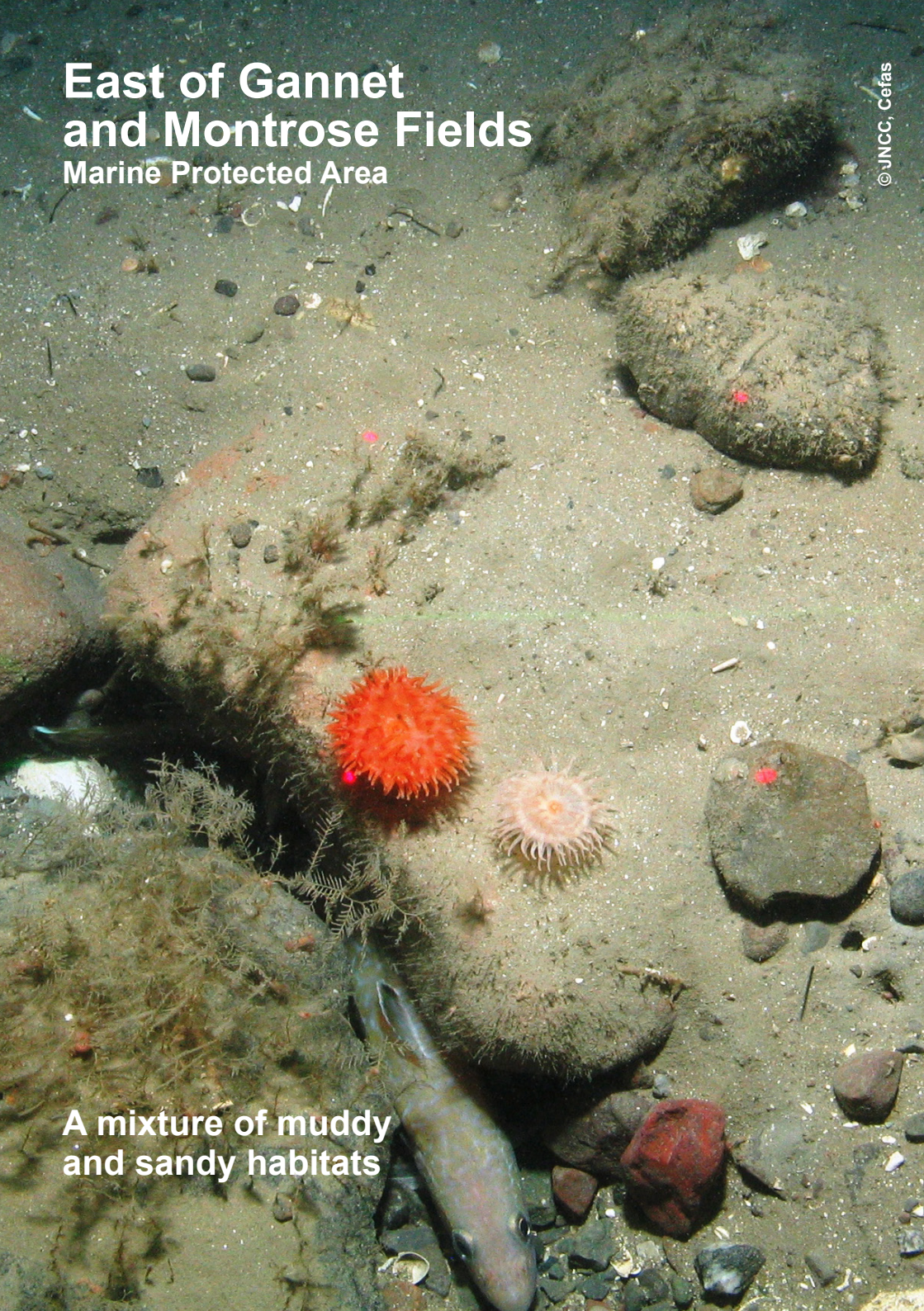


# East of Gannet and Montrose Fields

Marine Protected Area

© JNCC, Cefas

A mixture of muddy  
and sandy habitats

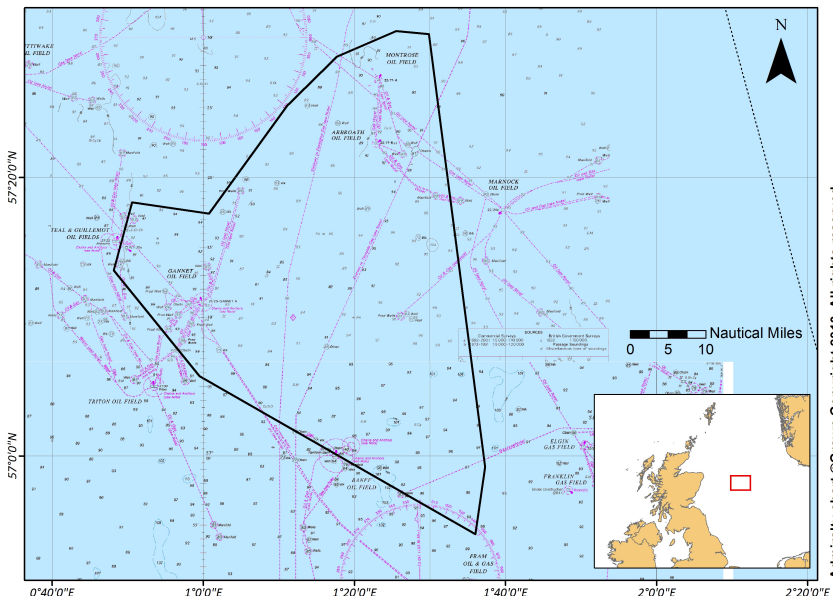


# East of Gannet and Montrose Fields

## Marine Protected Area (MPA)

The East of Gannet and Montrose Fields MPA lies within a shallow sediment plain to the east of Scotland. The sandy seabed in the region provides an ideal home for the ocean quahog, a type of large clam that normally lives buried in the sand. Ocean quahog filter food from passing currents, and use their shovel-like 'foot' to bury into the sediment.

The southern part of the MPA includes one of very few examples of deep-sea mud on the continental shelf in the North Sea. It is too dark for plants to grow at this depth; instead the conditions are favoured by animals such as sea spiders, sea urchins and worms.



### Boundary of the East of Gannet and Montrose Fields MPA

Location: 57° 12.651' N 1° 17.345' E

Area: 1,839 km<sup>2</sup>





A monkfish rests on the muddy seabed

## Protected Features & Conservation Objectives

The aim is to **conserve** the **ocean quahog aggregations** (including their supporting habitat, sands and gravels) and **offshore deep-sea muds** found within the East of Gannet and Montrose Fields MPA.

The majority of the seabed within the MPA is dominated by sands and gravels, which are the preferred habitat of the ocean quahog. Ocean quahog is an important food source for several species of fish, including cod, and can live buried deep in the sand for long periods of time without food or oxygen to escape predators. They can live for more than 400 years and are one of the longest living creatures on Earth.

The MPA includes a band of offshore deep-sea mud. Here many types of worm and mollusc live buried in the mud, and provide an important food source for passing fish. Above the surface, larger animals such as sea urchins roam the mud surface.

# Further Information

Further information on Nature Conservation MPAs, the wider network and protected areas management is available at

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/marine-environment/mpanetwork](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/marine-environment/mpanetwork)

For Nature Conservation MPA site documents and more information about the fascinating range of marine life found in Scotland's seas, please visit

[www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/scottishmpas](http://www.jncc.defra.gov.uk/scottishmpas) - for offshore waters

[www.snh.gov.uk/mpas](http://www.snh.gov.uk/mpas) - for territorial waters



marinescotland



Ocean quahog normally live buried in the sediment

