



The SWME Annual Report

Observations & Science, People, and Making a Difference - The theme of the SWME Conferences

Bob Earll

Talk summary The objectives of this talk are:

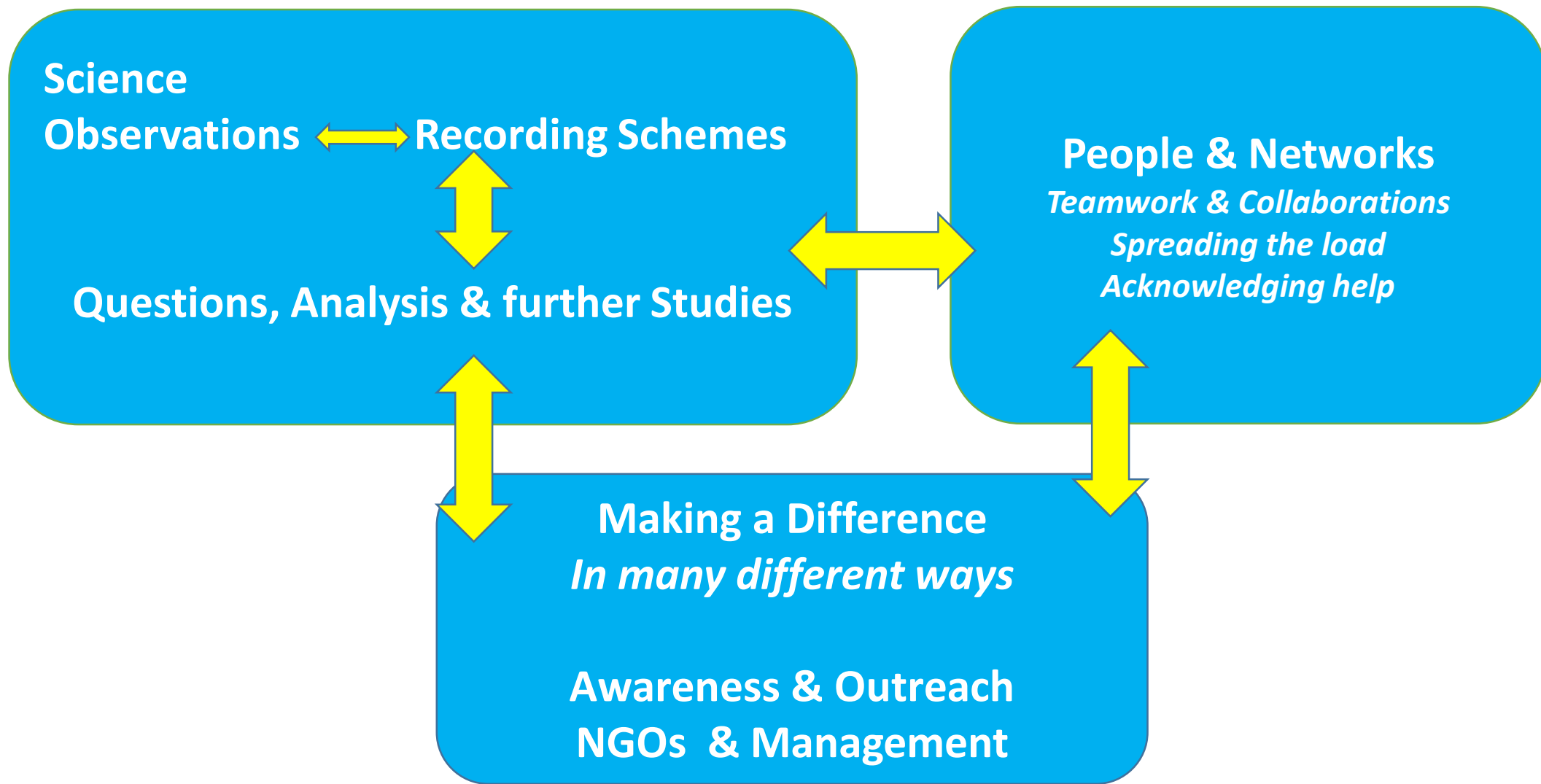
1. To describe the SWME Annual Report and what it is setting out to do
2. To explain the objectives of SWME in terms of
 - Observations, recordings and science
 - People and networks
 - Using people and information to make a difference
3. To link these elements together
4. Thank lots of you for your support

South-West Marine Ecosystem Conference & Activities Objectives

The Objectives for the SWME conferences and activities have been developed with the delegates and were **revised in 2017**; they are as follows:

1. **Networking** Through the conferences, website and mailings **GDPR**
 2. **Annual Events & Recording** To use the annual conference to record observation on ecological and oceanographic events
 3. **Ecology of marine species** To promote research studies
 4. **Management of south west marine ecosystems** to encourage strong relationships between policy makers and scientists and people making a difference
 5. **NEW Marine Education and Outreach** To highlight marine education and outreach programmes in the south west.
- ... and to come together to celebrate being part of the SWME!

