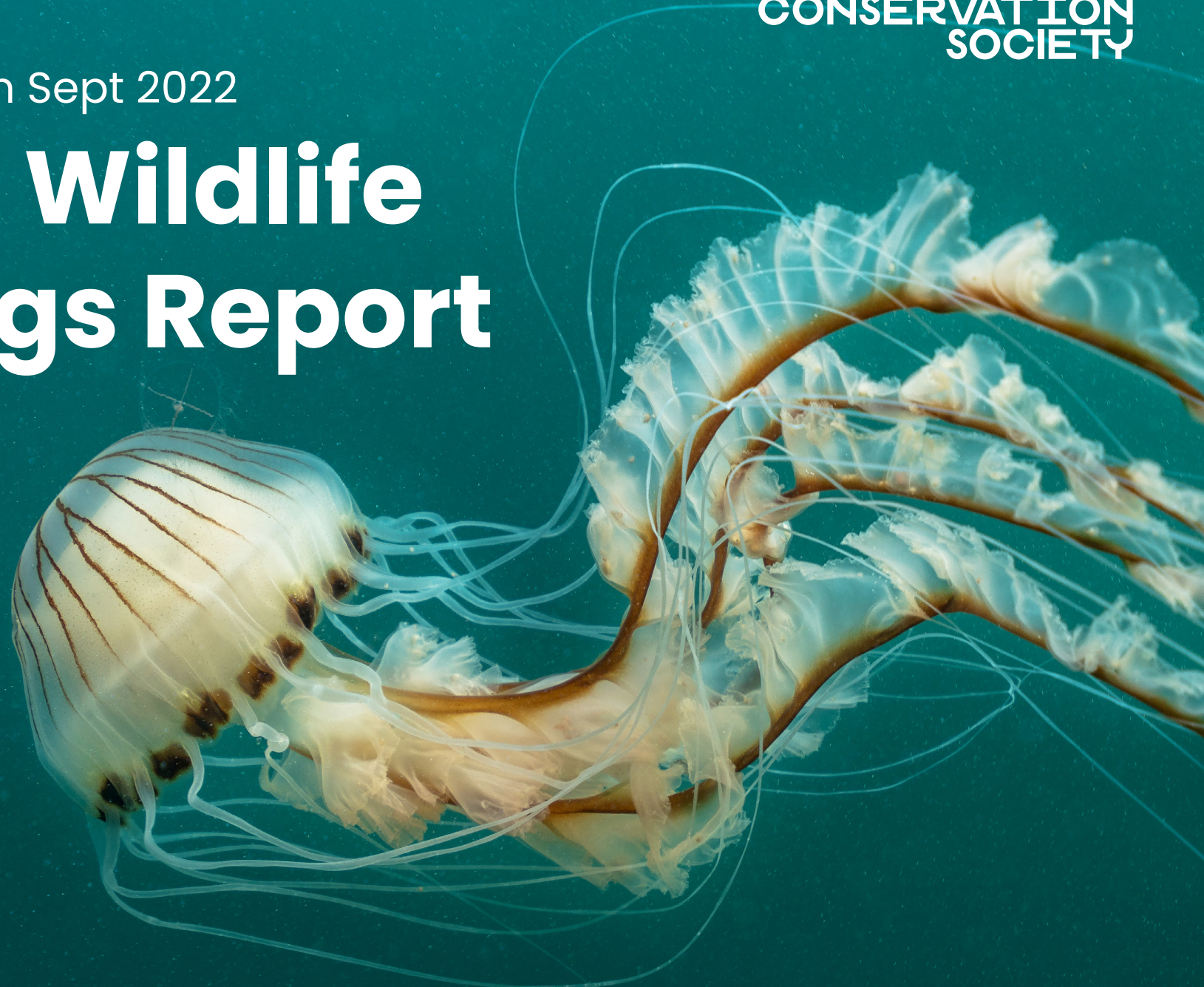


1st Oct 2021 – 30th Sept 2022

Annual Wildlife Sightings Report



Where have you spotted wildlife?

