

## New species identified



A new species has been discovered off the Scottish coast by a team of scientists from JNCC, Marine Scotland Science and Thomson Environmental Consultants. The worm which has eyes in its head and bottom was collected by scientists from JNCC and MSS whilst surveying the West Shetland Shelf Marine Protected Area (MPA). This MPA has been designated to protect a wide variety of important sand and gravel habitats, and is equivalent in size to the Cairngorms National Park.

The survey was the first to explore the animals within and on the seabed in this area and marks the beginning of a programme of long-term monitoring. As part of this undertaking, sandy areas of previously unexplored seabed were targeted for detailed examination by the scientists on board the research vessel MRV Scotia. During the identification process back onshore it became apparent that a completely unknown species of worm was present.

Our wiggly friend, given the scientific name *Ampharete oculicirrata*, has found a new home in the collections of National Museums Scotland in Edinburgh. A scientific paper detailing the find in full has just been published in the June edition of the European Journal of Taxonomy (No 531 (2019)) <https://europeanjournaloftaxonomy.eu/index.php/ejt/article/view/711/1649>

## Biodiversity and wine production



JNCC's Matt Smith and Becky Trippier have been working with the Wine, Climate Change & Biodiversity program in Chile on a pilot project to promote responsible practices and assess how biodiversity underpins environmental functions and processes that are critical to wine production in the Colchagua Valley. The project is working to understand how Earth observation data, ecosystem modelling, biodiversity conservation, sustainable agricultural practices and local knowledge can develop an integrated approach to managing the valley's natural capital.

## Aberdeen beach clean



JNCC staff from our Aberdeen office recently teamed up with colleagues from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage and Marine Scotland for hands-on conservation with a lunch time beach clean outside the Inverdee House office.

For more than 25 years JNCC has provided robust evidence and trusted advice on nature conservation to enable UK governments to achieve their policy objectives. As a public body we also work in partnership with business and society. Our people are dedicated to providing high-quality evidence and advice on the natural environment for the benefit of current and future generations. Our vision is to be a world-leading provider of innovative solutions, placing nature at the heart of sustainable wealth and wellbeing.



## European Eels



JNCC's Vin Fleming represented the UK, alongside Alan Walker from Cefas, at the productive Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) of Wild Animals 3rd Meeting of Range States for the European Eel in Malmo, Sweden. The meeting sought to consider scope for future actions for eels under CMS. The European Eel has a wide geographic range from Northern Norway to North Africa and the Mediterranean. Its journey to spawn in the Sargasso Sea, around Bermuda, is one of the most impressive feats of animal migration known in nature. Listed as "Critically Endangered" on the IUCN Red List and on Appendix II of both CMS and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, there is significant concern regarding this species due to a >90% decline over the past four decades in recruitment of 'glass eels', the product of spawning in the Sargasso. <https://www.cms.int/en/meeting/3rd-meeting-range-states-european-eel>

## Financial boost for Seabirds Count



A group of offshore renewable energy companies has provided a much-needed financial boost to 'Seabirds Count', the fourth national census of the UK's breeding seabird populations. Thanks to equal funding contributions from EDF Renewables, Moray Offshore Windfarm (West) Limited (Moray West), Red Rock Power Limited (Red Rock Power) and SSE Renewables, alongside support from government and conservation charities, the count is now set for completion in 2020. The census aims to make an accurate count of 25 species of seabirds across more than 10,000 sites in Britain and Ireland and is made possible through the hard work of dedicated volunteers and specialist surveyors, working with charities and government nature conservation bodies operating under the guidance of the Seabird Monitoring Programme Partnership, co-ordinated by JNCC. <https://jncc.gov.uk/news/boost-for-uk-seabird-census/>

## Marine monitoring by UAV



The third report in The Marine Monitoring Platform Guidelines series has been published. These guidelines provide marine scientists with a broad overview of the capabilities and limitations of key sampling platforms available for marine biological monitoring applications, and form part of JNCC's commitment to providing expert advice in this field.

This latest report is intended primarily for survey managers who are considering the use of Unmanned Autonomous Vehicles (UAVs), also known as drones, to meet their survey objectives. It focusses on small battery-powered aircraft, typically capable of flying for a period of less than an hour under the control of a pilot within line of sight of the aircraft. Download the guidelines at <http://bit.ly/2YJeVSd>.

## JNCC chair WGDEC

JNCC chaired the Joint International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)/Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) Working Group on Deep-water Ecology (WGDEC). This group brings together scientists from across the North Atlantic to collate data and map the distribution of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems in this area. Explore the VME data portal at <http://vme.ices.dk/map.aspx>



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