



## Annual Reports



 [2015 Report](#)

 [2014 Report](#)

# What happens to your observations?

<http://swmecosystems.co.uk/annual-reports>

## SOUTH-WEST MARINE ECOSYSTEMS IN 2015

Observations reported at the South-West Marine Ecosystems meeting in 2016 and other sources



**Sightings:** *Staphanopyxis palmeriana*, a diatom which has been absent from the western English Channel for more than a decade, reappeared in net samples at the end of March and persisted for the rest of the year. Image: Claire Widdicombe, PML



**Unusually high abundances:** Barrel jellyfish *Rhizostoma octopus* (and other jellyfish species). Image: Keith Hiscock



**Fisheries:** Anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) were present in unusually high numbers late in the year. Image: Doug Herdson



**Range extensions:** Anemone prawn *Periclymanes sagittifer* at Babbacombe (first recorded in Britain at Swenage in 2007). Image: Keith Hiscock

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and the Seaquest *ad hoc* sightings report appended

## **2015 – seems a long time ago!**

Looking for ‘highlights’, looking for changes

Looking for ‘lowlights’, looking for changes

Looking for the timing of change

Looking for the causes of change

Making links – coincidences or correlations?

# 2015 – Year of the jellies?



# Range extensions and unusual abundances – currents or climate?



**Range extensions:** Anemone prawn *Periclymenes sagittifer* at Babbacombe (first recorded in Britain at Swanage in 2007. Recorded at Babbacombe in 2015). Image: Keith Hiscock

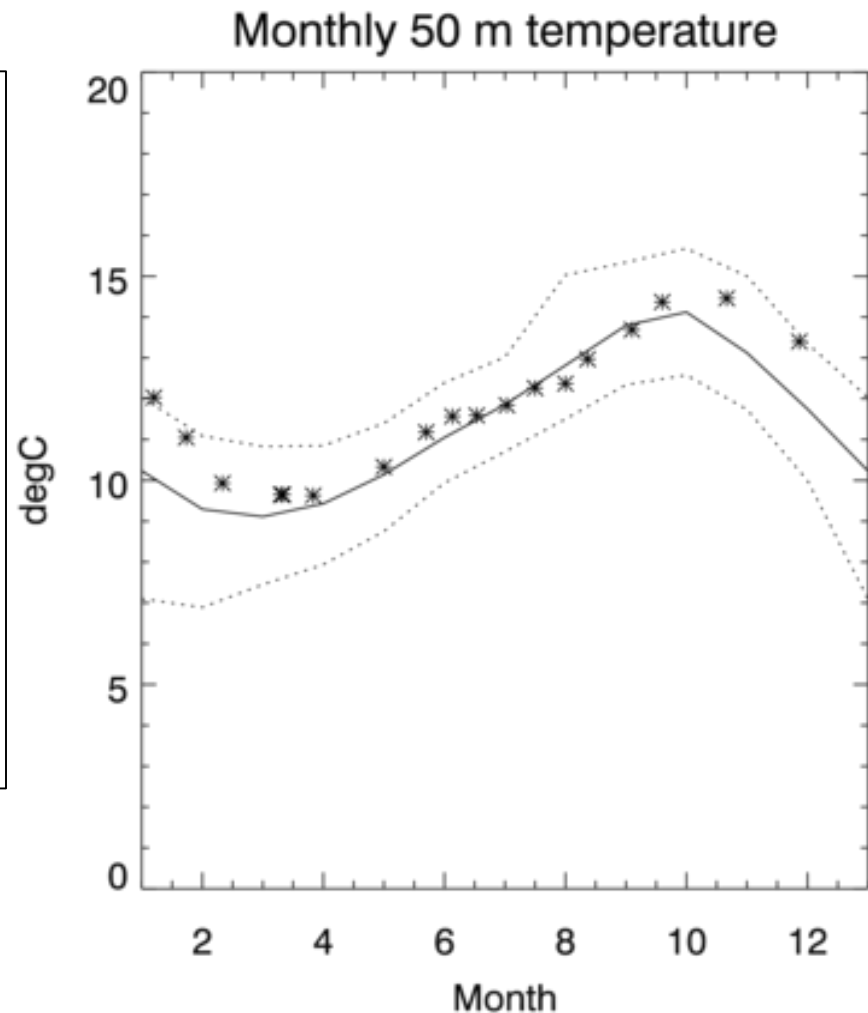


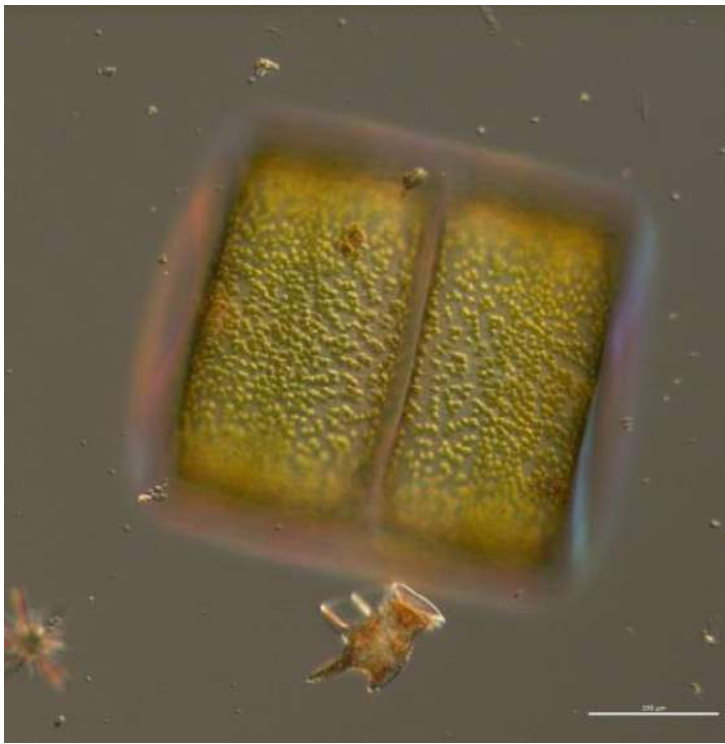
**Fisheries:** Anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) were present in unusually high numbers late in the year. Image: Doug Herdson

