



**Does Ireland have the largest Honeycomb worm (*Sabellaria*) reef in Europe?**  
**Join Wexford and Waterford Coastwatchers to find out. Biodiversity Days May 18 – 31<sup>st</sup> '15.**

We are inviting the interested public, schools, kayakers and divers to search our SE Ireland shore and waters for fragile honeycomb reefs and help map them from now until June 1st. The reported European Sabellaria reef record stands at 2.14 sq.km in the Bay of Mont Saint Michel in N. France.

This search is concentrated in the **Waterford estuary – Tramore Bay to Annestown area** where we think we may have the largest reef. In case you know of a honeycomb patterned sand sculpture (photos overleaf) around rocks elsewhere, please notify us too. National Sabellaria reef rivals we know of from Coastwatch surveys and official NBDC records are in counties Kerry, Galway, Sligo and Donegal.

**First Results** May 18<sup>th</sup> - see [www.coastwatch.org](http://www.coastwatch.org) Honeycomb reef for pictures and map.

Wexford side: Emmet found a 10- 55m wide reef straddling low water. He walked 2 survey units -1km from Booley Bay towards Duncannon and still hadn't reached the reef end! No reef at Duncannon Fort.

Waterford side, Coastwatchers and pupils of Our Lady of Mercy School Waterford at Tramore Lady's slip found ~ 250m<sup>2</sup> reef in patches. They also found beautiful snakelocks anemones with pink tentacle tips.

**If you would like to Join – here a summary of the method:**

1. Chose 500 m of shore to survey by contacting Coastwatch or googling 'Coastwatch map' <http://worldmap.harvard.edu/maps/cwsurveyunits> .Write the code in A1 below. (Zoom in on the area, then place the cursor over the blue or white survey unit lines so the code pops up).
2. Photograph that survey map so you know where your area starts/ ends, or print a map screen shot.
3. Plan your search just before low tide (google the times) with this paper form or download phone version – <http://goo.gl/forms/nK4fbhGR57> Bring anorak, pen, camera, measuring tape.
4. Grab family or friend and zigzag the shore searching along rocks and hard surfaces, mid to low shore
5. If you find a honeycomb reef **EUREKA! TELL US AT ONCE!** and photograph the amazing shapes.
6. Measure or step reefs out and jot down length, width (or widths) to get a size estimate. Reef patches within 10 m of others are counted as part of the same reef. Measure a high reef peak from the ground.

There are 10000s of other species on the shore when you start looking on sand, peeping under rock outcrops and into pools. We are interested in the pictured worm and anemones records as well as your special finds.

**Please report once you checked an area.**

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**Acknowledgements:** We have qualified for a 400 euro Biodiversity Days grant from NPWS towards costs of the survey. All work including project design, coordination and surveying are volunteer efforts.

**A Background information on the 500 m survey unit & surveyor(s)**

A1 Country code County code Block code Unit code

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**For your privacy: please circle**

Would you like to be named as surveyor and results contributor? **Yes** **No**

**A2 Name of survey unit or area**

**A3 Surveyor Name (Please write very clearly!)**

Address

Telephone

Email

Please write **very** clearly!

A4 **Date of shore survey** Day

Month

Year

**Coastwatch Honeycomb Worm & Co. Survey. Please tick or answer with your information**



Honeycomb Reef in distance & close up.



**Honeycomb worms** look like pink teenage earthworms. We are interested in the amazing sand reefs they can build from rock bases. Tiny holes are individual worm homes. They catch food from water.

**1. Did you find Honeycomb reef in your survey unit?**

- Yes, Please complete Box →
- No
- Not sure (please comment)

- 1.1 Is it  continuous reef or  in patches
- 1.2 How **long** \_\_\_\_\_ m (Pool reef and patches less than 10 m apart).
- 1.3 How **wide:** \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ m
- 1.4 How **high** from sand base? \_\_\_\_\_m
- 1.5 Is there more h reef in your survey area not included above?  Yes  No
- 1.6 Did you take photos  Yes  No
- 1.7 **Health:** do the reef surface holes have sharp edges or look old, abandoned?  
 Healthy  Old  A mix

**Comment:**



**Lugworms** live in U shaped burrows, eat mud; extract what they need and squirt the rest out as casts - see pic.

**2. Did you find lugworm casts?**

- Yes Please complete Box →
- No
- Not sure/didn't check

- 2.1 Found big ones  lots  a few.
- 2.2 Where there nursery beds with tiny worm casts? (higher on the shore)  
 Yes  No
- 2.3 Any signs of bait digging?  
 Yes  No



**Sand masons:** build sand & shell grain tubes sticking out of sand/mud with top branches to catch food.

**3. Did you find sand masons?**

- Yes ... please complete →
- No
- Didn't check

- 3.1 Found  lots  one or a few?
- 3.2 Where?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3.3 Photos taken?



**Beadlet anemone(s)** are brown/red soft blobs stuck to shaded rocks. In water tentacles pop out to catch prey.

**4. Did you find any Beadlets?**

- Yes please complete →
- No
- Didn't check

- 4.1 Found  lots  one or a few?
- 4.2 Where? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.3 Photos taken?

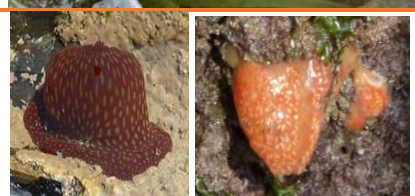


**Snakelocks** love light rock pools Long greeny tentacles, often with pink tips (symbiotic algae)

**5. Did you find Snakelocks?**

- Yes .....Please complete →
- No
- Didn't check

- 5.1 Found  lots  one/a few?
- 5.2 Where?
- 5.3 Photos taken?



**Strawberry anemones** love shade. Red with green spots. If hanging look like the fruit..

**6. Did you find Strawberry anemone?**

- Yes .....please complete →
- No
- Didn't check

- 6.1 Found  lots  one/few?
- 6.2 Where?
- 6.3 Photos taken?

**Anything else of note?**

Thanks a million! If you submitted the results on your phone, an acknowledgement will pop up. If you used paper, either scan and post or input the results using this link from your computer – <http://goo.gl/forms/nK4fbhGR57>