The Annual Report fully supports these objectives

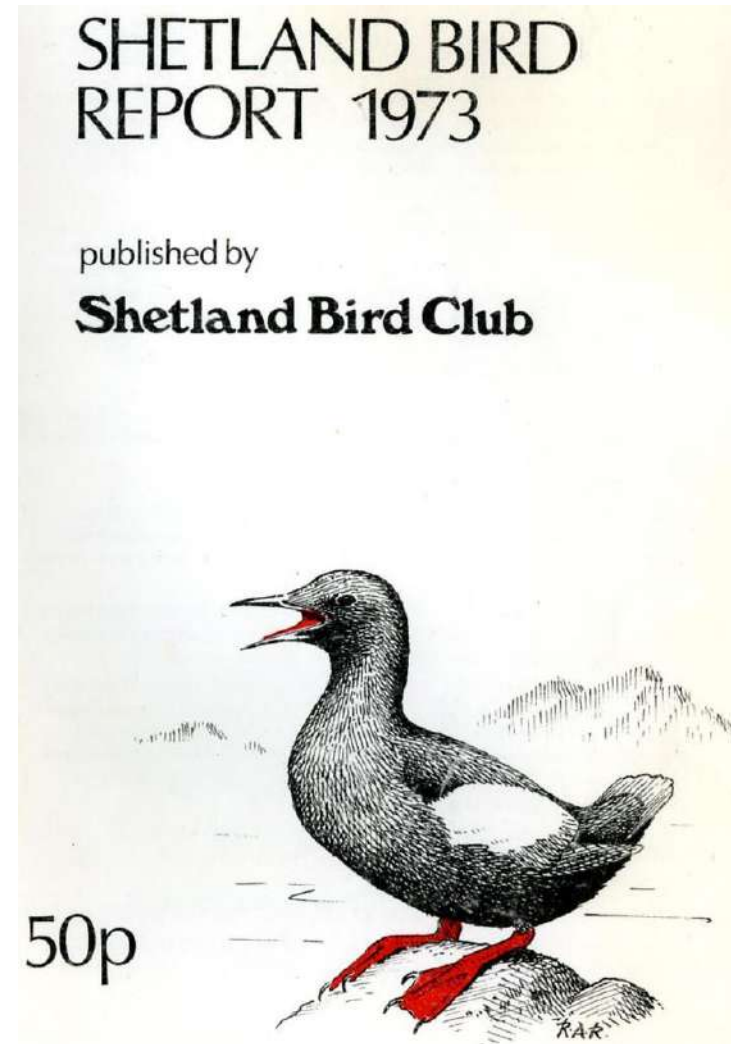


SWME Annual Report

Nothing new. A very long tradition - My first encounter with organised birders

SWME Report inputs

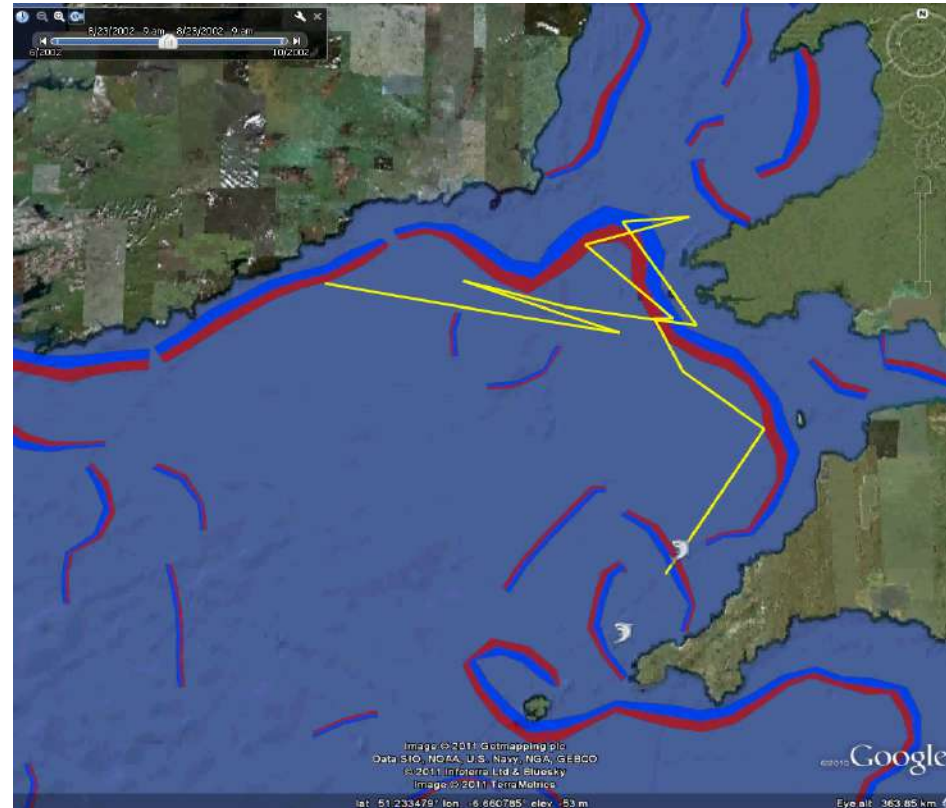
- From you – Observation forms
- Speaker notes
- All sorts of other sources



The 'South-west'

Basking shark tracked with GLS tag vs. fronts

Peter Miller - PML

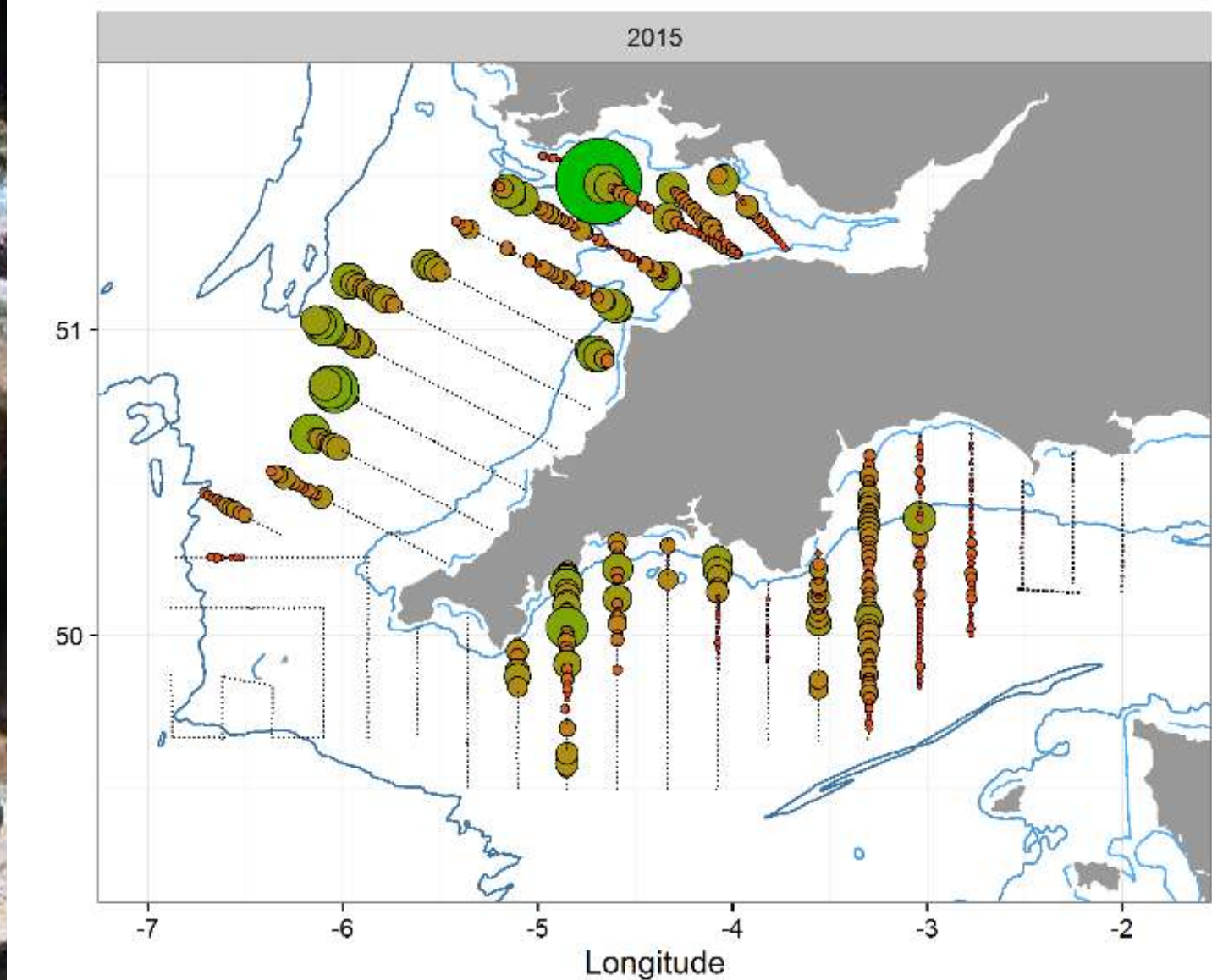


Small Pelagic Fish: sprat

Where is
the south-west?

Jeroen van der Kooij
Cefas

-



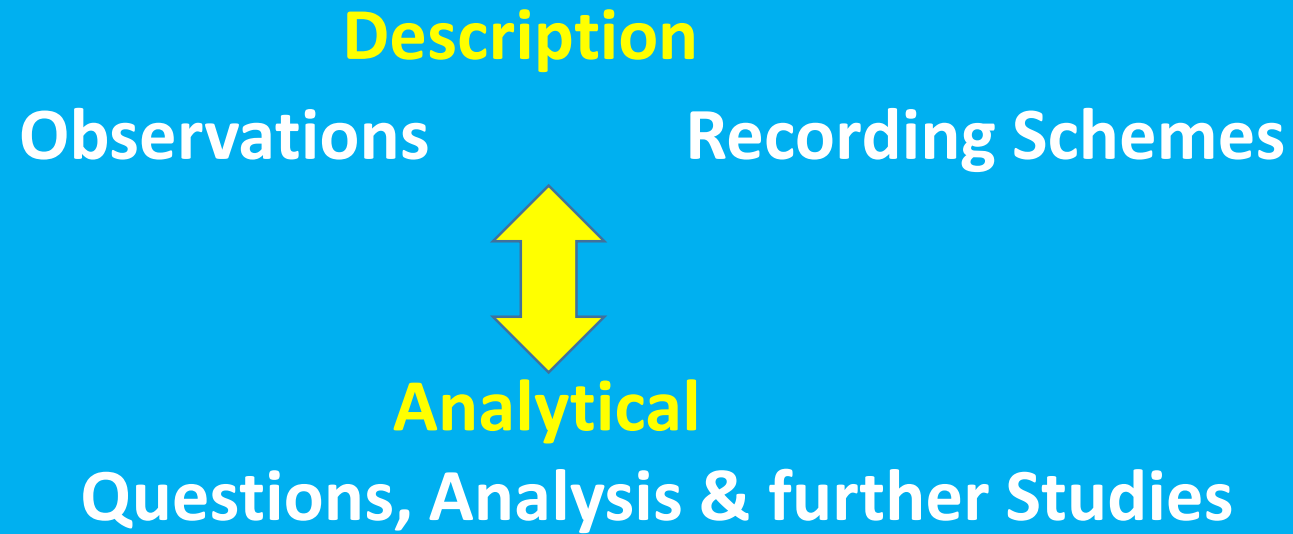
Science – Ecology - Arthur Tansley – ‘The father of ecology’

‘Every kind of scientific investigation has two stages the descriptive and the analytical.

We must first know clearly what the phenomena are – the things or processes we propose to investigate; thus we must carefully observe and accurately record before we can proceed to find out how particular phenomena come about.’

A guide for beginners in the study of plant communities 1923

Science

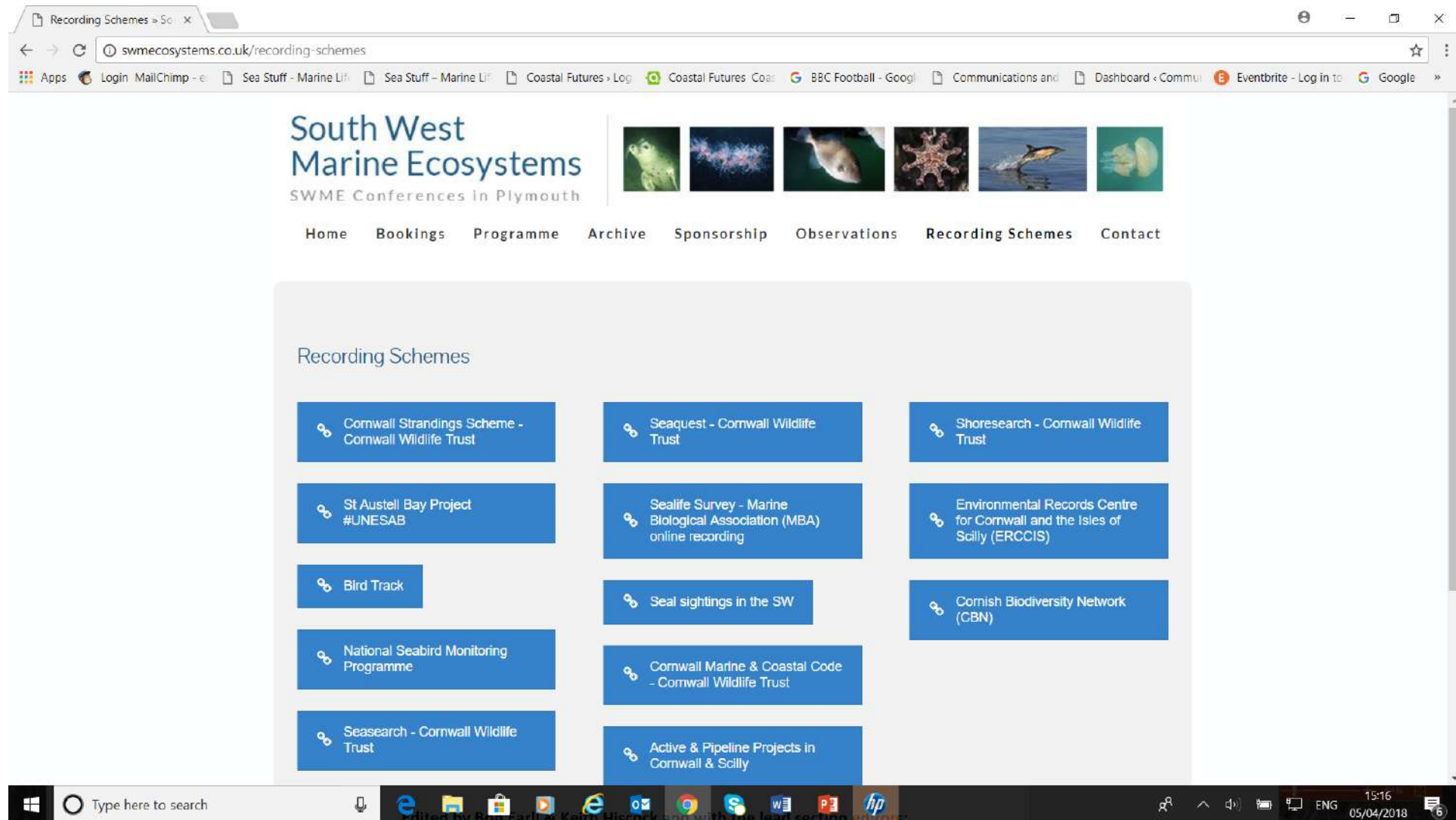


Observations ... 2016



Photographers: **Annabelle Lowe**/Newquay Sea Safaris and Fishing, **Keith Hiscock & Nigel Phillips**

