

Seaquest Southwest



**Cornwall
Wildlife Trust**

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Seaquest Southwest is a marine citizen science and public participation project run by Cornwall Wildlife Trust to record the presence and behaviours of marine megafauna found in Cornish waters; including porpoise, dolphins, whales, seals, sharks, turtles and fish.

Aims of Seaquest



1

To engage people with the marine environment.

2

To collect data on marine wildlife.

3

To better understand and conserve marine wildlife.

2022 Key Facts and Figures

1910

Marine mammal, Bluefin tuna, Basking shark and Ocean sunfish reports

14

Marine mega fauna species

172

Seaquest effort surveys conducted

14

Public watches* and 48 Seaquest Sundays*

41

Sites visited during Seaquest surveys

967

People engaged with the project

*Public watches (run by Seaquest) and Seaquest Sundays (run by local marine groups) are led by trained volunteers, but anyone can attend and trained volunteers can also lead their own cliff-top surveys!!

To find out more visit: www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/seaquest

Or contact us at: seaquest@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk

Seaquest Effort Based Surveys 2022

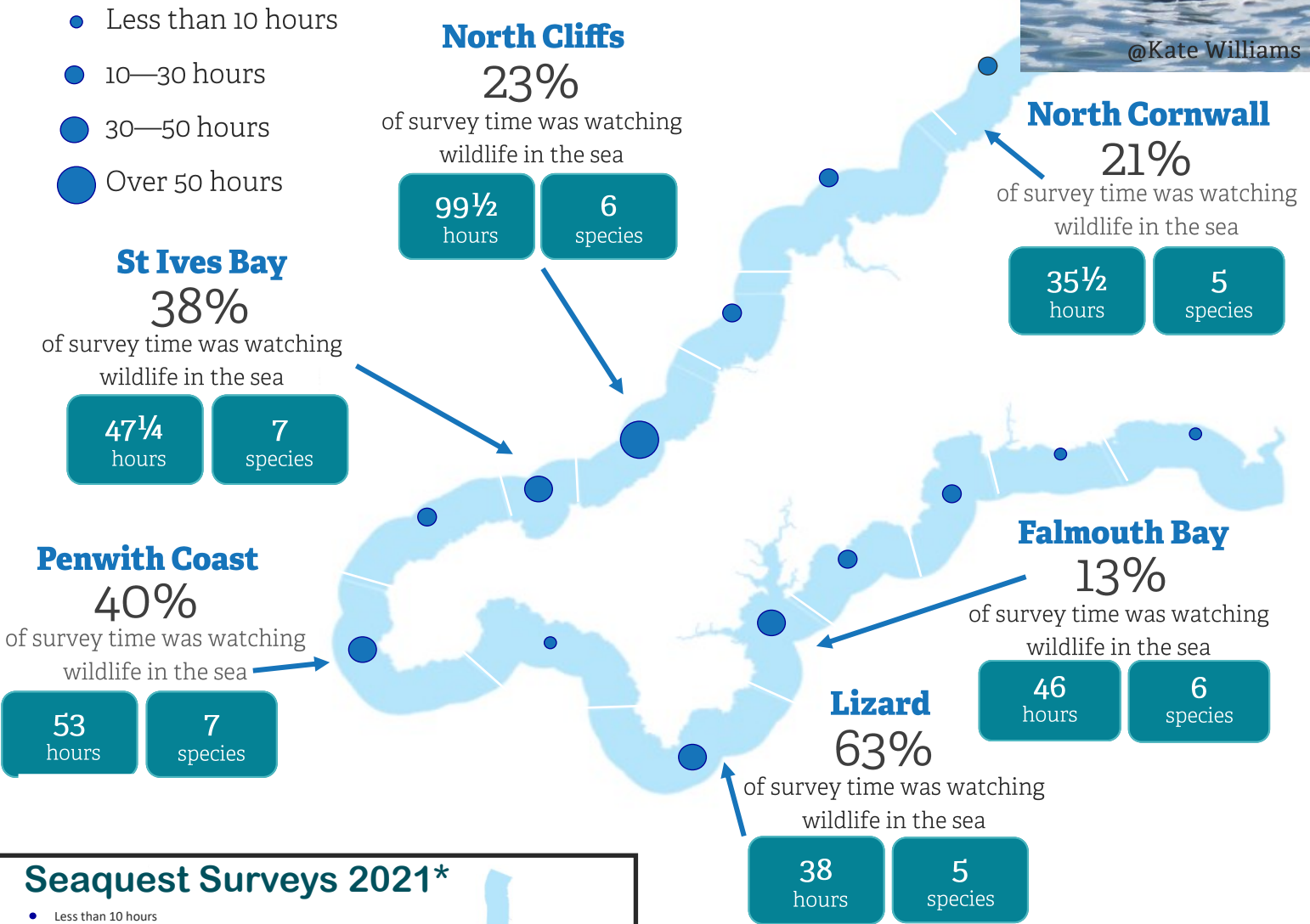


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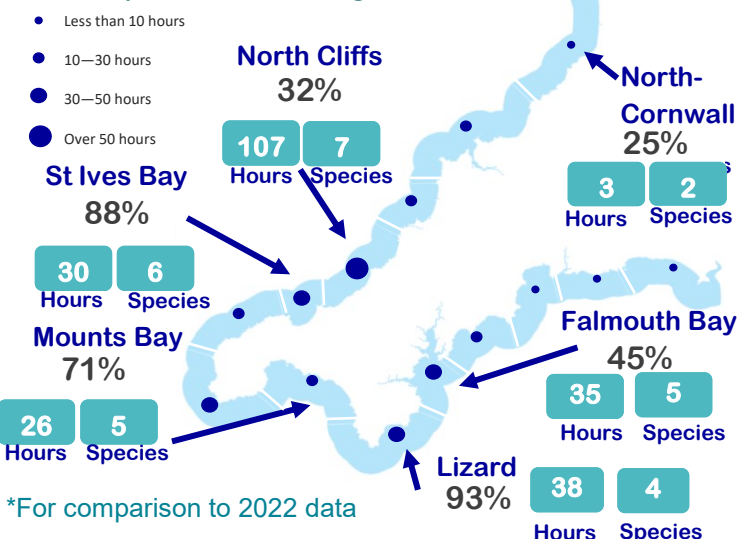