# Weather

“Winter 2014/15 was mild, as was autumn 2015. However, spring and summer were below average”

What really matters for benthos is seawater temperature at the seabed





High numbers of *Coscinodiscus wailsaii* caused a mucous 'sludge' in net samples and likely caused a problem for filter-feeding zooplankton and fish.

[In diver-speak, 'streaming blobby snotters'.

Sea fans get entangled but 'cope'.]

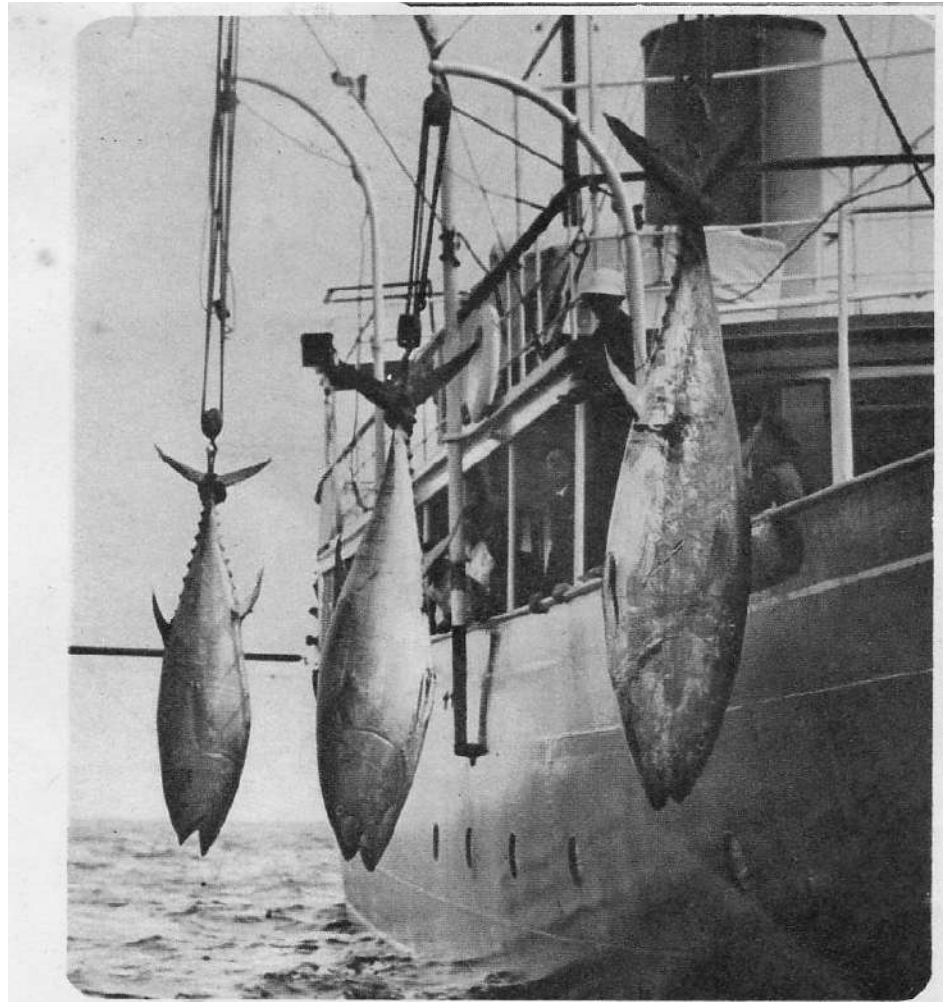


... the number of spiny lobsters *Palinurus elephas* being seen by divers rose again in 2015 with as many as six being seen on a dive. The individuals were mainly small and represented a significant recruitment probably in 2013-14.



Plymouth Sound Drop-off on 11 April 2015

2015 was notably for its lack of basking sharks, sunfish and triggerfish, but a number of warmer water species continued to be seen and are apparently establishing themselves in the south west. The outstanding features were the world's largest seahorse and a large shoal of bluefin tuna.



THE TUNNY-FISHING SEASON OPENS : HUGE CATCHES SUSPENDED FROM  
A YACHT OFF SCARBOROUGH.

Col. E. T. Peel and Col. Stapleton-Cotton put in at Scarborough on August 6 with three tunny on board, breaking last year's record, when Col. Peel caught two on the same day. At the moment, the largest fish yet taken is credited to Col. Peel—459 lb.—though a radio report from Lady Broughton, afloat in the North Sea, claims a catch weighing 564 lb.



Puffin numbers at Lundy continued to rise now that the island is rat free and .... monitoring including time-lapse photography revealed 264 confirmed burrows were being used in Jenny's Cove plus a further 30 across the cove - estimated population 500-600.



- Recording events will help us better identify patterns and linkages as well as the effects of, for instance, severe weather, climate change and the arrival of non-native species.
- Making and recording observations contributes to the fund of natural history knowledge that informs science, conservation and that enriches our lives.

## Beyond 'Descriptive'

- We need to develop a way of presenting year-to-year differences in marine climate and in abundances of species in a way that is understandable to a news reporter or politician.

Have a think.