



SSC DIVE IN! ROCKPOOLS





WELCOME!

Hello, and welcome to “SSC Dive In!” - packs of resources providing some seaside fun directly into family homes and classrooms.

This pack’s theme: **Rockpools**

Rockpooling is a wonderful way to discover the hidden animals and plants living on our shores. Find out more about these fantastic species and create your own rockpool crafts!

Inside this pack:

- Children’s Blog: Life on the Rocks
- Film: Rockpooling—A Beginner’s Guide
- Spotter Sheet: Rockpool creatures
- Spotter sheet: Seaweed
- Craft instructions: Eggbox Rockpool
- Craft instructions: Crab Finger Puppet

Important note: *If you are going outdoors, please follow the social distancing protocols and government advice.*

We’d love to hear from you! If you’ve had fun having a go at activities, experiments and crafts, let us know. Any comments or pictures can be sent to marineengagement@seabird.org. More resources available on our [website](#).

Enjoy using our packs and want to see more? The Scottish Seabird Centre is an environmental education and conservation charity. Every penny we raise helps us deliver our important education and conservation work. If you enjoy using our resources and would like to support our work, please consider making a donation to the our [JustGiving page](#). Thank you.

We hope you enjoy diving in to the pack!

Scottish Seabird Centre Learning Team





BLOG

LIFE ON THE ROCKS

When the tide goes out, something magical is revealed along the rocky shore. Thousands of incredible creatures are exposed, some on the rocks themselves, some sheltering in the pools left behind by the retreating water. These pools are alive with scurrying, squirming, and swimming animals, as well as a jungle of colourful seaweed waving peacefully in the still water. If you kneel down beside a rockpool and watch really carefully, you might be able to imagine what life is like for the creatures living life on the tideline.

First thing's first though, you've got to track down a good pool. Although you can spot some amazing creatures on sandy or stony beaches, it's the jaggedy, rocky areas of the shore that you need for a great rockpool. These places can sometimes be slippery, so make sure you're wearing boots or wellies before you set off.

Now, you might be thinking that the bigger is better when it comes to rockpools. In fact, small or medium pools can hold just as much (if not more) life as the big ones. What you really want to look out for is **colour**. Usually if you spot a really colourful pool, with a rainbow display of seaweed, anemones and shells surrounding it, you're onto a winner.



© Phil Wilkinson



Remember, you won't be rewarded with amazing sightings straight away. The real secret to becoming a great rockpooler is **patience**. It will take a little time, once you've stopped moving around, for the animals to build up enough confidence to start moving around. After all, you could easily be a predator waiting for your chance to catch them out in the open.

Speaking of predators, many rockpool dwellers are expertly camouflaged, helping them to blend into their backdrop and stay hidden from hungry eyes. You'll have to look really closely, especially for some of the smaller creatures, to spot them amongst the seaweed. Are there see-through shrimps darting around in the shallow water? Is that really a periwinkle or is it a hermit crab? Only sharp eyes and plenty of patience will tell.



So, why are these creatures worth waiting for? A good rockpool has something for everyone.

We'll start with the stars of the show...The common starfish has 5 arms and is usually orange. Believe it or not, this iconic animal is actually an active predator, gobbling up mussels and clams by pulling their shells open and dissolving the creature inside with their digestive juices. It's not just common starfish around—spindly brittle stars, chunky cushion stars and spiny starfish can also be seen if you're very lucky!

Another favourite bunch of rockpool regulars are the crabs. Both shore crabs and edible crabs are pretty common, their sideways shuffle a guaranteed crowd-pleaser. Hermit crabs also bring their own charm to the pool, disguised amongst the shellfish. They live in empty shells which protect their soft bodies, swapping each time they outgrow their current home.



© Phil Wilkinson

Common prawns and rockpool shrimps (which are virtually identical) are also a common sight in most rockpools. They are scavengers, eating anything from dead mussels to decaying seaweed and blend in perfectly due to their semi-transparent (see-through) appearance. They are so difficult to see that, unless you spot them on the move, they are virtually invisible.

If you're planning on dipping into the rockpool instead of just watching from above, you can find some top-tips on the equipment you'll need, what to look out for, and most importantly how to **rockpool responsibly** by watching our beginner's guide video in this pack. Remember, these delicate creatures rely on a healthy rockpool environment to survive, so always make sure you handle them carefully and leave the pool exactly as you found it. If you do, more people will have the chance to glimpse the amazing lives thriving along the rocky shore.

DO YOU ROCK(POOL) ?

Find out how much you've learnt by answering the following questions:

1. How do starfish hunt?
2. What do hermit crabs have to do as they grow?
3. How should you always leave a rockpool?



FILM

ROCKPOOLING- A BEGINNER'S GUIDE

Be a responsible rockpooler with this handy guide created by North Berwick Wildlife Watch. Click [here](#) to watch the video containing top tips on how to rockpool in a safe, respectful and sustainable way!

Check out our [YouTube channel](#) for more educational videos.





SPOTTER SHEET

SEAWEED

Here are some of the common seaweeds you may spot on Scottish rocky shores. Use the circles provided to mark the ones you spot.

OAR WEED

Laminaria digitata



SAW WRACK

Fucus serratus



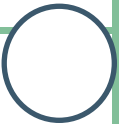
SUGAR KELP

Saccharina latissima



BLADDER WRACK

Fucus vesiculosus



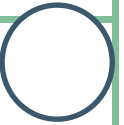
DULSE

Palmaria palmata



CHANNELLED WRACK

Pelvitia canaliculata



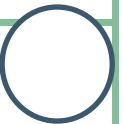
CORAL WEED

Corolina officinalis



SEA LETTUCE

Ulva lactuca



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SPOTTER SHEET

ROCKPOOL CREATURES

Here are some of the common animals you may spot on Scottish rocky shores. Use the circles provided to mark the ones you spot.

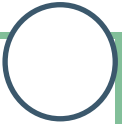
COMMON SHORE CRAB

Carcinus maenas



BEADLET ANEMONE

Actinia equina



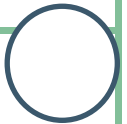
COMMON STARFISH

Asterias rubens



DOG WHELK

Nucella lapillus



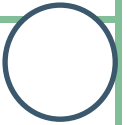
EDIBLE PERIWINKLE

Littorina littorea



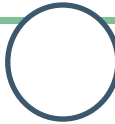
EDIBLE CRAB

Cancer pagurus



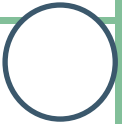
ACORN BARNACLES

*Semibalanus
balanoides*



COMMON LIMPET

Patella vulgata



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CRAFT



EGGBOX ROCKPOOL

WHAT DO I NEED?

- Empty egg box
- String
- Scissors
- Coloured pens/pencils
- Paints and brushes
- Glue or sticky tape
- Paper
- Seaside shells/pebbles

1



Paint the inside of the egg box blue and then leave it to dry.

2



Gather items to put in your box. These can be things found at the sea-side such as shells, dried-up seaweed and rocks.

3



Or you can use things that you've made yourself such as drawings or plasticine models of animals. In our example, we drew cartoons onto paper and coloured them in.

4



Place the items into the box and arrange them however you wish!

5



You can even make things dangle by attaching them to string and sticking them to the lid of the box.

6



Ta- da!
What an "eggs-ellent" box you've made.



Note: Please don't collect live animals and plants for your box – they need to be by the sea to survive .

CRAFT



MARINE FINGER PUPPETS

EDIBLE CRAB

WHAT DO I NEED?

- Scissors
- Colouring pencils or pens
- A finger!

1. Choose what colours you want your crab to be. Will it be camouflaged? Or bold and bright?
2. Carefully cut around the outside of the crab—be careful! This bit is tricky and you may want an adult to help you.
3. Now cut along the dashed lines and roll the crab around your finger. The two slits will line up and lock together.

