

Seaquest Southwest

ANNUAL REPORT **2020**

Seaquest Southwest is a marine citizen science and public participation project run by Cornwall Wildlife Trust to record the most charismatic marine wildlife found in Cornish waters; including porpoise, dolphins, whales, seals, sharks, turtles and fish.

Aims of Seaquest



1

To engage people with the marine environment.

2

To collect data on marine wildlife.

3

To better understand and conserve marine wildlife.

2020 Key Facts and Figures

2208

Marine mammal, Bluefin tuna, Basking shark and Ocean sunfish sightings reported

17

Marine mega fauna species

202

Seaquest effort surveys conducted

14

Online seminar events

43

Sites visited during Seaquest surveys

1213

People engaged with the project

www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/seaquest

seaquest@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk

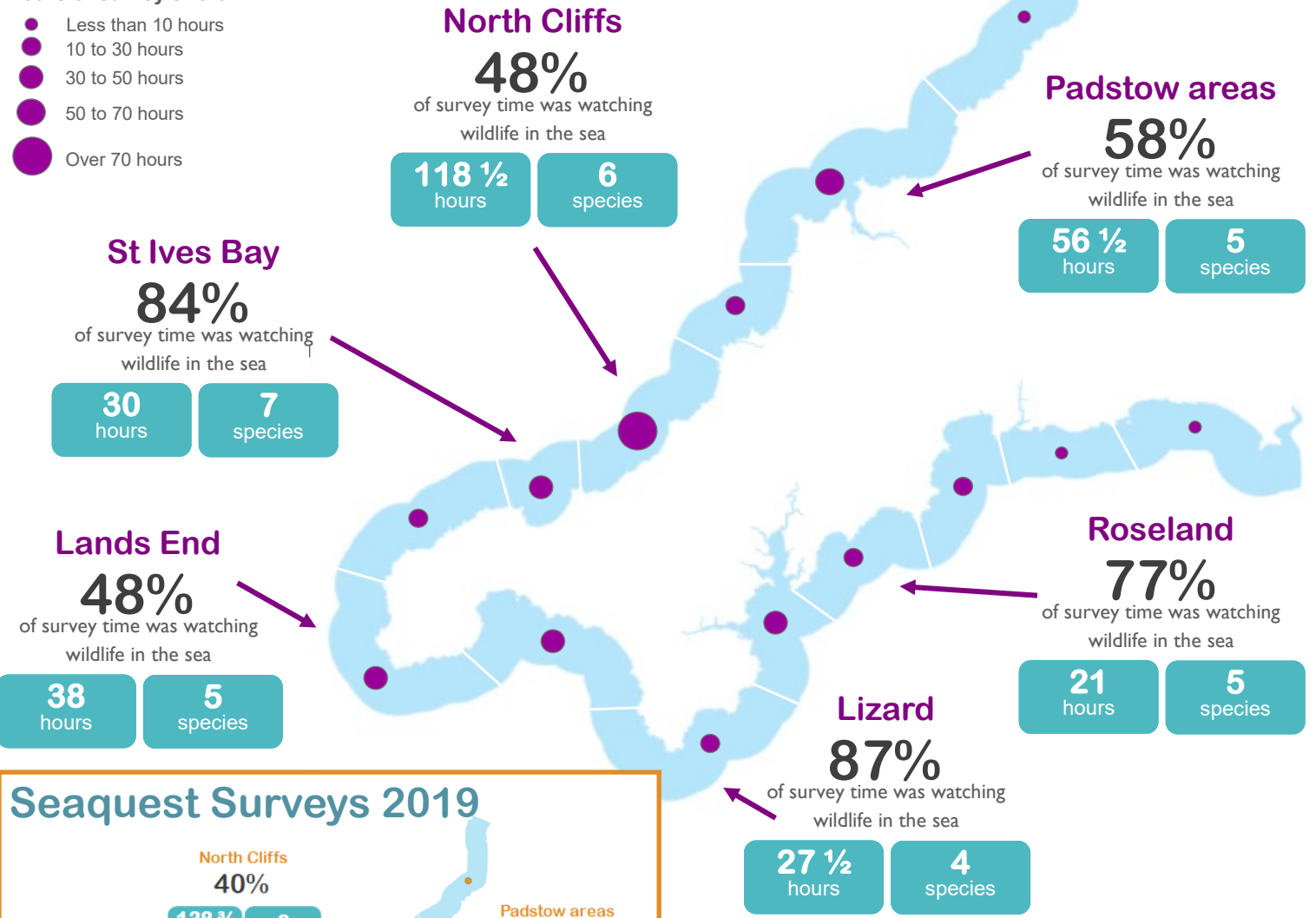
**Cornwall
Wildlife Trust**



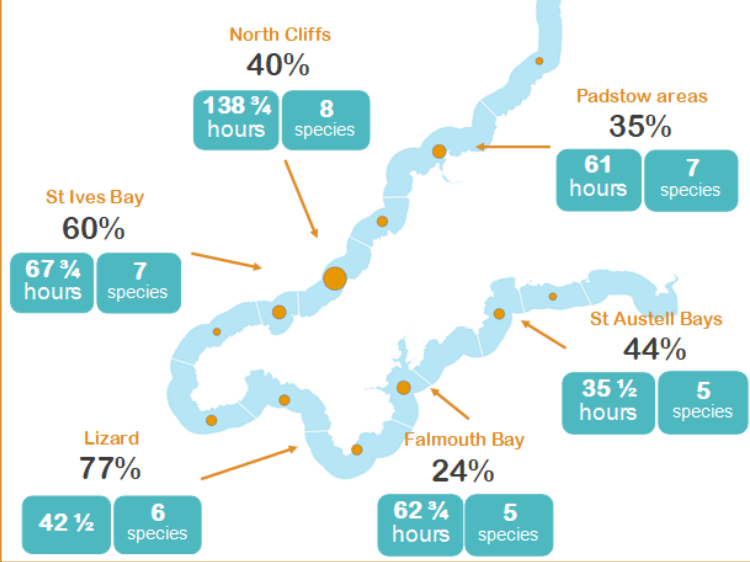
Seaquest Surveys 2020

Hours of survey effort

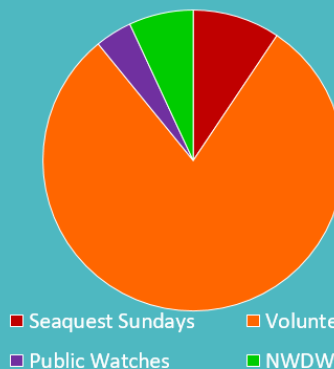
- Less than 10 hours
- 10 to 30 hours
- 30 to 50 hours
- 50 to 70 hours
- Over 70 hours



Seaquest Surveys 2019



KEY FIGURES FROM SEAQUEST EFFORT SURVEYS




- 161 Volunteer surveys
- 19 Seaquest Sundays
- 8 Public Watches
- 14 National Whale and Dolphin watch surveys


Casual Sightings

Sightings records submitted to Seaquest and CWT via our recording website (www.ORKS.org.uk), social media and email


Minke whale
76
 Records submitted
 Number up from 51 in 2019



Ocean sunfish
108
 Records submitted
 Number up from 62 in 2019




Harbour porpoise
537
 Records submitted
 Number down from 594 in 2019




2208
 Total number of casual sightings records submitted to Seaquest


Bluefin tuna
250
 Records submitted
 Number up from 57 in 2019



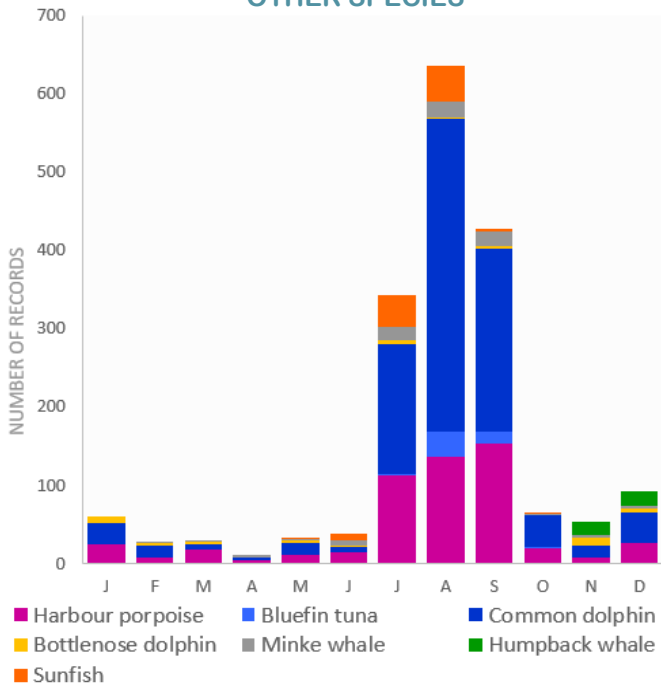
Common dolphin
971
 Records submitted
 Number up from 729 in 2019



