – October 2018, during which time we have not been permitted to dive.

Survey Dive Details

Two expeditions were carried out – one in March prior to the installation of the gym and again in November after it had been dismantled for the winter. March yielded 4 Observation forms. Five Observation forms and 2 Survey forms were received from November. All Observer dives were tutor-led qualifying dives with the focus being either the seabed or the Dock walls.

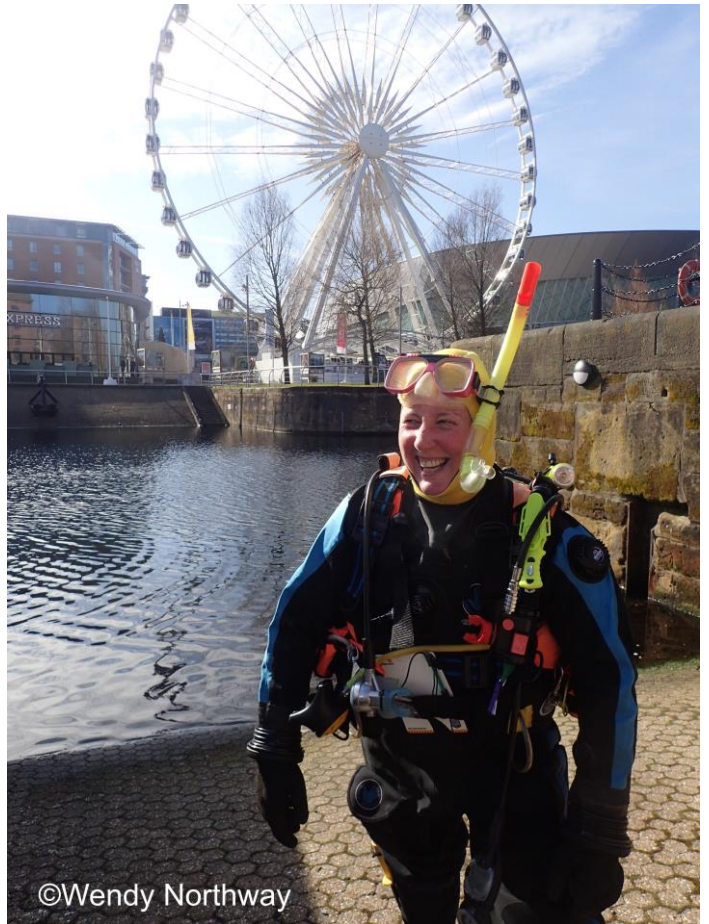
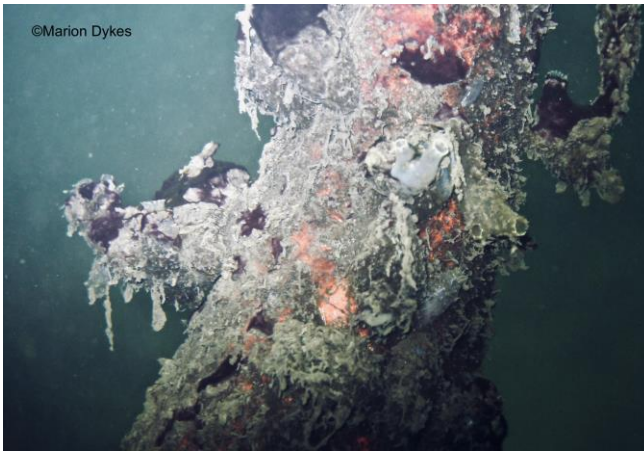
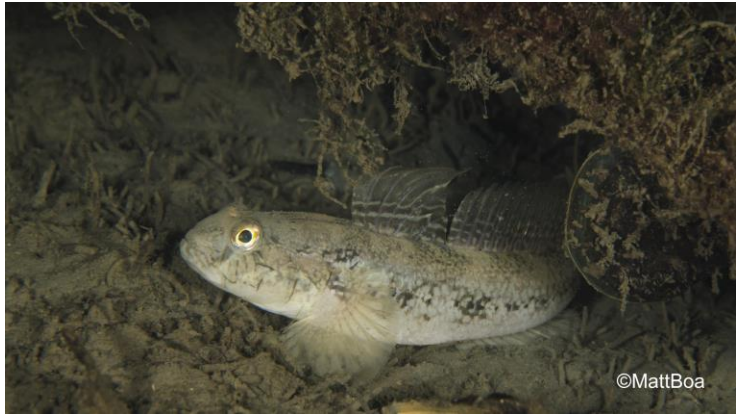
The dominant species continue to be *Mytilus edulis* (common mussels) and *Cliona intestinalis* (yellow fluted squirt) with *Halichondria bowerbanki* encrusting large areas of the dock walls. *Mytilus edulis* thrives with the absence of the main predator, *Asterias rubens*. Cockles, which were spotted in 2017, were seen again, indicating good quality water. A small, orange, fine tentacled anemone continues to make its presence known, but eludes identification. Tiny mysid shrimps dotted the walls along with *Carcinus maenas* and polychaete tubes were also evident.

The silty bottom saw a number of annelids, particularly *Oxydromus flexuosus* and Nereididae sp. Fish life in the docks is good. Shoals of *Gobiusculus flavescens* (2-spot gobies) were seen on both surveys although the larger fish seen in previous years were not noted. Flat fish, black gobies and pipefish were all spotted.

Aurelia aurita were abundant in the far eastern end of the dock as the sessile polyp-stage scyphistoma spotted on the dock walls.

The marine life in the docks appears to be very healthy. Litter is present as one would expect with a heavy footfall but a lot of this provides shelter for crabs and fish plus growth opportunities for algae and squirts.





Species list

Name	Common Name	March 2018	November 2018
Sponges			
<i>Halicondria bowerbanki</i>		O	C
Cnidarians			
<i>Diadumene cinta</i> OR <i>Sagartiogeton laceratus</i>		R	C
<i>Aurelia aurita</i>	Moon Jellies		C
Worms			
	Tube worms		R
<i>Oxydromus flexuosus</i>			R
Crustaceans			
<i>Carcinus maenas</i>	Shore crab	R	R
Mysidae	Mysis shrimps		O
Molluscs			
<i>Mytis edulis</i>	Common Mussels	O	C
<i>Cerastoderma</i> sp.	Cockles	O	
Sea squirts			
<i>Cliona intestinalis</i>	Yellow-ringed sea squirt	O	C
<i>Asciidiella aspersa</i>	Fluted sea squirt	O	O
<i>Pycnoclavella</i> sp. or <i>Botrylloides</i> sp.			R
<i>Clavelina lepadiformis</i>	Lightbulb sea squirt		R
<i>Styela clava</i>	Leathery sea squirt (non-native)		R

Name	Common Name	March 2018	November 2018
Fishes			
Pleuronectiformes	Large Flat Fish	R	R
<i>Gobius niger</i>	Black goby	O	C
<i>Gobiusculus flavescens</i>	Two-spot goby	R	F
<i>Pomatoschistus pictus</i>	Painted goby		O
Syngnathidae	Pipe fish		R
Seaweeds			
Rhodophyta	Feathery red seaweed	C	
Chlorophyta	Green seaweeds	O	O

Acknowledgements

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Thanks to Marion Dykes, Matt Boa and Wendy Northway for the photos within this report. Copyright is retained by the original photographers.

Seasearch is a partnership between the Marine Conservation Society (MCS), The Wildlife Trusts, statutory nature conservation bodies and others, co-ordinated nationally by MCS and co-ordinated and delivered locally in England by Wildlife Trust and MCS local co-ordinators. For more information on Seasearch and to see all of the partners involved nationally, please visit www.seasearch.org.uk or email info@seasearch.org.uk