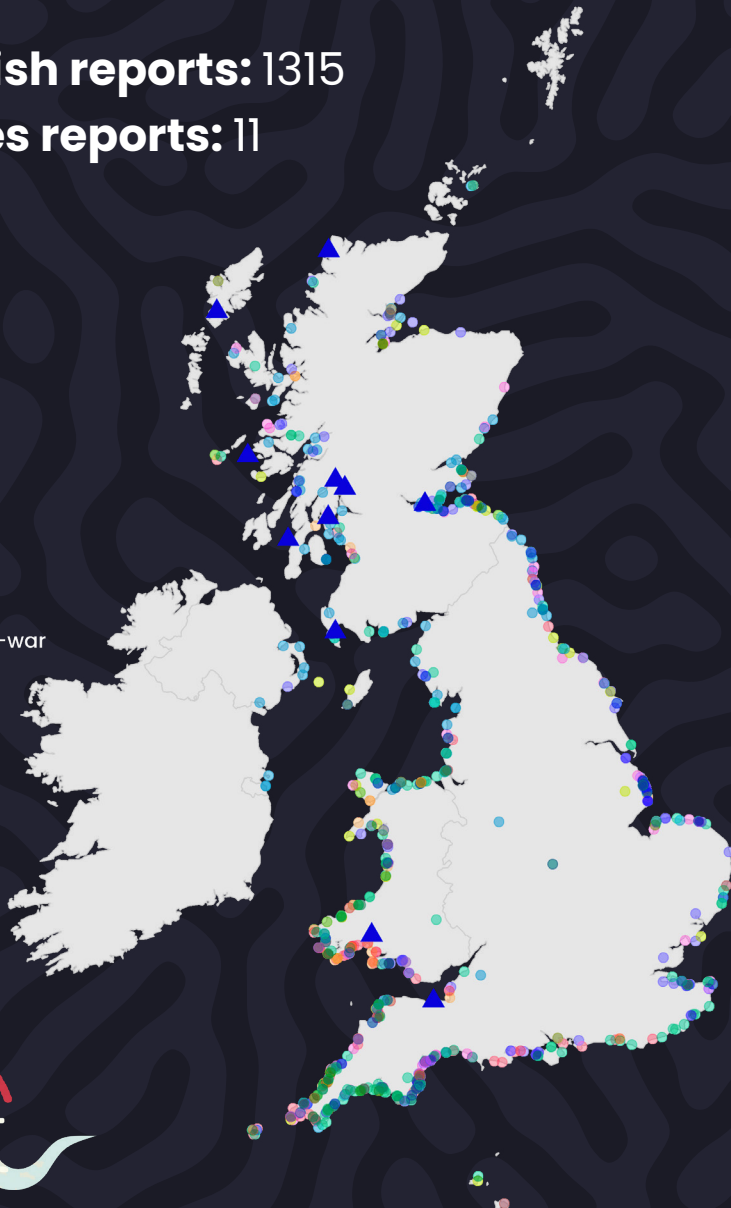
This map shows where you have spotted wildlife this year. 78% of these sightings were of individuals (1-20), whilst 7% of sightings were of large blooms of over 100 individuals.

