

# Taking stock of Crawfish



Janet Dallimore

**Matt Slater**  
Marine Awareness Officer, Cornwall Wildlife Trust  
01872 302251  
[Matt.slater@Cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:Matt.slater@Cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk)

# Cornwall Wildlife Trust

## Living Seas Projects

**Cornwall  
Wildlife Trust**   
*Protecting Cornwall's wildlife  
and wild places*



*Seaquest*  
*South-West*



**CORNWALL  
GOOD  
SEAFOOD  
GUIDE**





# Seasearch



Rob Spray Seasearch East



A large crayfish, *Palinurus elephas*, is shown on a sandy seabed. The crayfish has a brown and white patterned body and long, striped antennae. It is surrounded by various marine life, including sea urchins and coral.

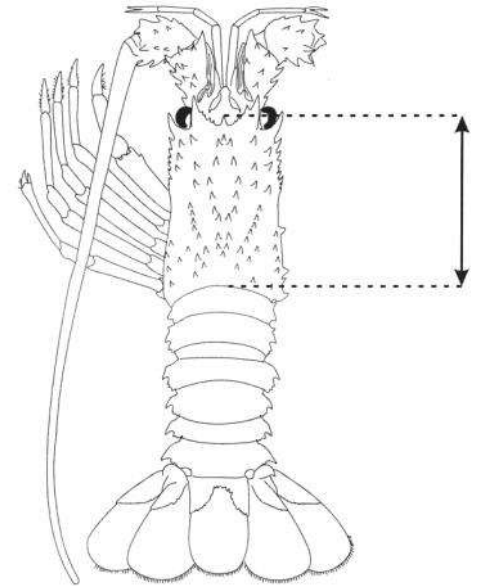
# *Palinurus elephas* Crawfish

David Morgan  
[www.morganphotographic.co.uk](http://www.morganphotographic.co.uk)