Recording schemes – *and if your scheme isn't on this list let me know*

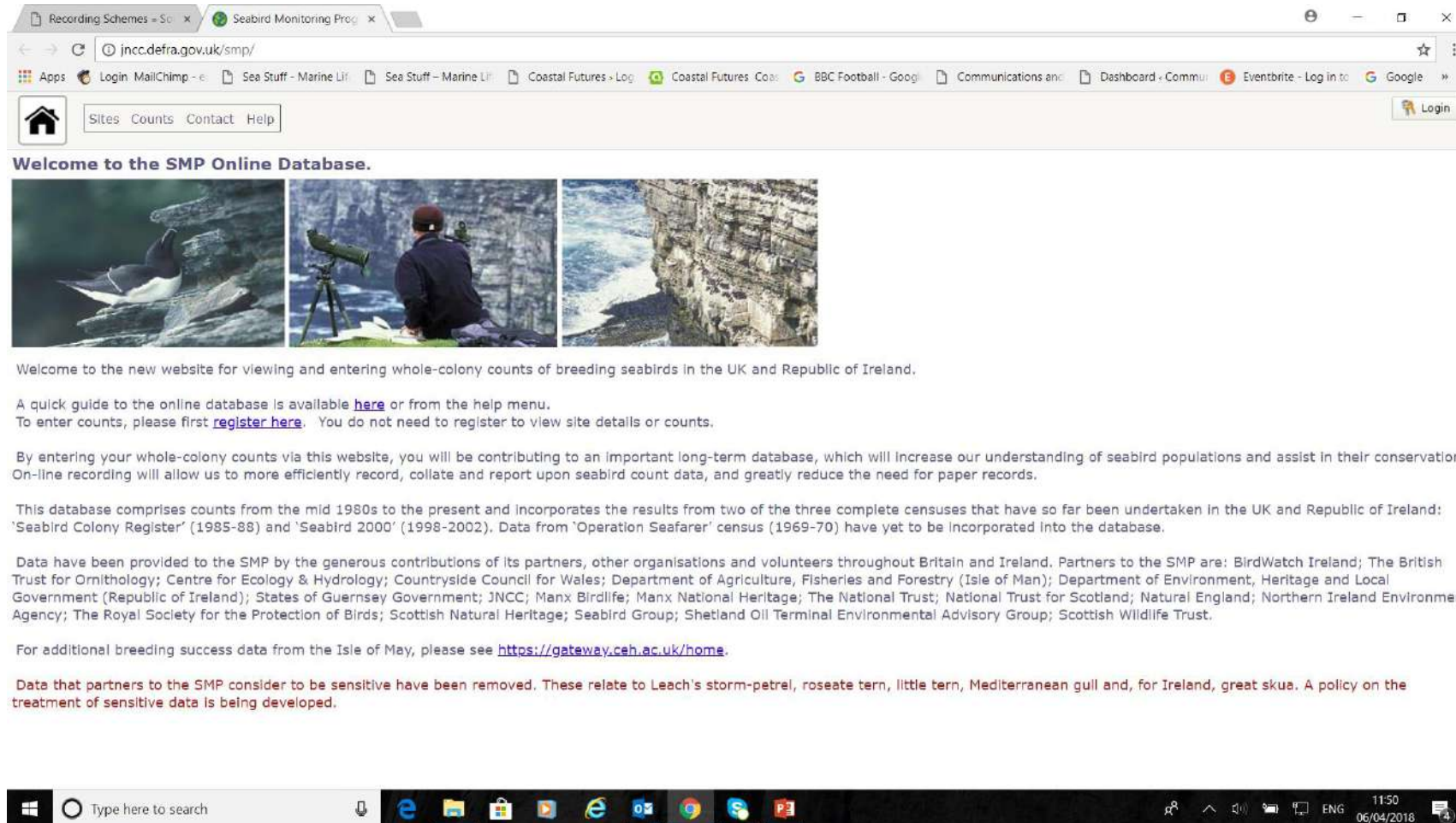


The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the 'Recording Schemes' page of the South West Marine Ecosystems website. The browser's address bar shows 'swmecosystems.co.uk/recording-schemes'. The website header includes the logo 'South West Marine Ecosystems' and 'SWME Conferences in Plymouth', along with a navigation menu: Home, Bookings, Programme, Archive, Sponsorship, Observations, Recording Schemes, and Contact. Below the header, a row of six small images depicts various marine life: a green frog-like creature, a blue and white jellyfish, a silver fish, a brown starfish, a dolphin, and a yellow jellyfish. The main content area, titled 'Recording Schemes', features a grid of blue buttons, each with a magnifying glass icon and the name of a recording scheme. The schemes listed are: Cornwall Strandings Scheme - Cornwall Wildlife Trust, St Austell Bay Project #UNESAB, Bird Track, National Seabird Monitoring Programme, Seasearch - Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Seaquest - Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Sealife Survey - Marine Biological Association (MBA) online recording, Seal sightings in the SW, Cornwall Marine & Coastal Code - Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Active & Pipeline Projects in Cornwall & Scilly, Shoresearch - Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCCIS), and Cornish Biodiversity Network (CBN). The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the search bar and several application icons, with the system clock indicating 15:16 on 05/04/2018.

Recording Schemes

- Cornwall Strandings Scheme - Cornwall Wildlife Trust
- St Austell Bay Project #UNESAB
- Bird Track
- National Seabird Monitoring Programme
- Seasearch - Cornwall Wildlife Trust
- Seaquest - Cornwall Wildlife Trust
- Sealife Survey - Marine Biological Association (MBA) online recording
- Seal sightings in the SW
- Cornwall Marine & Coastal Code - Cornwall Wildlife Trust
- Active & Pipeline Projects in Cornwall & Scilly
- Shoresearch - Cornwall Wildlife Trust
- Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCCIS)
- Cornish Biodiversity Network (CBN)

Click on the Blue Links and it goes to your site




Recording Schemes = So x Seabird Monitoring Prog x

jncc.defra.gov.uk/smp/

Apps Login MailChimp - c Sea Stuff - Marine Lif Sea Stuff - Marine Lif Coastal Futures > Log Coastal Futures > Coa BBC Football - Googl Communications and Dashboard > Commu Eventbrite - Log in to Google

Home Sites Counts Contact Help Login

Welcome to the SMP Online Database.



