



Hi everyone,

Just a quick-ish update and seasonal newsletter from the marine team, wishing you a Merry Christmas and thanking you for all your support throughout 2025. It's been an extraordinary year for wildlife, from acrobatic humpback whales and newly recorded nudibranchs to a truly blooming year for octopus. Volunteers have been active on many fronts- diving, snorkelling, and seashore rambling; getting covered in mud planting seagrass seeds; and even trudging through winter gales to recover dolphins and seals for post mortem work. Your dedication, enthusiasm, and resilience have been incredible. You've been amazing!

We recently celebrated these achievements at our annual Marine Recorders Evening at St Petroc's church in Bodmin. The evening is always a highlight of our year, bringing together our wonderful marine community - though there never seems enough time to catch up with all our friends during the pasty break!

A huge thank you again to everyone who has supported us this year, whether through giving your time, taking action, donating, or even just with kind encouraging words. We look forward to seeing all of you on the beach, cliffs, mud or in the sea in 2026!

Contents

Seasearch.....	2
Seeding change together – seagrass restoration project	2
Your Shore	3
Seaquest Southwest.....	5
Marine Strandings Network	5
Marine Recorders Evening.....	7
Consultations and project developments.....	7
Events to look forward to early in 2026	8
Merry Fishmas Crossword	9

Seasearch



In the first of our winter talks series Matt Slater and David Roberts (Porthkerris Divers) gave a fantastic online talk in November on the 'Tentacular spectacular – The year of the octopus'.

Matt explored octopus biology and ecology, sharing some wonderful footage of octopus behaviour using both his own footage and clips from volunteers. David shared his incredible videos and stories of his octopus encounters at Porthkerris where they have been observing many of these incredible creatures on almost every dive. We had 73 attendees, with £360 raised for CWT marine work. Our furthest-flung participant joined us from California: octopus expert and author Danna Staaf, who jumped in on the chat afterwards to help answer some of the in-depth questions about these truly otherworldly ocean denizens.

If you missed it the recording is here:

<https://youtu.be/h-Xtqqclcy2k?si=Wb2sFjcOqVFXjx9k>

Seeding change together – seagrass restoration project

The seagrass team Chloe and Nia and their fantastic volunteers have been extremely busy! Nia Clarke our Seagrass project assistant and her partner Ben Oakes put together this fabulous five-minute film providing an update on the project for Marine Recordors Evening -

https://youtu.be/_gciByrRjT8?feature=shared



Your Shore

This year has seen exciting progress within the Your Shore Network through funding from the Swire Charitable Trust. As we come to end of this particular project, we'd like to reflect on the inspiring outcomes that the Your Shore team and incredible associated local groups have achieved.

Ultimately, the strength and power of the Your Shore Network is to facilitate local action by engaging their communities.

Over the funding period, the Your Shore Network as a whole has engaged 15,870 people through over 1000 activities, including public events, marine life surveys, community meetings, and bespoke training sessions. **The local Your Shore groups themselves have done 44% of this engagement**, showing the huge impact community conservation has here in Cornwall. The groups have also conducted **208** citizen science surveys, collecting vital data to ensure that our seas are protected.

Training for Your Shore volunteers has been a major part for the work around Cornwall, providing free opportunities for local people to get involved with the CWT core citizen science programmes. Your Shore has been able to deliver **24** specialist marine training opportunities to Your Shore groups, with an additional **23** training sessions through our Associated groups package.

Over these sessions, 670 volunteers improved their skill sets, enabling them to be able to contribute to their Your Shore local group in a number of ways.

The funding also enabled dedicated time and resources to provide additional support to three of our smaller groups on the North Coast – Bude, Perranporth and St Ives to increase their presence in their communities. Support included collaborative events and strategies to avoid volunteer fatigue and develop succession plans so their groups could continue to thrive.

We've seen great successes through this year, including the revival of the St Ives group who continue to grow in active members, confidence and skills. Perranporth have also attracted new members who have stepped into event leadership roles, increasing their capacity to engage with their community. The St Austell Bay and Mounts Bay seagrass and kelp teams have now surveyed over 18km of coastline!

But amongst these achievements, we have to recognise that sadly, despite a huge amount of effort and perseverance, the incredible Bude Marine Group has decided to end the group.