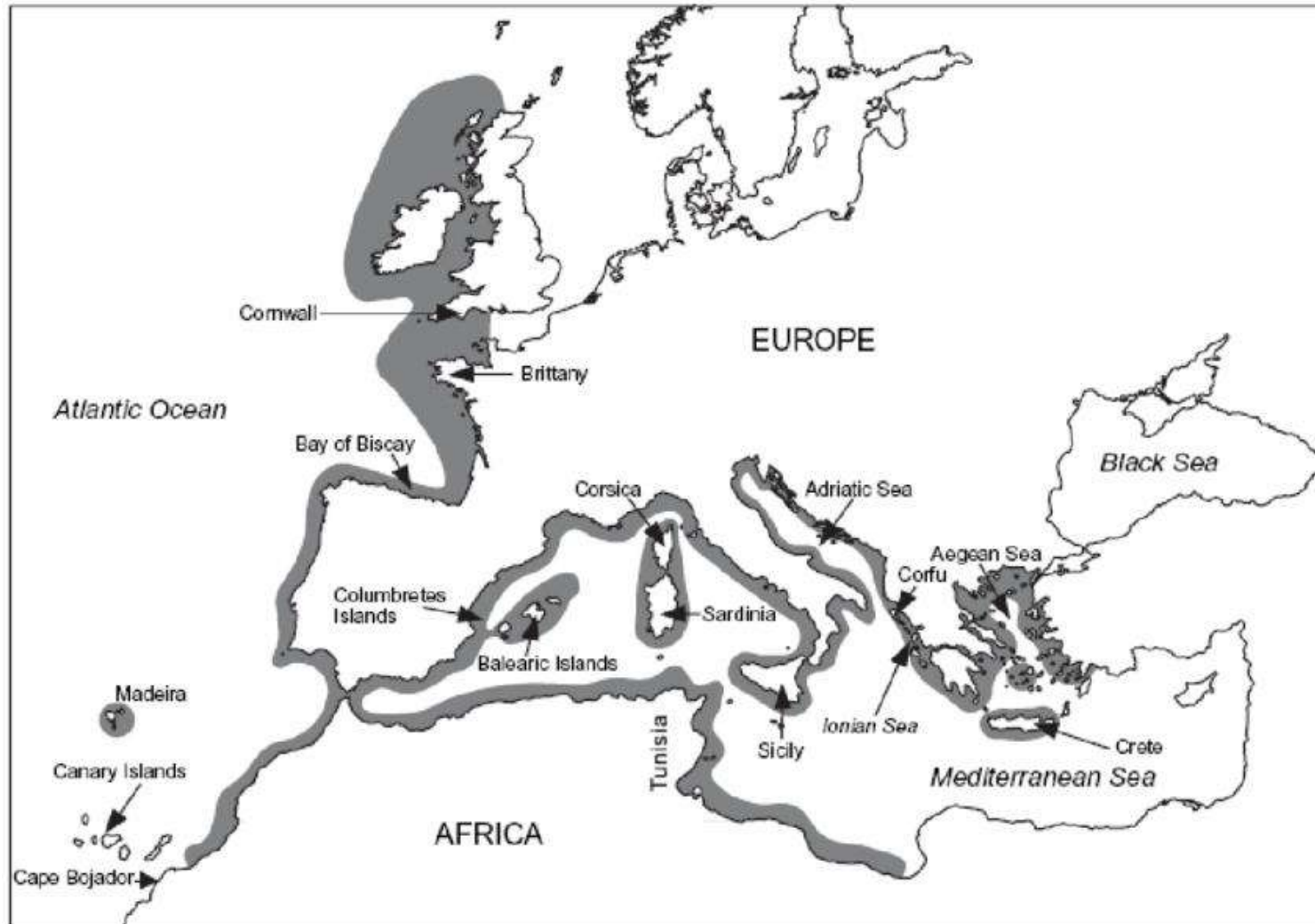


# Biology

- Size at maturity 84- 92mm carapace length (Goni and Latrouite 2005)
- When the female is ready to mate, she emits a specific noise (stridulation) which attracts a mate (Mercer, 1973)
- Females move to deeper waters during egg development and return inshore prior to egg hatching (Jackson et al, 2009).
- Female crawfish can carry 23,000-202,000 eggs depending on size. (3-5 times less than other *Palinurus* species) (Hunter)
- Incubation is 9 months off SW England.
- Planktonic Larval Duration can vary between 5 and 12 months , with 13 moults. (Groenveled et al 2013)
- From larval distribution modelling we know that larvae can travel long distances during this time in a Northerly direction (Whomersley et al 2018)



# Geographical Range



Source Groeneveld et al. 2006

# Conservation Status



- Classed as Vulnerable by IUCN
- Catch rates from the Welsh fishery showed a decline of 92% between 1980 and 1997 (Hunter 1999)
- A sevenfold decline in CPUE was registered in the SW Irish fishery between 1972 and 1999 (Tully 2011).
- Overall across its whole range *Palinurus elephas* is estimated to have undergone a decline of between 30-50% over the last 27 years (IUCN)



