

Jersey's Living Coast: Rockpools

Jersey is home to acres of rocky shoreline most of which will retain small pools of sea water at low tide. These rockpools offer a refuge for many kinds of marine life, allowing them to survive in relative comfort while the tide is out. Try searching inside a rockpool among the stones and seaweed to see what you can find.



PENNANT'S TOP SHELL

(*Gibbula pennanti*); 1.5 cm

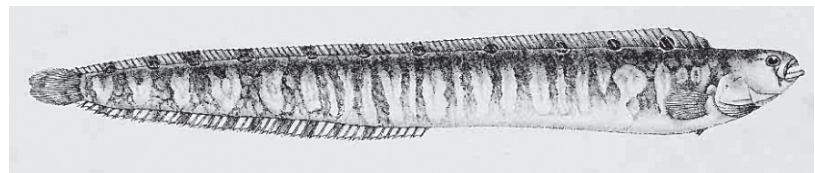
This shell is common in the Channel Islands but is found nowhere else within the British Isles. It lives by grazing the rock surface but when the tide is out will often tuck itself into small crevices.



CORALLINE SEAWEED

(*Corallina officinalis*); 8 cm

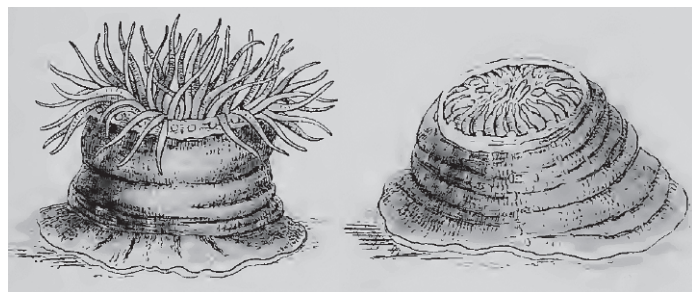
This small but beautiful pink seaweed may be found growing in dense tufts around the fringes of many rockpools. It is an important ecosystem in its own right, providing cover for many small species of animal including seashells, crustaceans, mites and brittlestars.



BUTTERFISH

(*Pholis gunnellus*); 3 cm

An occasional visitor to rockpools. The butterfish likes to hide itself amongst weed and, if disturbed, will slither away quickly. It is called a butterfish because its skin is slippery making it difficult to hold on to!



BEADLET ANEMONE

(*Actinia equina*); 5 cm

The commonest of Jersey's anemones, this animal is often encountered as a red blob, with its tentacles withdrawn. However, in rockpools the beadlet anemone may be seen with its tentacles out, waiting for passing prey to come within reach, such as shrimps.



SMALL BRITTLESTAR

(*Amphipholis squamata*); 1 cm

It takes skill and care to find this tiny brittlestar, large numbers of which live deep within the fronds of coralline seaweeds. Do not be tempted to handle it roughly; it is called a brittlestar because its legs fall off very easily.



PRAWN

(*Palaemon elegans*); 6 cm

Most prawns like to hide themselves amongst seaweed and are tricky to catch without a net. When out of the water they will vigorously flex their bodies, flicking themselves backwards and forwards. The gathering of prawns for food was once a commonplace activity but is less often seen these days.