Bottlenose dolphin
49
 Records submitted
 Number down from 54 in 2019



REPORTS PER MONTH - MARINE MAMMALS AND OTHER SPECIES

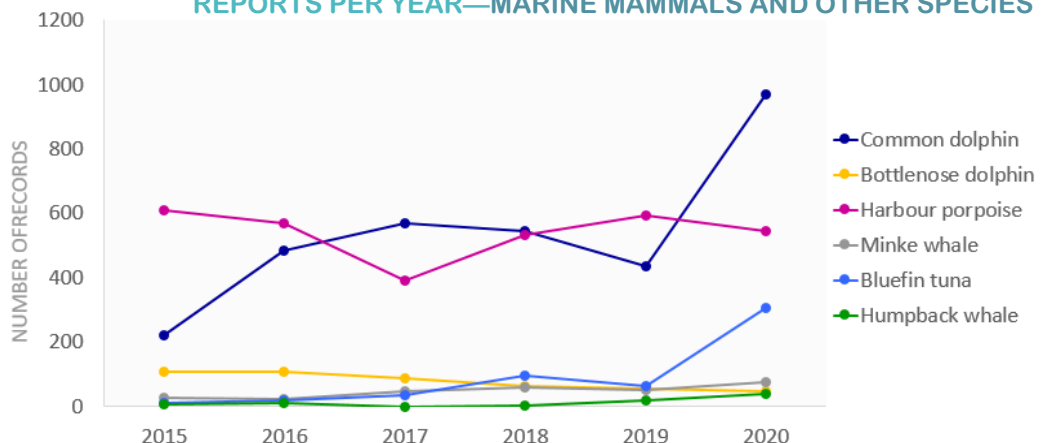


SIGHTINGS HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2020

- **38 humpback whale** records! All records, bar one, were recorded between November and December from around the very West coast of Cornwall and the Isle of Scilly.
- A phenomenal **971 common dolphin** records!
- 2020 saw the return of the **basking shark** with a wonderful **18** sightings mostly around the Lizard and Lands End.
- The second largest mammal in the world, the **fin whale**, was recorded **9** times in 2020.
- **Bluefin tuna** have made a tremendous return to Cornish waters with **250** records of these apex predators.
- **White-beaked dolphins** made another yearly visit to our waters with **3** more records all in Falmouth Bay.
- St Ives Christmas public Seaquest watch, **5** species in **2** hours including a **fin whale!**



REPORTS PER YEAR—MARINE MAMMALS AND OTHER SPECIES



Engagement

Key facts and figures

23

Number of volunteers trained

1213

People engaged with the project

22

Public events run

7

Local marine volunteer groups running Seaquest surveys



To all our Seaquest Volunteers and Supporters

A massive thank you to all who got involved and supported Seaquest during 2020, it has been an extraordinary year. The Covid-19 pandemic put pause to many citizen science projects however the effort that was put into completing surveys and sending in records after lockdown has been astonishing! We are also extremely grateful for your participation with our social media and webinars, it kept us busy and positive during the lockdown and we hope you all enjoyed it too.

A special big thank you to everyone who contributed to Seaquest in 2020

- Cheryl Yarham, Clare Owen and Becky Thomas for an incredible job as Seaquest Coordinator volunteers.
- Our associated local marine groups; St Agnes Marine Conservation group, Newquay Marine Group, Three Bays Wildlife Group, Mounts Bay Marine group, Falmouth Marine Conservation, National Trust at Lizard and West Cornwall for conducting Seaquest surveys on your patch.
- To all our Seaquest trained volunteers for conducting an incredible number of surveys all around the coast in 2020.
- Marine Discovery Penzance, Padstow Sealife Safari, Newquay Sea Safari and Fishing, AK Wildlife Cruises and Cornwall Seal Group Research Trust for kindly sharing your sightings with us.
- To everyone sharing marine animal sightings with us via our online recording website www.ORKS.org.uk, through our Facebook page or via email.
- To all our speakers for our fantastic evening talks; Tom Horton, Jax Keenan, Shauna Corr, Sue Sayer, Dan Jarvis, Mark Grantham, Dr Natasha Philips, Ashley Kitchiner, Jenny Simpson, Hannah Wilson and Duncan Jones, Dr Simon Ingram and Rebecca Dudley, Nick Tregenza, Rebecca Walker, Ruth Williams and Niki Clear, Professor Callum Roberts.

JOIN THE SEAQUEST SOUTHWEST PROJECT!

- Visit www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/seaquest to learn about the project and download previous reports
- Subscribe to our newsletter—the link is on the CWT website
- Follow us on social media: Facebook (@CWTSeaquestSouthwest), Instagram (@seaquest_southwest) and Twitter (@CWTSeaquestSW)
- Come along to a Seaquest public sea watch, talk or training event
- Explore casual sightings by visiting the Seaquest Recording Group on www.ORKS.org.uk
- Sightings and surveys are available on request for your research, project or personal interest, if you would like to access Seaquest data please email seaquest@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk