

Supplement to the Marine Flora and Fauna of the Medina Estuary (II)

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A major survey of the marine fauna and flora of the Medina Estuary was published by Withers (1979). Further records were presented in the first supplement published in *Medina Valley Wildlife 1994 Report* (Herbert, 1995). New information has produced the following additions to earlier lists.

Oligochaete worms

Tubificoides pseudogaster

Upper estuary near MTL in vicinity of new Aerolaminates MTF. Densities of 1267 per m² on west side and 2500 per m² on east side of estuary. (ABP, 1999)

Polychaete worms

Anaitides mucosa

Found at LWS on east side of estuary just south of the Folly Inn: mean density 261 per m². Herbert *et al.*, 2000).

Caulleriella zetlandica

Found between HWN and LWS in mudflats adjacent to Medina Valley Centre on 7/9/95. Maximum densities 10250 per m². M.Sheader pers.comm.

Desdemonia ornata

Upper estuary near LWN in vicinity of new MTF. Densities of 233 per m² on east side of estuary, (ABP, 1999). This is an alien species originating from Australia and South Africa. It was first recorded in UK from Southampton Water in 1997 (Smith *et al.*, 1999).

Fabricia sabella

This fanworm was found between HWN and MTL on 7/9/95. Estimated density 300 per m². (M.Sheader pers.comm.)

Malacoceros fuliginosus

Found between HWN and LWN in mudflats adjacent to Medina Valley Centre 7/9/95 (M.Sheader pers.comm). Also in upper estuary in vicinity of Aerolaminates MTF where densities of 233 per m² found on west side and 100 per m² on east side.

Polydora cornuta

Upper estuary between MTL and LWN in vicinity of new MTF. Densities of 1167 per m² on west side and 2166 per m² on east side of estuary (ABP, 1999).

Pygospio elegans

Upper estuary between MTL and LWN in vicinity of new MTF. Densities of 1067 per m² on west side and 967 per m² on east side of estuary (ABP, 1999).

Streblospio shrubsolii

Mudflats adjacent to Medina Valley Centre 7/9/95 (M.Sheader pers.comm); Upper estuary between MTL and LWN in vicinity of new MTF. Densities of 1167 per m² on west side and 2166 per m² on east side of estuary (ABP, 1999).

Mollusca

Littorina obtusata

The flat periwinkle *Littorina littoralis* referred to in Withers (1979) is now generally separated into *L.obtusata* and *L.mariae*. Snails found amongst *F.vesiculosus* clumps between MTL and LWN on mudflats adjacent to Medina Valley Centre.

Scrobicularia plana

Large specimen found in mudflats near Rowing club on 18/9/96. First record in Medina since 1976 (M.Sheader pers.comm.).

Fish

Sparus aurata (Gilthead Bream)

Now frequently caught in the Folly area. Prior to 1980's this was a rare fish around the IOW (C.Pledge pers.comm.).

Labrus bergylta (Ballan Wrasse)

Now increasing in the estuary (C.Pledge pers.comm.).

Callionymus lyra (Dragonet)

Several caught near Dodnor (Pledge, 1996).

Limanda limanda (Dab)

Caught near Folly area (Pledge, 1996).

Mola mola (Sun Fish)

A most remarkable observation was of a juvenile seen swimming at Newport Quay in June 2000. The fish was photographed by C.Pledge.

Flora

Undaria pinnatifida

Although outside the main estuary study area defined by Withers (1979), this laminarian kelp, which is native to Japan, Korea and parts of China, has been found attached to floating pontoons at West Cowes and East Cowes Marinas (Farrell & Fletcher, 2000). The species was first found in the R. Hamble in June 1994 and reported from West Cowes in August 1996.

References

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Two additions to the UK marine fauna: *Desdemona ornata* Banse, 1957 (Polychaeta, Sabellidae) and *Grandidierella japonica* Stephensen, 1938 (Amphipoda, Gammaridea). *Porcupine Newsletter* (2):8-11.

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Photo © Chris Pledge

On 10th June, this Sun-fish (*Mola mola*) was found swimming amongst boats and harbour pontoons in the River Medina at Newport Quay. Weighing about 10lbs it was only a juvenile: adults can reach 5ft across and weigh 500lbs. This is a particularly unusual record as the species is more typically found in the open sea. In recent years there have been a few sightings of larger animals in coastal waters off the Isle of Wight, normally from anglers who observe the long dorsal fin breaking the water surface. Poor colouration indicated that this animal was in distress. It was initially taken to the Fort Victoria Marine Aquarium and put in one of the recovery tanks and later transported to the SeaLife Centre at Southsea.