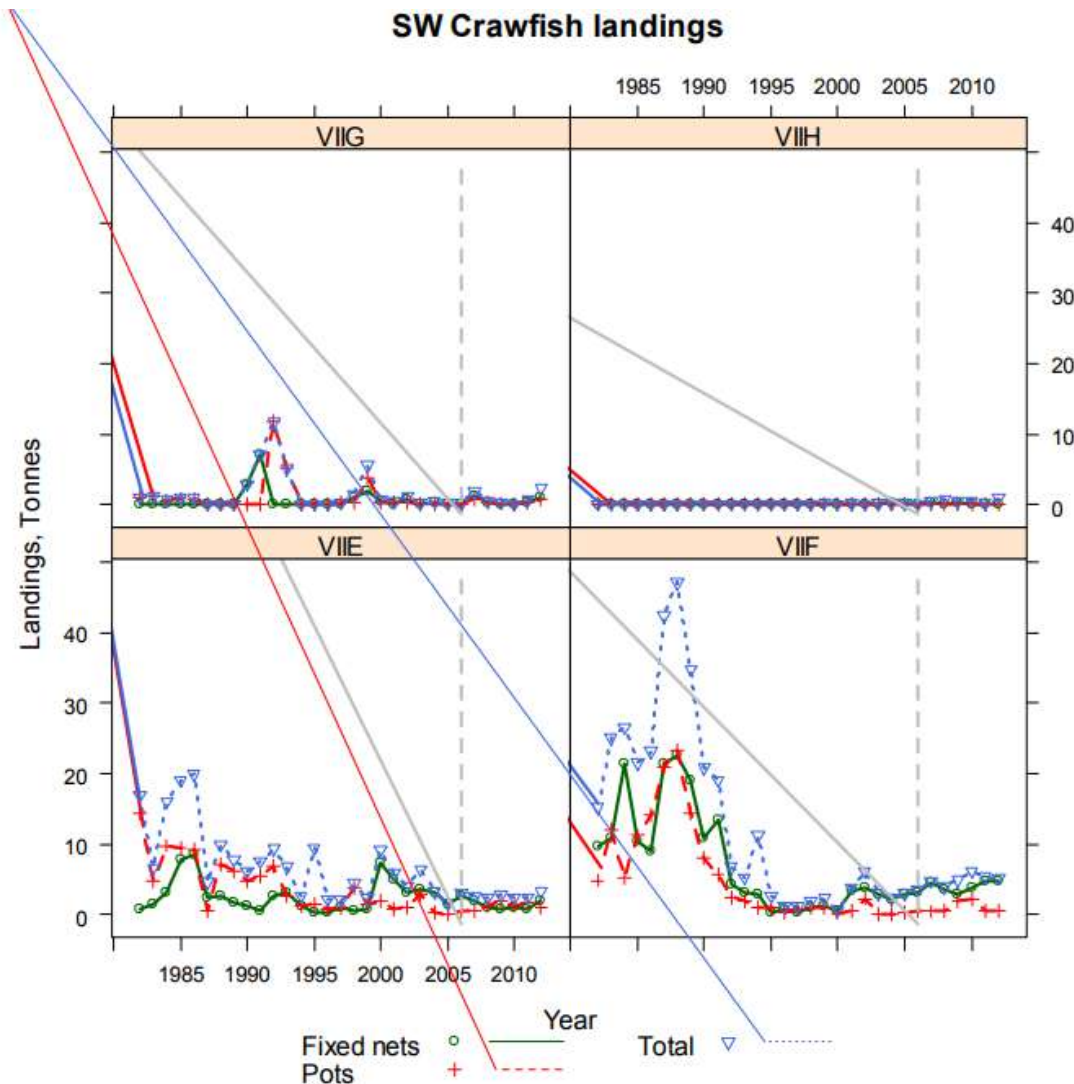


Figure 6 Annual landings per ICES division and gear for *Palinurus elephas*

Significant drop in  
landings between 1988  
and 1993

A time when many  
potters and longliners  
were switching to  
tangle nets

Bell, E (2013) Advice to  
Seafish on input to ecological  
risk assessment of the effects  
of fishing in the southwest  
marine ecosystem  
Component 1: Commercial  
Crustacea; crabs, lobsters,  
crawfish and spider crabs