Welcome to the new website for viewing and entering whole-colony counts of breeding seabirds in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

A quick guide to the online database is available [here](#) or from the help menu.
To enter counts, please first [register here](#). You do not need to register to view site details or counts.

By entering your whole-colony counts via this website, you will be contributing to an important long-term database, which will increase our understanding of seabird populations and assist in their conservation. On-line recording will allow us to more efficiently record, collate and report upon seabird count data, and greatly reduce the need for paper records.

This database comprises counts from the mid 1980s to the present and incorporates the results from two of the three complete censuses that have so far been undertaken in the UK and Republic of Ireland: 'Seabird Colony Register' (1985-88) and 'Seabird 2000' (1998-2002). Data from 'Operation Seafarer' census (1969-70) have yet to be incorporated into the database.

Data have been provided to the SMP by the generous contributions of its partners, other organisations and volunteers throughout Britain and Ireland. Partners to the SMP are: BirdWatch Ireland; The British Trust for Ornithology; Centre for Ecology & Hydrology; Countryside Council for Wales; Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Isle of Man); Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (Republic of Ireland); States of Guernsey Government; JNCC; Manx Birdlife; Manx National Heritage; The National Trust; National Trust for Scotland; Natural England; Northern Ireland Environment Agency; The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; Scottish Natural Heritage; Seabird Group; Shetland Oil Terminal Environmental Advisory Group; Scottish Wildlife Trust.

For additional breeding success data from the Isle of May, please see <https://gateway.ceh.ac.uk/home>.

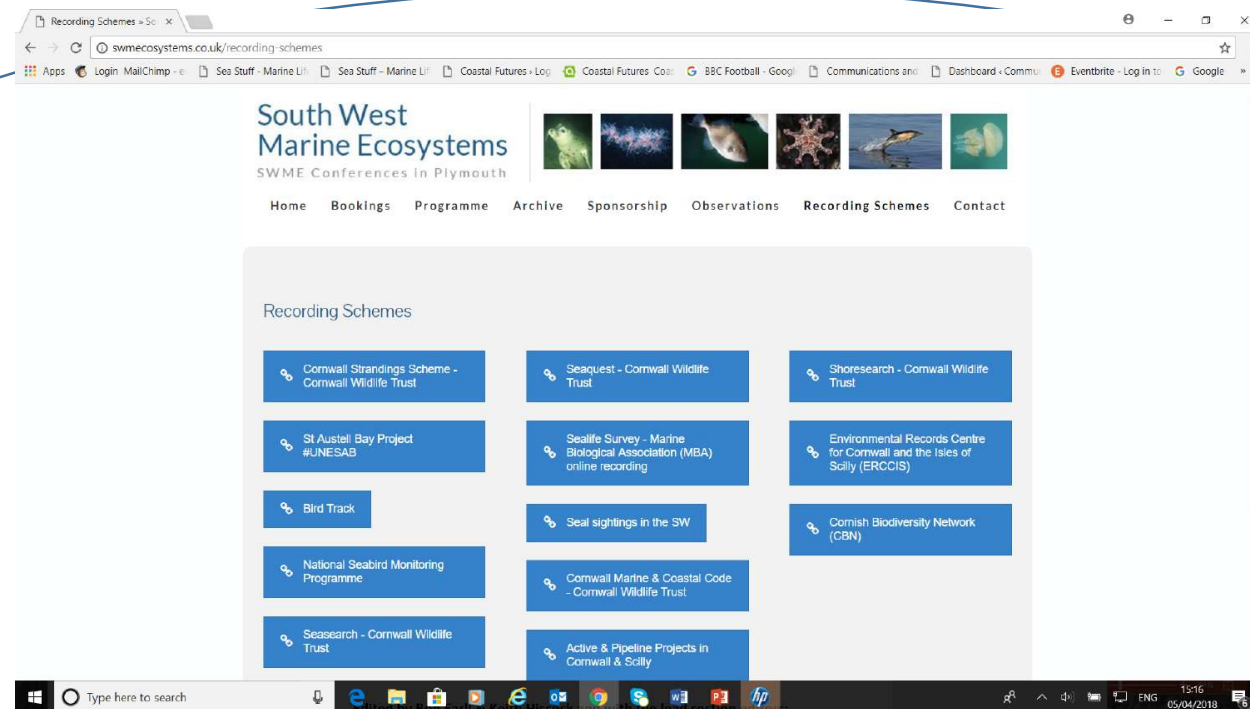
Data that partners to the SMP consider to be sensitive have been removed. These relate to Leach's storm-petrel, roseate tern, little tern, Mediterranean gull and, for Ireland, great skua. A policy on the treatment of sensitive data is being developed.

Type here to search

11:50 06/04/2018

**Lots of different projects and recording schemes
We need to know who is doing what because**

What do you do if you are on 'Any project' (e.g. Seasearch) in Dorset – and see a humpback whale - *who do you report it to?*



It's People that make SWME

**600+ SWME meeting
attendees since 2014**

**Volunteers - Citizen Science &
Multiple skills
& Action**

Paid

**70+ organisations
at each meeting**



Not including, west Wales, France,
Ireland

Cornwall Seal Group – Amazing CSG volunteers ...

Photos: Sue Sayer



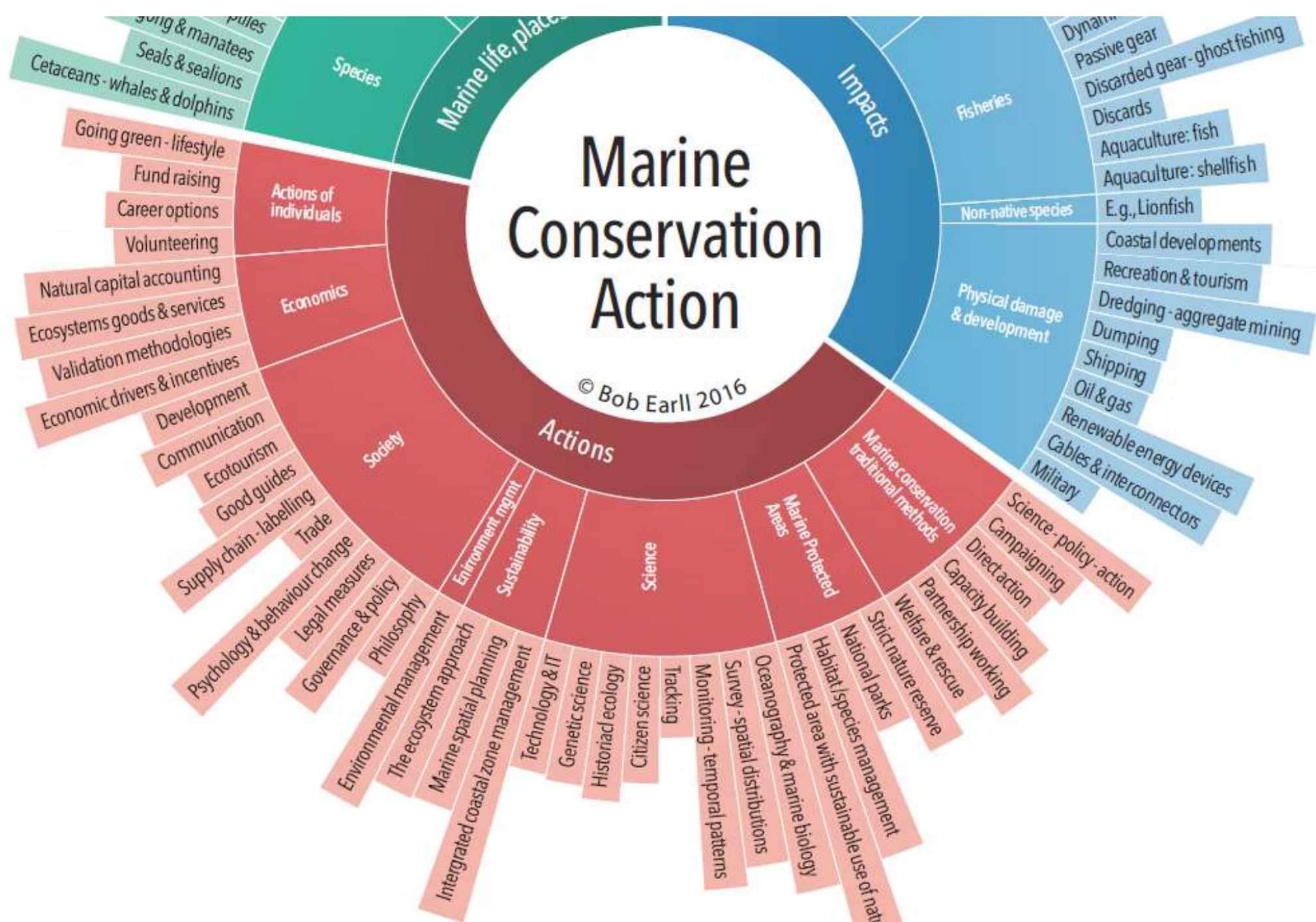
Making a difference

How many of you think there are steps we can take, and that you can participate in, that help to protect the marine environment?

Science – Information is helpful but on its own it's not enough ...

Lots of different people with different skills – disciplines - are needed to make the difference

- Public awareness – Outreach, education
- NGO style activities – with freedoms that implies
- Managers of all sorts – NE, IFCA's, MMO etc
- Lots of disciplines – communicators, campaigners, welfare specialists, legal, economic expertise etc., etc



SWME Annual Report Editors and Teams ... spread the load and collect more information

Editorial Group – Bob Earll, Keith Hiscock & Richard White

**Background Oceanography
& Western Channel Observatory
Tim Smyth**



**The seashore & seabed
Keith Hiscock**



**Fish & Reptiles
Doug Herdson**

**Plankton observations
Angus Atkinson**



Cetaceans
Colin Speedie, Dan Jarvis
& Duncan Jones



Seals
Sue Sayer



Management
Fisheries – MPAs – Sarah Clark
Plastics – Claire Wallerstein
Developments – Planning -



Marine & Coastal birds
Alex Banks



Strandings & Seaquest
Ruth Williams &
Abby Crosby



Humpback – South Devon 2017 – Observation from 2017



Why produce an Annual report?

1. Describing the ‘normal’ patterns of events

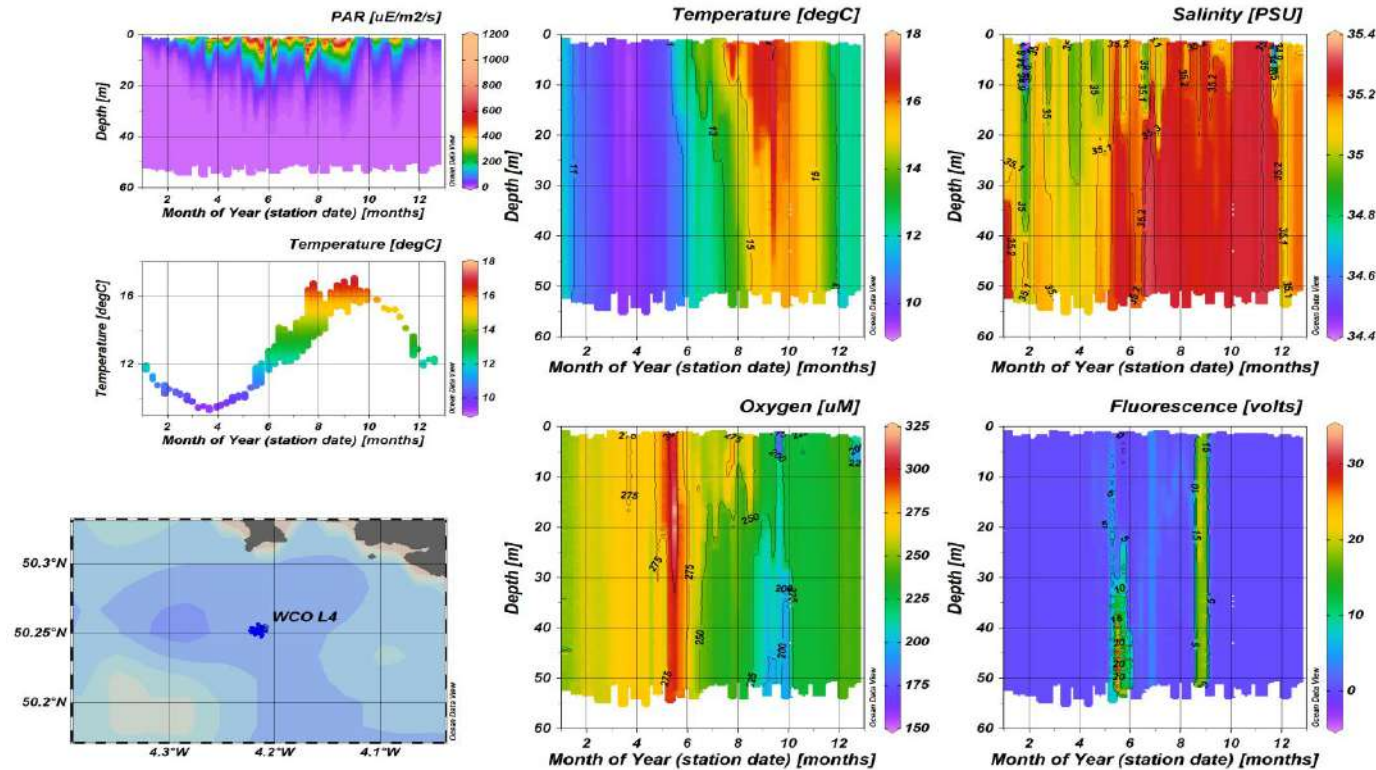


Figure 2: Conditions throughout the water column at station L4 during 2016 from 50 individual profiles taken using a rosette sampler with multi-parameter “CTD”, deployed from the RV Plymouth Quest.
Image PML