Total jellyfish reports: 1315

Total turtles reports: 11

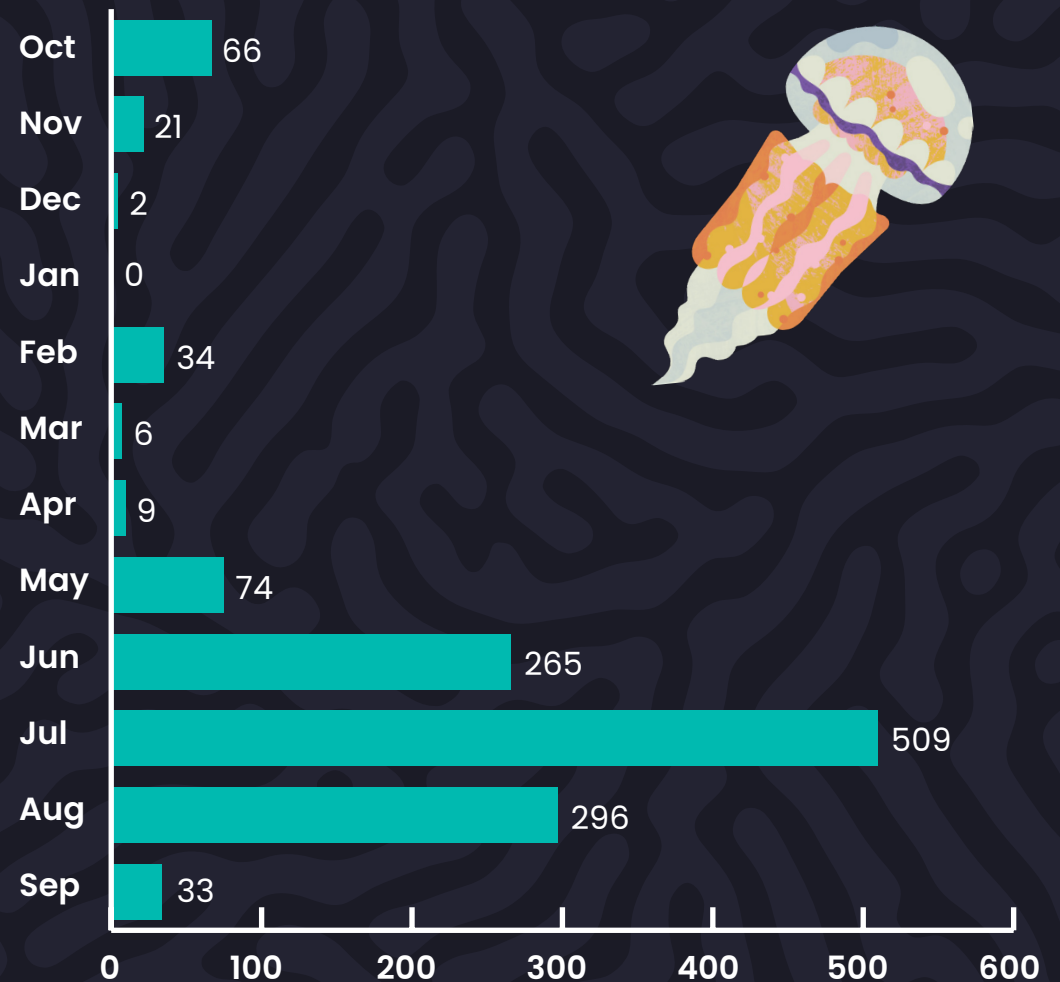
Species

- Barrel
- Blue
- By-the-wind-sailor
- Compass
- Lion's Mane
- Mauve Stinger
- Moon
- Other
- Portuguese-man-of-war
- Turtle

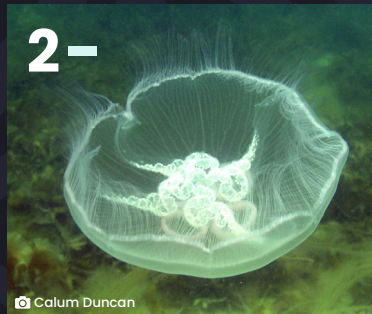


When did you spot wildlife?

Around the UK coast, we see jellyfish numbers increase over the warmer summer periods. Some species, like Barrel jellyfish, can be found here all year round and normally account for the sightings in the winter months. Below is the trend in monthly sightings for this year.



Which jellyfish did you spot the most?



Turtles



This year, you reported 11 sightings of marine turtles, six of which were live leatherbacks. Leatherbacks visit UK shores in the summer to feed on jellyfish. They can survive in our temperate waters by regulating their own body temperature – the only reptile that is known to do this! Hard-shelled marine turtles seen on our shores are often young juveniles who get carried here on strong currents and are less adaptable to our cold waters.

These sightings will be added together with other organisations' reports and shared in the British & