

Aquatic Life

A Trip to the Seashore

The rocky seashores around our coast offer a chance to see a dazzling variety of animals and plants to those who will only take the time to look. The seashore is also full of examples of how animals and plants adapt to a wide range of changing conditions as the tides come in and out.

When to go

The best time to visit the seashore is an hour before the low Spring Tide. Spring tides occur every two weeks and bring with them the lowest tides, exposing as much of the shore as possible. Their time and dates can be determined from tide tables published in local newspapers or purchased in angling and yachting shops. By visiting the shore an hour before Low Spring Tide you

will experience the water dropping to low tide, turning and rising again, making the best use of your time on the shore.

Planning for Safety on the Shore

You will need waterproof boots and warm clothing in winter or old shoes that can get wet in summer. Teachers will need a whistle to call their class together and need to observe the standard pupil/teacher ratio for a field trip. A mobile phone is also a useful safety item. Finally you will need a wooden frame of standard size (0.25 m²) to compare the number of animals and plants up and down the beach, notepaper, buckets, nets and a simple magnifying glass.



Seaweeds

The most obvious living things on the seashore are plants, which range from land plants like Sea Holly and Sea Pinks at the top of the shore, through lichens (a cross between an algae and a fungus), down to the true algae – Wracks, Kelps and red seaweeds at the bottom of the shore.

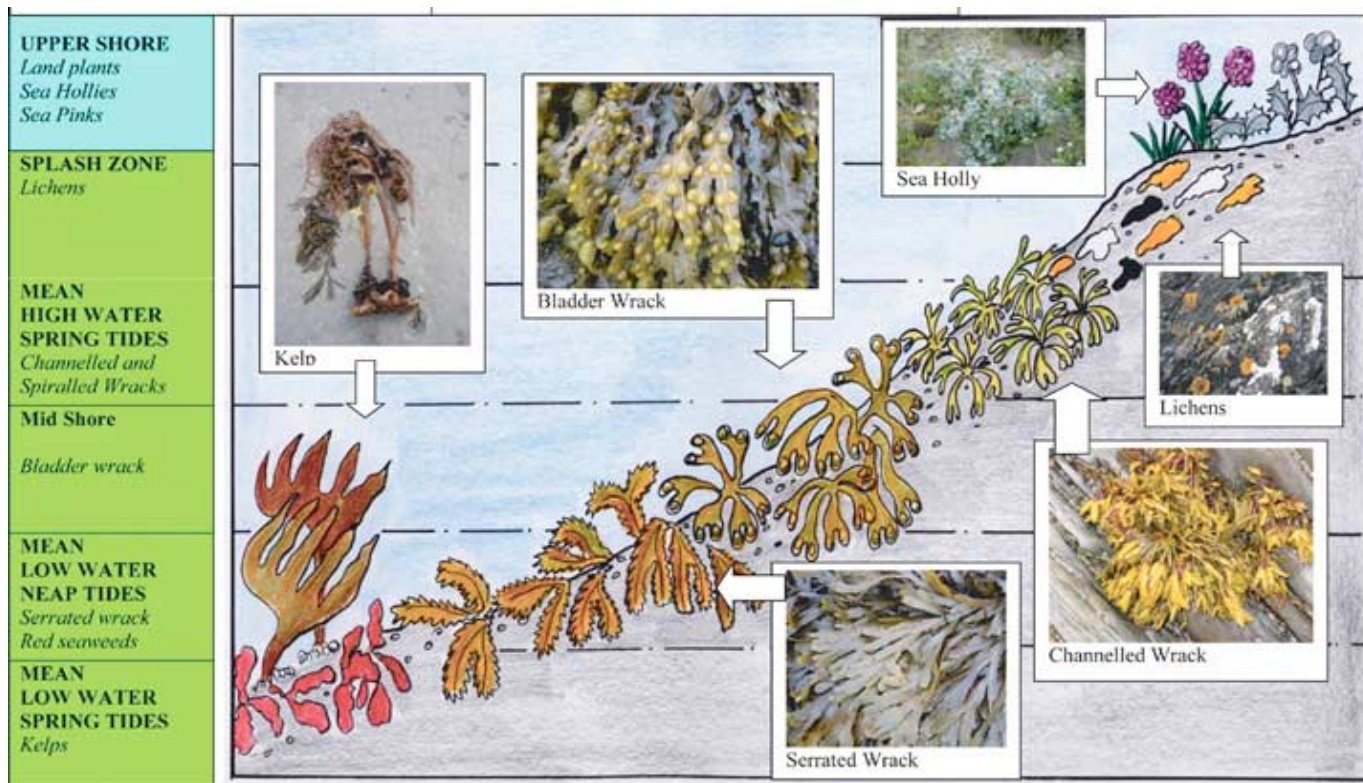
Make a note of which types grow where on the shore, or

make an accurate count from low tide to high tide using your standard frame and a measuring tape.

Captain Cockle's Log



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