Since its creation, seven years ago the Bude Marine Group (BMG) has endeavoured to both promote and protect the amazing diverse marine ecosystem of the Bude area.

Ranging from rock-pooling surveys, marine mammal watches and beach cleaning, the BMG team has provided an annual programme of monthly events, in which many local

people and visitors have participated. They have even created their own guides to local shore.

Like most volunteer groups in many aspects of our lives, the BMG has relied on a lot of hard work from a very small core of key individuals, namely Alison Wood, Martin Dancey and Adrian Dean Daniels. These people have given a lot of their own time to this cause and done fantastic things for the marine environment of Bude and should be applauded for their passion and endeavours.



We hope that all will continue to support their local groups in the coming year and we are excited to see what happens next!

Seaquest Southwest

As another brilliant year of Seaquest Southwest draws to a close, we're taking a moment to celebrate just how much you've all achieved. In 2025, our amazing volunteers carried out 110 surveys, welcomed 123 new Seaquesters, and clocked up an impressive 214 hours of surveying along the Cornish coast.



Marine Strandings Network



On Saturday 10th October we had a fantastic time training up 46 new Marine Strandings volunteers. Hosted by Newquay University Centre trainees spent the morning covering theory before moving out into the grounds of the campus to practise recording stranded marine animals.

A veritable gang of enthusiastic MSN volunteers came along to help, from packing kit, and directing traffic to delivering training talks and demonstrations, and especially guiding groups of volunteers through the practical aspects of recording strandings, the day really wouldn't have been possible without them.

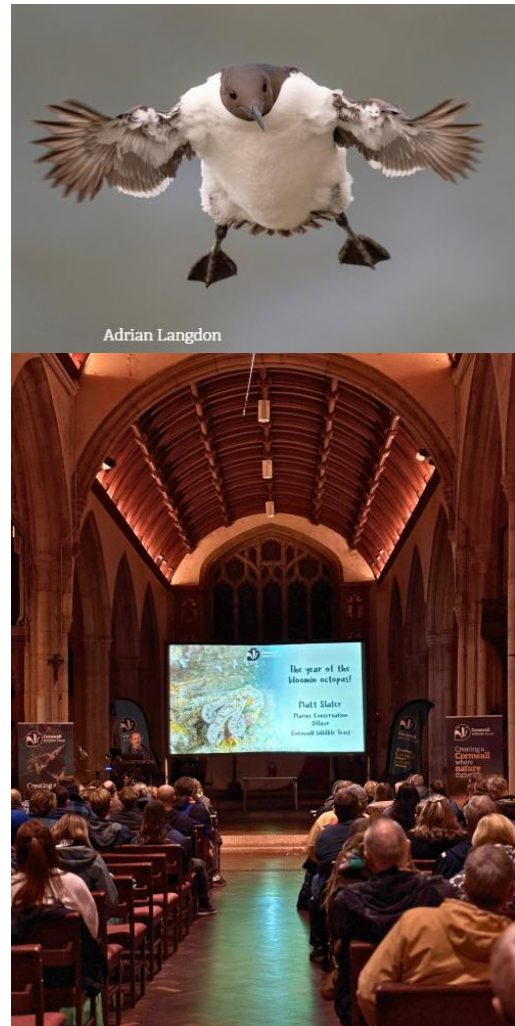
A big thank you to all the MSN volunteers who gave their time and expertise to help train up our new recruits, including pathologist James Barnett who delivered an insightful talk on the findings from post-mortem examinations of stranded animals and also to Cornwall College Newquay University Centre for generously hosting us for free!

Marine Recorders Evening

The highlight of the marine team's year is the annual Marine Recorders Evening which took place in November at St Petroc's Church, Bodmin.

It was amazing to have such a great turn out despite the snowy weather. The night was packed with updates and highlights from across our citizen science projects, alongside a brilliant line-up of guest speakers. We welcomed Dr Simon Thomas, who gave a fascinating talk about his research in 'the return of the blue sharks', as well as Adrian Langdon, who shared some of his fabulous seabird photography and stories behind the shots. CWT volunteer coordinators Ben Nesbitt and Jess Turley gave updates from Shoresearch and Seaquest respectively and Jess gave us a summary of her master's research into Harbour Porpoise sightings and strandings. Matt Slater rounded off the evening with 'Year of the blooming octopus' sharing some brilliant encounters and videos captured by him and volunteers.

A huge thankyou to all our speakers and to everyone who braved the snow to join us! A special shout out to Roland and the other staff at St Petroc's for hosting us at such a lovely venue and for ensuring the evening ran smoothly without a single technical hitch!



Consultations and project developments

Falmouth Docks redevelopment update: We are objecting to government's decision to fast-track the £150m Falmouth Docks redevelopment. We are deeply concerned that poorly planned dredging and construction works could put the Fal's nationally important marine ecosystems at risk, along with the traditional oyster fishery, and fishing in the outer Bay around the dredge spoil disposal site. We have three substantive concerns relating to the proposals themselves: (1) that measures to prevent the potential resuspension of contaminated sediments are not robust enough; (2) that the modelled dispersal of sediments from the dredge and dump sites do not guarantee that irreplicable habitats like maerl will not be smothered, and; (3) that noise and light

pollution impacts have not been adequately mitigated. We have raised our concerns [publicly](#), with regulators, with the Council, and with local decision makers. Beyond the specifics of this development we—along with other Wildlife Trusts and charities—are deeply concerned of the precedent that may be set.

MPAs round 4. The MMO have been holding talks and webinars around management of the two large MPAs for Harbour Porpoise. Look out for more on this in the new year, but if you want to read about it you can find information here: [Managing harbour porpoise bycatch in English waters - GOV.UK](#)

Events to look forward to early in 2026

More details of these (and others) will be found (soon) on Cornwall Wildlife Trust Events page: [Events | Cornwall Wildlife Trust](#)

Online talks:

Our winter talks series continues with a Seaquest special on Wednesday 18th February ‘Superlative seabirds of the Southwest’ from guest speaker RSPB Senior marine policy officer Sam Wroble. Sam will be giving insights into the lives some of our most charismatic Cornish seabirds along with ID tips. In March we have a Seasearch special from Cat Wilding of the Marine Biological Association: ‘Kernow’s hidden Kelp Kingdom’. She will help you to discover how to distinguish our local kelp species and discuss current research aiming to restore kelp forests, which is the focus of her PhD research.

Public Seaquest SW seawatches:

Sunday December 21st 11am – 1pm St Ives Island

Sunday January 18th 11am – 1pm Huer’s Hut, Newquay

Sunday February 15th 11am – 1pm, Pendennis Point, Falmouth

Your shore:

Your shore conference, 31st January, Tregenna Castle, St Ives

Love your beach weekend: Sat 14th February – many locations!

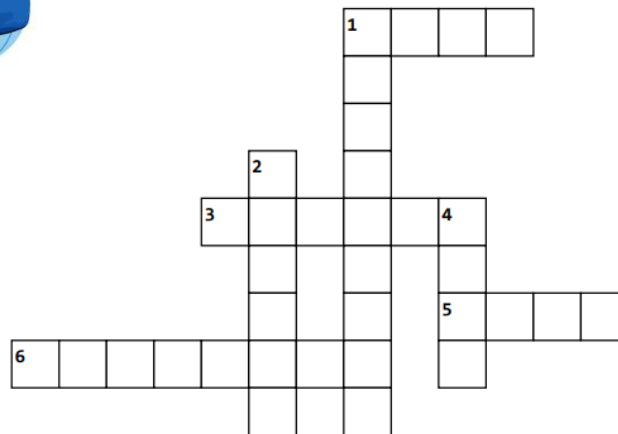
Seasearch:

Seasearch observer course 7th – 8th March

Merry Fishmas Crossword



Merry Fishmas



Across

1. Put this squirt on top of the tree ascidian
3. Seashore carol favourite ... Jingle
5. The cod father of croon gives us a 'White Christmas' Crosby
6. Its little known that these attended the nativity (according to Love Actually)

Down

1. Why didn't the crabs give out any presents this year? Because they were
2. Cetacean seasonal salutation: Have a merry Christmas
4. Old king Cole is a merry one ...

Sea-sons greetings from the marine team

