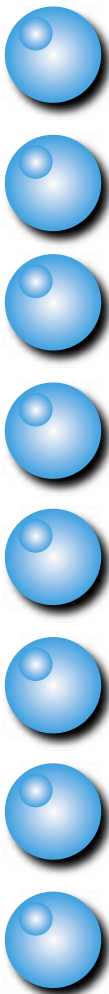




Watch Out for Jellyfish

SHOTLINES



THE MARINE Conservation Society (MCS) is again calling on British seaside visitors to take part in the national MCS Jellyfish Survey and report their sightings of these bizarre but fascinating creatures. Large jellyfish blooms have already been reported washing up on beaches across the country.

"This year's jellyfish season started in earnest in April in the Irish Sea, when barrel and moon jellyfish were reported off the Welsh coast. Through May and June, barrel and moon jellyfish reports increased, with moon jellyfish reports coming from elsewhere along with reports of other species such as the beautiful blue and compass jellyfishes," said Peter Richardson, MCS Biodiversity Programme Manager.

"We started receiving reports of stranded Lion's mane jellyfish off Wales and Northern Ireland in June. Lion's mane jellyfish and some other species can sting, so as ever, we are encouraging people to take part in our national jellyfish survey, but the key message is look, don't touch!"

The MCS Jellyfish Survey aims to uncover the little-known habits of British jellyfish, as part of a wider programme to find out more about leatherback turtles that migrate thousands of miles to UK waters to feed on their favourite jellyfish prey each summer. By mapping where and when the jellyfish are seen, MCS hopes to understand more about leatherback turtles while they visit in UK seas.

"The jellyfish survey is an excellent way for people to get involved in finding out more about our threatened seas. It appears that around the world jellyfish numbers are increasing, especially in our temperate seas, and scientists have linked these increases to factors such as pollution, over-fishing and possibly climate change," said Peter Richardson.

"We should consider jellyfish populations as important indicators that show us what happens when we treat our seas badly, telling us that our marine resources are in desperate need of proper management."

In September last year, MCS President HRH the Prince of

Wales launched Silent Seas, a comprehensive assessment of the state of our seas, detailing the damage we are causing to the valuable resources they yield, and including a detailed call for specific action to ensure our oceans and marine wildlife have a future. Silent Seas can be downloaded from www.mcsuk.org

MCS is interested in records of the six larger jellyfish and two jellyfish-like species likely to be encountered around the UK coast and that are known to be leatherback prey. Over 6,000 jellyfish encounters have been reported since the MCS Survey was launched in 2003. The survey data will be fully analysed in collaboration with the University of Exeter, but initial analysis of these public reports is already showing interesting differences in the distribution of the larger jellyfish species around Britain

Taking part in the jellyfish survey is easy! The full-colour MCS jellyfish photo-ID guide and recording forms can be downloaded from www.mcsuk.org, where jellyfish encounters can also be reported in detail online.

SOME JELLYFISH SPECIES YOU MIGHT COME ACROSS IN SCOTLAND



Barrel Jellyfish - Image courtesy of John Crum

Barrel Jellyfish

(harmless, very mild sting)
Blooms largely restricted to the Irish Sea, Solway Firth and the Firth of Clyde, but strays can be recorded further south throughout the year.

January – Individuals recorded on beaches in Wales and Isle of Man.
April to June – Started occurring in numbers in off the Welsh coast, with some June records from North Devon.



Moon Jellyfish - Image courtesy of Carl Hansen

Moon Jellyfish

(harmless, very mild sting)
Entire UK coast – most frequently encountered jellyfish in UK waters.

April – Reported in numbers off Anglesey.
May – Large blooms reported off Shetland, Northern Ireland, Wales and Cumbria.
June - Reports from Dumfries & Galloway, Isle of Man, Co. Down, Wales and Essex.
July – Reported off Norfolk and Angus.

Search for Crawfish But Not For Eating

SEASEARCH IS urging divers throughout Britain and Ireland to be on the lookout for crawfish (sometimes known as crayfish or spiny lobster), on their dives. The crawfish is the largest crustacean in our waters and, whilst it used to be commonly seen in the waters around our coasts it has become increasingly rare due to overfishing.

Unlike the lobster, which is much better known and still relatively common, the crawfish does not have the protection of large claws. This has made it very easy for divers to take from the pot. It also is more active than lobster, and large numbers have been taken by tangle netting. Because it is now so rare it has been put on the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan species list, making it a priority for conservation.

Seasearch wants divers to tell them where they are currently seeing crawfish, how many they see and what size they are. This will help to build up a picture of current populations in shallow waters and help them to identify hotspots where protection is needed. Recording is easy and results can be entered online at www.seasearch.org.uk

Seasearch will not be producing detailed maps for where to find crawfish, which would be counter-productive, and they are urging divers who see them to record their presence and leave them there. As what is now a relatively rare species, divers should not take crawfish even for their own consumption.

