

LYME BAY PINK SEAFAN DROP VIDEO SURVEY WINTER 2006-2007

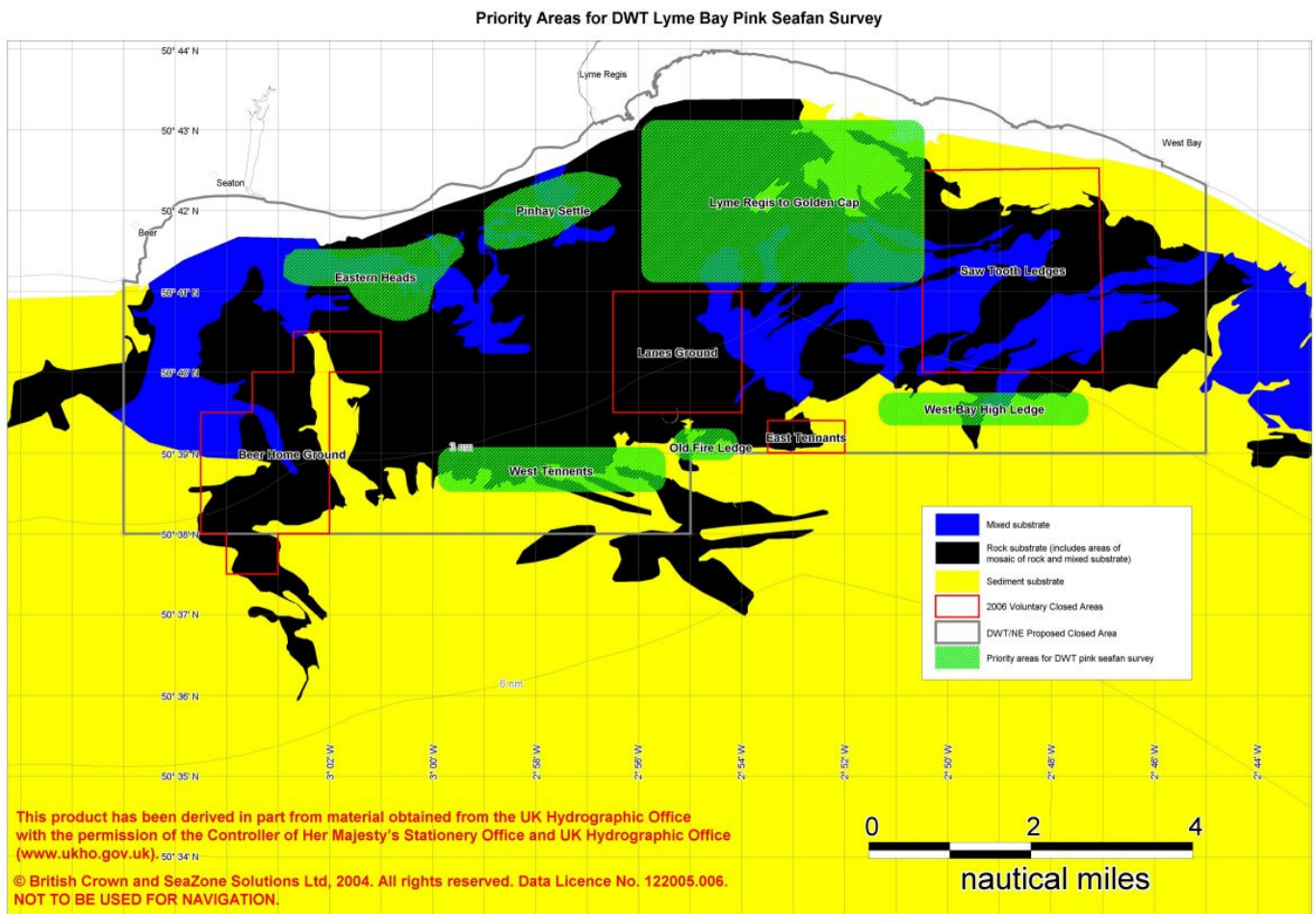


Aim:

To gather pink seafan records to demonstrate presence throughout Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) / Natural England (NE) proposed closed area where habitat is suitable.

Location:

Using United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO)/Gardline seabed texture maps and local knowledge, certain areas have been prioritised as lacking survey data and likely to have pink seafans present. These include Eastern Heads, Pinhay Settle, West Tennents, Lyme Regis to Golden Cap, Old Fire Ledge and West Bay High Ledge. These areas will be targeted initially for survey, followed by a wider geographical approach for areas without anecdotal records (e.g. the area between Beer Home Ground and Lanes Ground). This will occur only if time and funding allows.



Map produced by Devon Biodiversity Records Centre, Jan 2007. No further copies may be made.

Key equipment:

Vessel/hard platform with dGPS
Digital video camera (PC110 Sony DV Camcorder) and underwater housing (Gates housing with wide angle dome port)
Bespoke, tubular, stainless steel, protective frame for camera and housing
60m cable with rope running parallel
Onboard monitor
Hand held GPS

Methodology:

Due to poor weather conditions in the winter, windows of opportunity will have to be taken on an ad-hoc basis. A period of two days after rough weather will be needed to allow suspended sediment to settle.

Once a window arises the priority areas for survey will be visited. Having identified potential reef areas using seabed texture data from available sidescan SONAR maps, these will be sought using echo sounding equipment on board the survey vessel.

Having identified hard ground on the echo sounder, the hand held GPS and a notepad displaying survey site identification code, date and time, will be shown to the camera so that lat and long is recorded. Immediately after this the slightly negatively-weighted digital video camera will be hand deployed to within a metre of the seabed. Video footage is recorded on mini DV tape within the camcorder and live images sent up to the surface via the umbilical cable, for observations by the survey team.

The camera will remain deployed for between 2 and 5 minutes with the vessel drifting with the current to prevent streaming of the cable and camera. Any changes to the deployed depth will be made by hand by viewing up coming obstacles on the seabed.

Notes will be made of the habitat and obvious species and any pink seafans recorded. After no more than 5 minutes the video will be recovered and the handheld GPS shown to the camera to mark the end of the sequence.

Approximately 10-15 sites can be surveyed per day in this way.

If new seemingly rich sites are located it is anticipated that these sites will be visited by a dive team who will carry out a more detailed benthic survey of epifauna and habitat.

Data will be provided by the subcontractor to DWT in Excel and DVD format and ultimately stored in Marine Recorder and MapInfo GIS format.