# Poltexas Reef Newquay - 13<sup>th</sup> May 2017



Total 10

**Cornwall  
Wildlife Trust**



Sponsored by

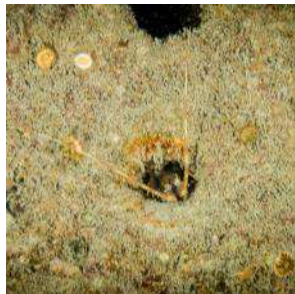




# SS Volnay Wreck – Fal and Helford SAC

March 29<sup>th</sup> 2018

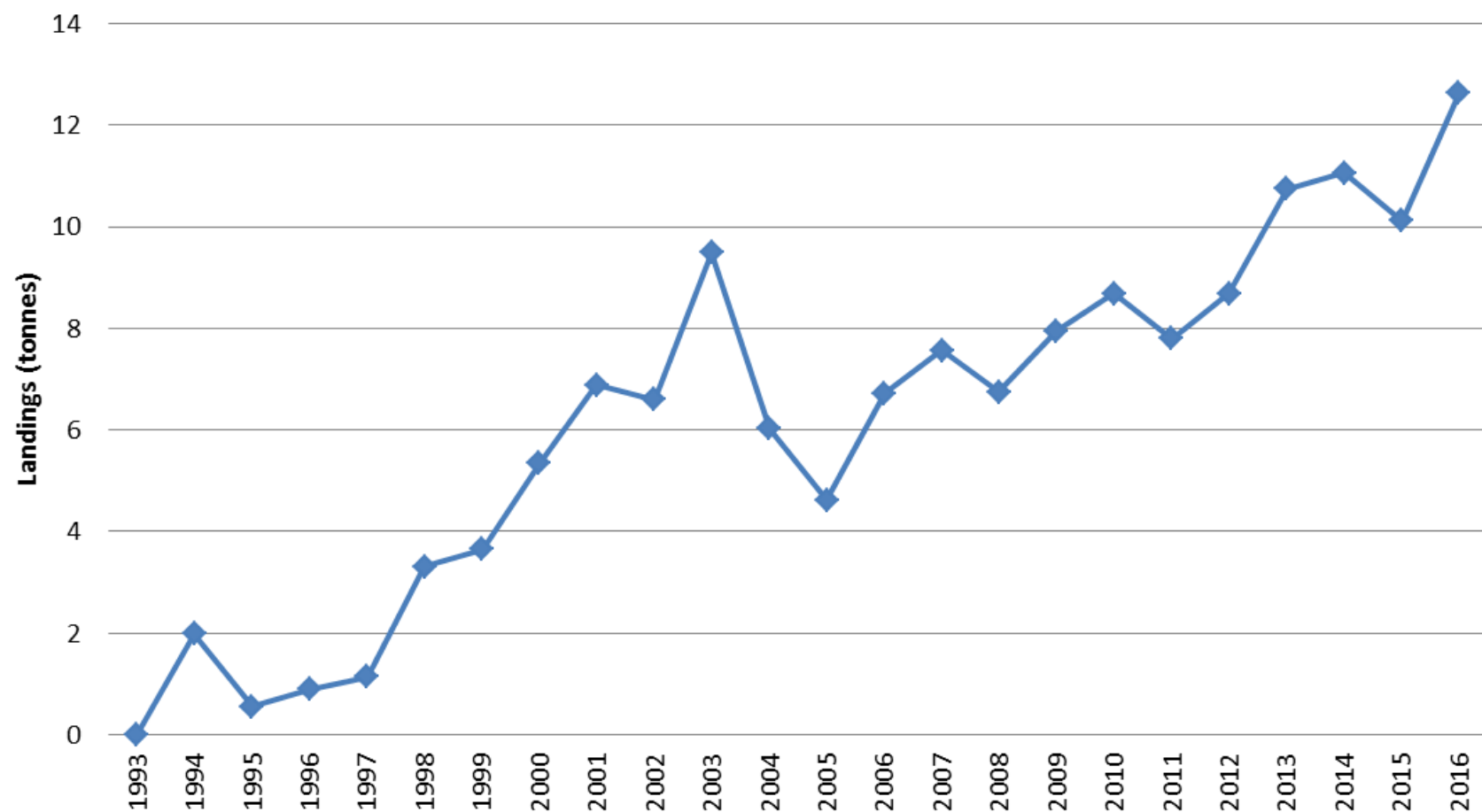
Photos by John Yarrow



Total 18



## Total landings of Crawfish to Cornish ports (source MMO data)





# Landings per unit effort Gill net fishing CIFCA data 2016

Figure 29: LPUE (kg landed/100m nets hauled) of crawfish (*Panlinurus elephas*) for 2016, thematically mapped by belted statistical area, using increments of 0.1kg.

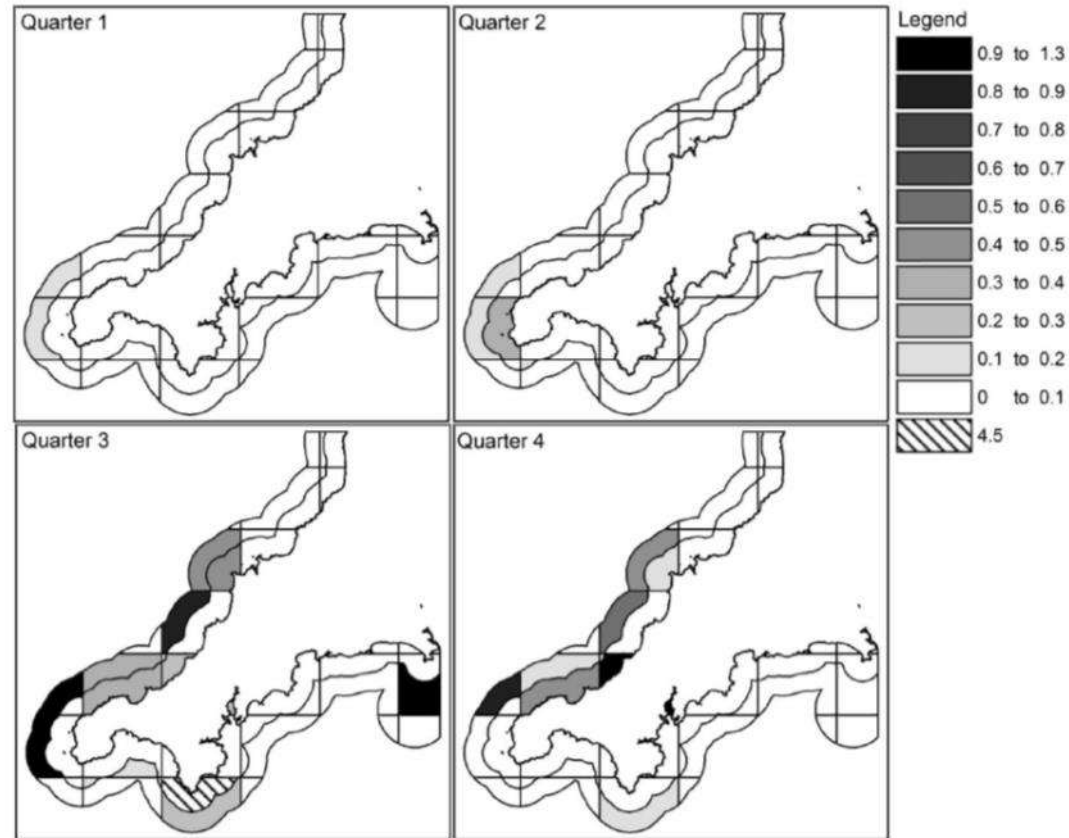


Figure 30: LPUE (kg landed/100m nets hauled) of crawfish (*Panlinurus elephas*) for quarters 1 to 4 of 2016, thematically mapped by fine statistical area, using increments of 0.1kg.

# Management

- Minimum landing size 110mm carapace length (Cornwall and Devon) (95mm in rest of EU)
- National ban on landing berried females
- Recreational fishermen (including divers) bag limit 2 per day in CIFCA district (cannot be sold).
- Listed feature of some MCZs (Manacles, Padstow Bay and Surrounds)
- CIFCA Lobster, Crawfish and Crab fishing bylaw 2014 requires all shellfishermen to have a permit if landing crustaceans caught within CIFCA district. It also ensures that all fishermen submit monthly returns details on catch and fishing effort / gear used.



# Seasearch *Palinurus elephas* data

Charlotte Bolton  
National Seasearch Coordinator  
Marine Conservation Society



# **Calling all divers...**

## **We want your crawfish sightings!**

**Have you seen a crawfish (or crayfish or spiny lobster)???**

Seasearch are very keen to hear from any diver who spots these on their dives! You can download a simple recording form and accompanying notes from our website ([www.seasearch.org.uk/recording.html](http://www.seasearch.org.uk/recording.html)), or send an email to [info@seasearch.org.uk](mailto:info@seasearch.org.uk) stating where you saw them with an estimate of their size (carapace length). A photograph would also be very helpful to accompany your sighting.