Why produce an Annual Report?

2. Marking Major Events and their effects

2013-14 Storms, Wash outs, PIB bird wreck 2014, 2016-17 common dolphins, etc

Photographers: Gerd Masselink
Keith Hiscock & Jersey RSPB



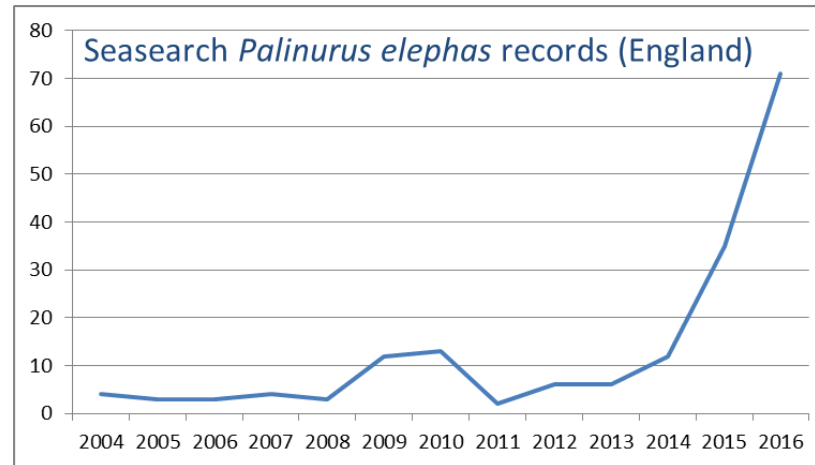
Why produce an Annual Report?

3. Highlighting significant population changes

Trends

Spiny lobsters, Seasearch and fisheries data

Graph: Charlotte Bolton,
Image: Geoff Huelin.



Good years – Bad Years

Barrel jellyfish population explosion

Photo: Keith Hiscock



Why produce an Annual Report?

3. Highlighting significant population changes

Relative status ... of some of
our charismatic species .e.g.
Basking shark, sunfish, bottle
nose dolphins, harbour porpoises



Managing Recovery Seabird
recovery after rat eradication
programmes on Islands
Photo: Keith Hiscock



Why produce an annual report?

5. Remarkable sightings – the start of patterns

Lost? *'One swallow ...'*



From very unusual to regular



Dalmatian Pelican in
Cornwall, 2016



Photo: Bowhead whale in
Mounts Bay
– Ed Hurst



Unknown, enigmatic
species known as the
“Pringle”, recorded
during early 2016 at
the Plymouth L4 and E1
PML



Tuna 2012 -2013 A novelty – to
2017 so regular a study by Tom
Horton – Exeter University

Why produce an Annual Report?

5. Acting as a focus for interest – publishing provides a point around which observations grow



People Bringing interested people together ... start to document important populations

Why produce an annual report?

6. Posing Questions – making the links What is happening to basking shark sightings ... anything in the plankton? Coincides with Tuna doing well?

Seaquest figures	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Basking sharks	76	419	237	72	34	28	low?
Ocean sunfish	160	264	289	84	163	154	

Why produce an annual report?

6. Posing Questions – making the links



What food is it that makes Manx shearwaters fly to Lyme Bay to feed?

Will we ever see the seabed – scyphistoma stage – of barrel jellyfish?

Spiny lobsters ... what is it over the last 5 or 6 years in terms of the Plankton / oceanography that have seen their numbers grow – one good year?

St Piron's crab – Episodic recruitment in 2016?

Image: Keith Hiscock



Why produce an annual report?

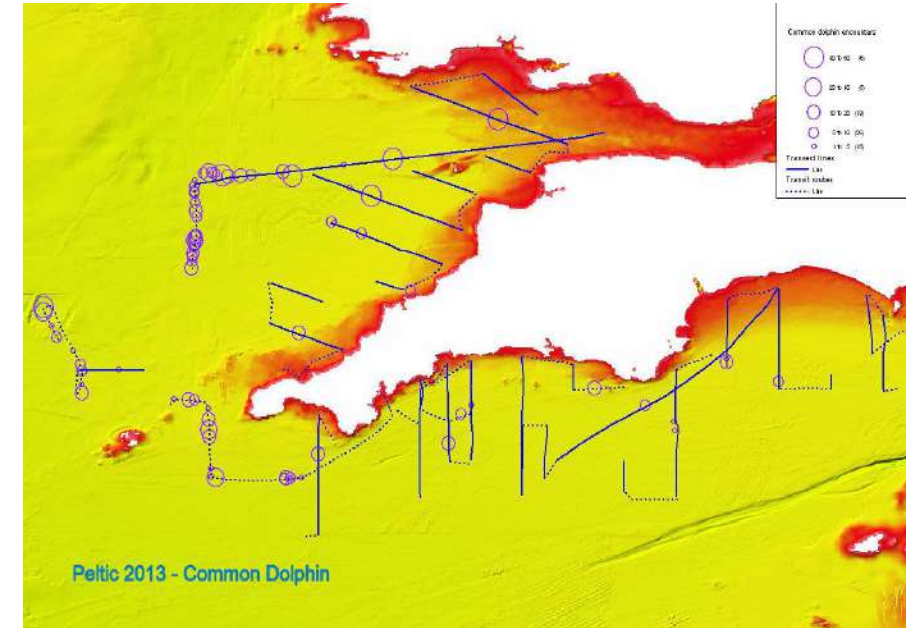
7. Telling stories

Seawatching - Manx Shearwaters

Nothing usual suspects, herring gulls, shags etc

Then in an hour 400+ Manx Shearwaters fly past ... Wow!