In addition to getting an up to date picture

of where crawfish occur Seasearch are urging divers to look back through their old logbooks and report where they have seen them in the past. The information can be entered online in exactly the same way.



Crawfish numbers have dropped in recent years



Friends In High Places

ST ABBS & Eyemouth Marine Ranger, Liza Cole, was recently honoured with an invitation to a reception at No.10 Downing Street. She was one of 150 people invited from all over the country to attend the reception which was a celebration of the contribution that people make everyday in support of their local environmental wildlife projects and organisations.

Liza said:

Liza outside Britain's most famous door

"Although it was a very long way to go, and a rather surreal experience to be sipping Pimms in the garden of Number 10, it was great to be able to spread the word about the Reserve, its Silver Jubilee and the area in general."

Liza has had a busy couple of months hanging out with the great and good of Britain, as earlier in July she was introduced to the Queen during her trip to Eyemouth.

UK's First GUE Dive Centre

UNDERWATER EXPLORERS are pleased to announce that they are the 8th Global Underwater Explorers (GUE) Dive Centre in the world. They are the first in the UK and will hopefully be leading the way for others to follow. This official status guarantees divers access to premium quality equipment, training and services that meet GUE standards.

GUE is a training agency founded in Florida in 1998 by some of the most accomplished cave divers; originally it only offered

some of the most demanding cave and technical training, as time has gone on the natural evolution of GUE has meant they offer recreational training using the same tough course standards.

GUE's Recreational Diver 1 programme is one of the toughest and most well rounded beginner's courses on the market. As a GUE Dive Centre Underwater Explorers will also seek to expand the GUE diving community and support the broader goals of the organisation through training and club

activities.

Underwater Explorers are based in Portland and will be running

some exciting conservation work in line with their club Millennium Divers.

For further details visit www.underwater-explorers.co.uk





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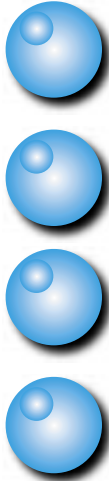
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Filling The Gap

If you are one of 2009's many graduates and the thought of settling down to nine to five hum drum is an unsettling one then why not consider a gap year in marine conservation?

THE PREMIERE of 'The End of the Line' at this year's Sundance Film Festival has brought evidence of the devastating effects of over-fishing to a global audience. Ethical travel provider Frontier is calling on students and graduates to consider a marine-based gap year project to help carry out vital research work in the ongoing marine conservation battle.

Dr Mark Steer, Research and Development Manager at Frontier comments; "The film has provided an acute insight into marine policies and brought the issues it raises to the attention of a mass audience. We trust it will also become the catalyst for people to begin making more informed choices about purchasing fish. However, we also hope that it will inspire many to become directly involved in the conservation of natural marine resources on volunteer programmes with established ethical companies such as Frontier."

Frontier celebrates 20 years of operation this year and the number of their marine projects has grown considerably over this period. The first project - Tanzania Marine Conservation and Diving, was established in 1989 and is now one of Frontier's most popular and established programmes along with similar trips in Fiji and Madagascar. Marine research projects are also available in Cape Verde, Costa Rica, Greece, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Mozambique and Uruguay.

Frontier-Tanzania Marine Conservation & Diving is run in association

with the University of Dar es Salaam and aims to provide the local government with the information they need to design and implement management plans for the future protection of this fragile marine ecosystem. Using the latest scientific techniques volunteers will gather data on the extensive coral reefs and the various communities existing on them. They will also explore and record the living organisms that inhabit the mangrove forests, dense seagrass beds and productive intertidals in the area.

Participants can also gain an internationally recognised BTEC Advanced Diploma (10 weeks or longer) or Advanced Certificate (4 weeks or longer) in Tropical Habitat Conservation.

Scuba diving is an essential component to the underwater survey work carried out on Frontier's marine research programmes therefore all volunteers will receive free PADI Advanced Open Water dive training worth approx £475. Frontier is a registered PADI Educational Facility offering expert tuition by experienced Dive Officers and Dive Masters. Frontier also offers PADI Dive Master (£340), PADI Rescue Diver (£170) and PADI Emergency First Response (£85) qualifications.

The Frontier-Tanzania Marine Conservation & Diving Project departs



Gap year divers head overboard



Whale shark

monthly and is available for durations of 3, 4, 5 and 6 weeks in Jan, Feb, Apr, May, Jul, Aug, Oct and Nov, and 8, 10 and 20 weeks in Jan, Apr, Jul and Oct.

Frontier's marine conservation projects include comprehensive pre-departure support, free UK residential briefing weekend, travel and medical advice and documentation, equipment advice, discounted kit and a free Frontier T-shirt as standard. In-country volunteers receive food, accommodation, airport transfers, most ground transfers, local orientation, project training, free dive training to PADI Advanced Open Water, project equipment, project materials, 24-hour emergency support from project staff and representatives plus international HQ emergency support and backup. All prices exclude flights.

For more information visit www.frontier.ac.uk



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