**If you are lucky enough to see a crawfish on your dive PLEASE DO NOT COLLECT IT!**



## CRAWFISH RECORDING FORM

### About you:

Name

Email

### Additional notes on crawfish at this site:

### About your dive:

Site name and general location

Position (degrees and decimal minutes)

Lat  Long

Date  Start time

Depth range of crawfish

Habitat of crawfish ✓

Vertical rock	Flatfish rock	Boulders
---------------	---------------	----------

### Please return your completed form to:

Seasearch, Marine Conservation Society, Overross House, Ross Park, Ross-on-Wye HR9 7US  
Or by email to [info@seasearch.org.uk](mailto:info@seasearch.org.uk)

Number of crawfish

### Details of individual crawfish:

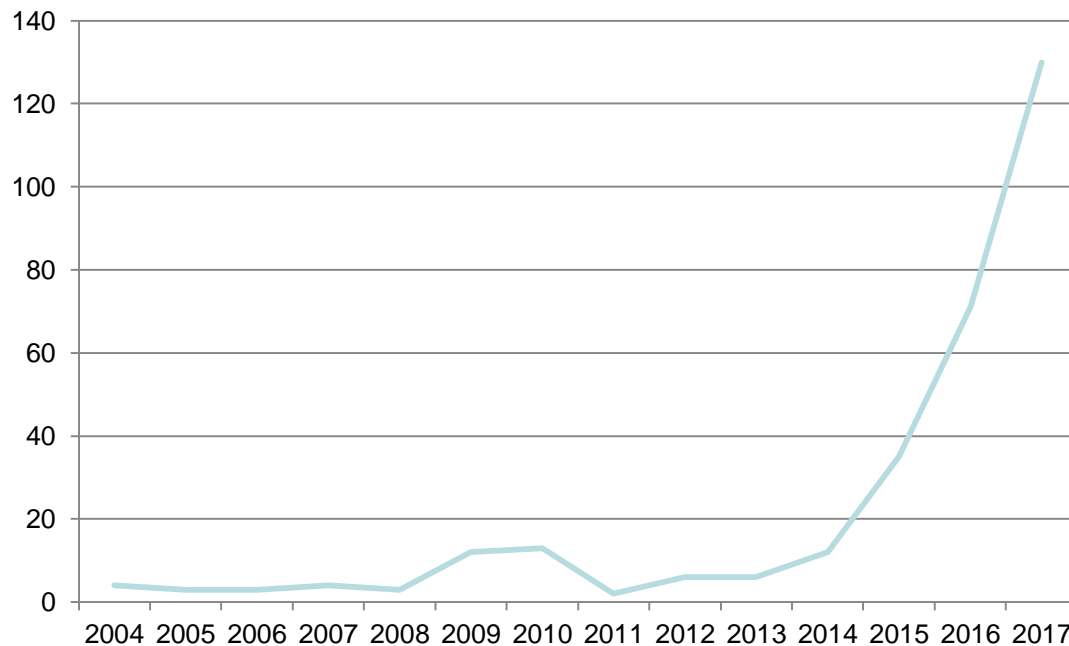
	Habitat	Estimated length of carapace (if seen) in cm. Use your hand as a guide.	Notes
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			

[www.seasearch.org.uk/downloads/crawfish-recording-form.html](http://www.seasearch.org.uk/downloads/crawfish-recording-form.html)



Very large *P. elephas*, Alderney CI © Chris Wood

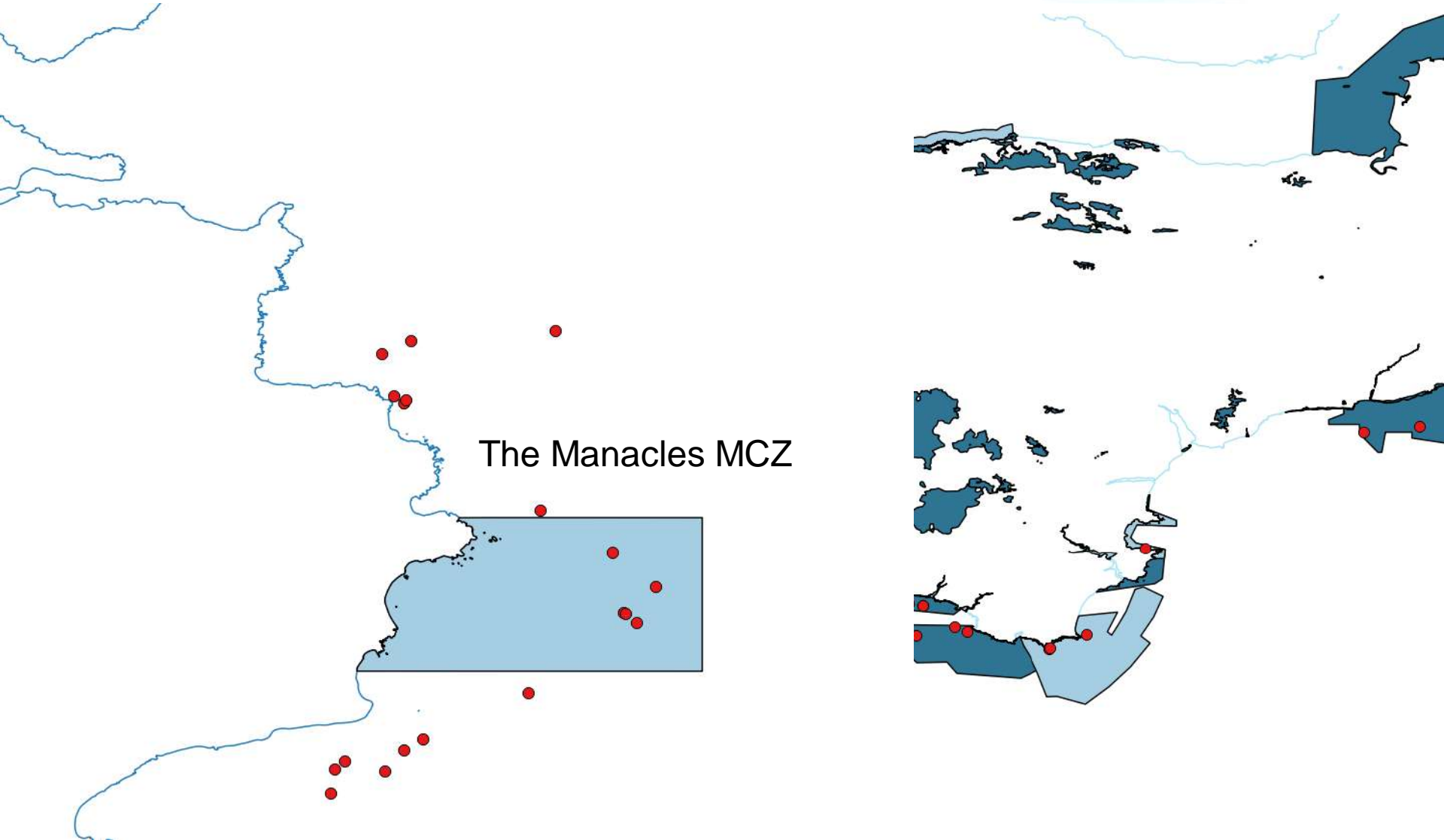
## Seasearch *Palinurus elephas* records (England)



N.B. Uncorrected for survey effort

Year	No. of records
2004	4
2005	3
2006	3
2007	4
2008	3
2009	12
2010	13
2011	2
2012	6
2013	6
2014	12
2015	35
2016	71
2017	130





**#oceanoptimism**









# Thank you



@seasearchcornwall

**Matt Slater**

Marine Awareness Officer  
Cornwall Wildlife Trust

01872 302251

Matt.slater@Cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk



@\_Seasearch

**Charlotte Bolton**

National Seasearch Coordinator  
Marine Conservation Society

07776 142096

info@seasearch.org.uk