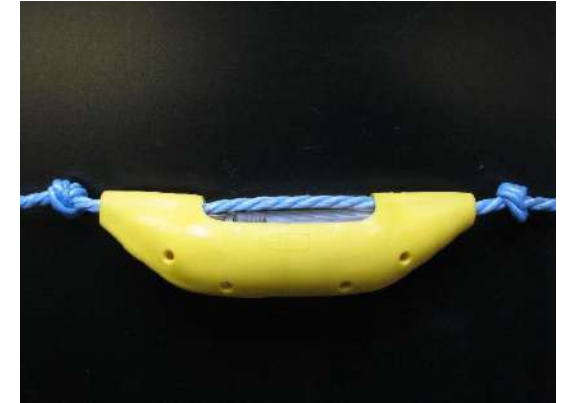
Where are they going too? Lyme Bay ... Where have that number of birds come fromWelsh islands?



Why produce an annual report?

8. Making a difference – Human Activities – documenting events & pushing for change

‘NGOs’ Strandings -> Pingers
CWT & Nick Tregenza



Management Wrasse
fishery, MCZs, MPAs, Fisheries.
IFCAs, NE, MMO etc

Image: Keith Hiscock



Why produce an annual report?

8. Making a difference – Human Activities – documenting events & pushing for change

Balloon releases

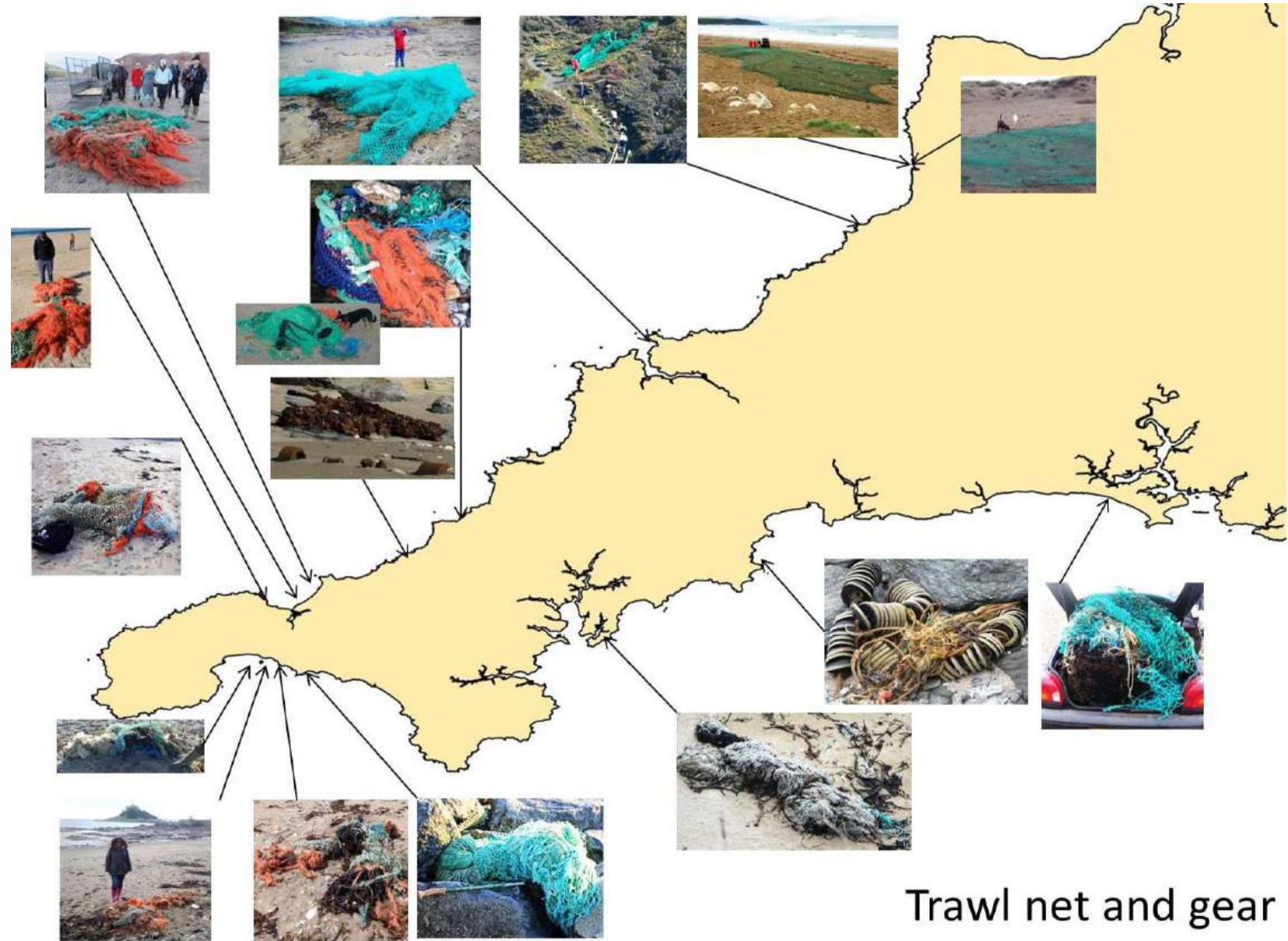
Claire Wallerstein Cornish
Plastic Pollution Coalition
writing to organisations



Nurdles – South West Water



Discarded fishing gear - Cornwall Seal Group Research Trust - images Sue Sayer



9. Opportunities and unknowns in 2017

- **US marine fauna and flora in Cornwall – David Fenwick** ... Two and half pages of mainly American marine life (Florida) mainly on marine litter floating across the Atlantic .. Carefully identified and corroborated with world experts ... amazing
- **Cornwall Seal Group Research Trust Annual Report** ... Sue Sayer's seal section has been the longest in the report for the 3 years ... 8 pages ... Does CSGRT produce an annual report? This could be it!!
- **Who record's the South West's Seabirds?** Nigel Phillips – Bob Earll – Alex Banks -> **Sophy Allen**
- **Strandlines & Beaches – In every section of the report**

Conclusions

SWME = Science + People + Making a Difference

9 Reasons why it is useful to produce an Annual Report & probably lots of others ...

Observations for 2017 – that Humpback whale ...



Humpback – South Devon 2017 – Observation from 2017



ANNUAL REPORTS - SOUTH-WEST MARINE ECOSYSTEMS IN 2015

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

Edited by Keith Hiscock and Bob Earll with the lead section editors:

**Tim Smyth, Angus Atkinson, Keith Hiscock, Doug Herdson, Sue Sayer, Tom Horton, Sarah Clark
and the Seaquest *ad hoc* sightings report appended**



Sightings: *Stephanopyxis 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* – high numbers, Doug Herdson, **Range extensions:** Anemone prawn *Periclymenes sagittifer* at Babbacombe (first recorded in Britain at Swanage in 2007). Image: Keith Hiscock