Trained Seaquest volunteers conduct timed cliff top surveys, recording the presence or absence of marine megafauna at their location every 15 minutes and any additional sightings. This data is then stored in the publicly accessible Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCCIS) for use in conservation projects.

Seaquest Surveys 2022

- Less than 10 hours
- 10—30 hours
- 30—50 hours
- Over 50 hours



Seaquest Surveys 2021*



Key survey facts 2022

349 Hours of surveys	172 Surveys submitted	10 Species recorded	41 Sites surveyed
28% Seaquest Sundays	64% Volunteer surveys	5% Public watches	3% NWDW* surveys

*NWDW = National Whale and Dolphin Watch Week

Casual Sightings



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Casual sightings records are received via e-mail, picked up through social media, or are recorded directly via www.ORKS.org.uk. One Sightings record can represent a single individual or a group of individuals, thus the total number of individuals seen each year can be much higher!

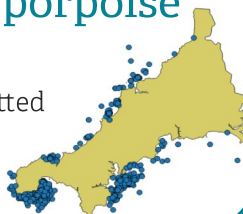
Number and distribution of 2022 sightings

Harbour porpoise

503

Records submitted

↓ Down from
543 in 2021



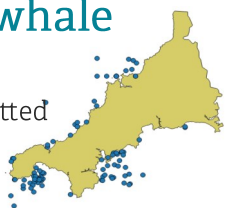
*Although sightings of most species were slightly down in 2022 from 2021 these were in keeping with numbers from previous years and likely represent natural variation—see graph below.

Minke whale

108

Records submitted

↓ Down from
118 in 2021

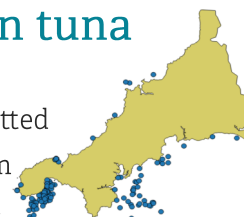


Bluefin tuna

136

Records submitted

↓ Down from
153 in 2021

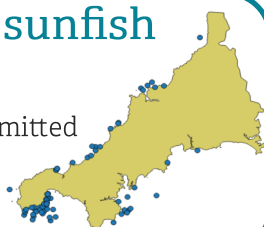


Ocean sunfish

53

Records submitted

↓ Down from
77 in 2021



1910

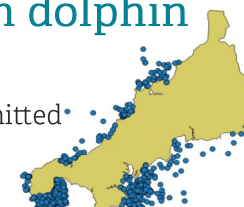
Casual sightings
records in total

Common dolphin

771

Records submitted

↓ Down from
875 in 2021

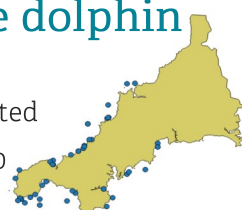


Bottlenose dolphin

63

Records submitted

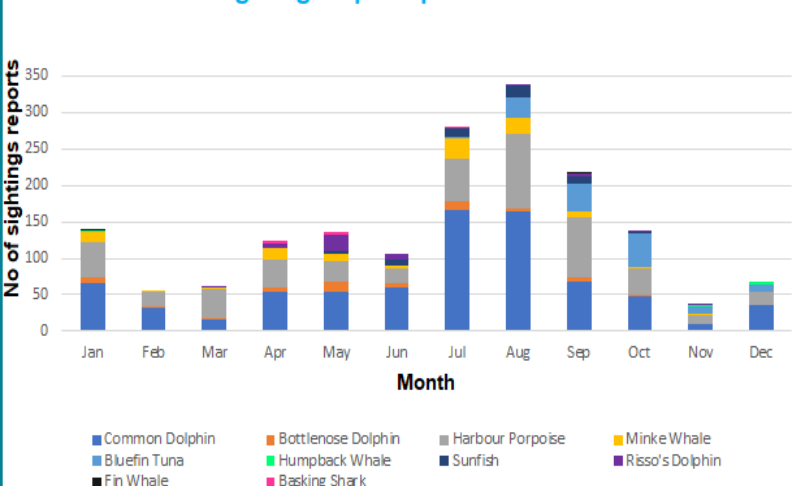
↑ Up from 50
in 2021



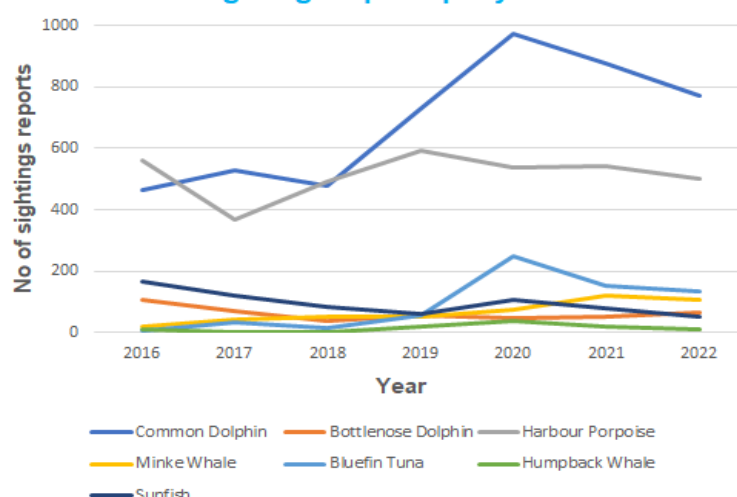
Sightings Highlights 2022

- Humpback Whales in Cornwall, including an adult and juvenile spotted together off the Lizard in November.
- This year brought dolphins galore with 63 Bottlenose Dolphin and 771 Common Dolphin records from year-round sightings, in addition to, 44 Risso's Dolphins, the majority of which were spotted in March, and White Beaked Dolphins spotted in June and August!
- Harbour Porpoise and Minke Whales were spotted across Cornwall all year round.
- Basking Sharks continued to visit our shores, being seen in April, May and July.
- Fin Whales were recorded in January and September.

Sightings reports per month 2022



Sightings reports per year



Project Engagement



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Key facts and figures

77

Volunteers trained

967

People involved

37

Public events run

9

Local marine
groups involved



To all of our Seaquest volunteers and supporters

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who supported Seaquest during 2022!

This was an eventful year as everyone tried to get back to normal life after COVID, and winter weather scuppered some of our best laid Seaquest plans! However our Seaquest volunteers continued to survey our coastlines with a dedication and passion that we could not successfully operate without. Thank you all!!

A special big thank you to:

- Cheryl Yarham and Clare Owen for doing a brilliant job as Seaquest Coordinators until the end of 2022.
- Lauren Brenton-Crabb, former Marine Team apprentice and Gemma Newman, Current Marine Team Apprentice for support with events and data.
- Katherine O'Brien, Current Seaquest Coordinator for compiling and producing this report.
- Abby Crosby, Marine Conservation Officer for managing the entire Seaquest project.
- Kate and Dave Williams and Brenda and Adrian Tregunna for an incredible number of Seaquest surveys completed.
- Our associated local marine groups; St Agnes Marine Conservation Group, Newquay Marine Group, Three Bays Wildlife Group, Mounts Bay Marine Group, Falmouth Marine Conservation, National Trust at Lizard, St Ives Marine Group, Perranporth Marine Conservation Group and Bude Marine Group for conducting Seaquest surveys in your areas.
- To all of our Seaquest trained volunteers for conducting an incredible number of surveys all around the coast in 2022.
- Marine Discovery Penzance, Padstow Sealife Safari, Newquay Sea Safari and Fishing, AK Wildlife Cruises and Cornwall Seal Group Research Trust and Cornwall Birds for kindly sharing your sightings.
- To everyone sharing marine animal sightings with us via our online recording website www.ORKS.org.uk, through our Facebook page or via email.
- To all of our speakers from our fantastic evening talks, including; Dan Jarvis from British Divers Marine Life Rescue, Thea Taylor from the Sussex Dolphin Project and Duncan Jones from the Marine Discovery.

JOIN THE SEAQUEST SOUTHWEST PROJECT!

- Visit www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/seaquest to learn more about the project
- Subscribe to our newsletter—the link is on the CWT website
- Follow us on Facebook (@CWTSeaquestSouthwest) and Instagram (@seaquest_southwest)
- Come along to a Public sea watch, talk or training event (Programme available on our website)
- Explore casual sightings by visiting the Seaquest Recording Group on www.ORKS.org.uk.
- Sightings and surveys are available on request for your research, project or personal interest, if you would like to access Seaquest data please email the Wildlife Information Service within ERCCIS via email: wis@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk.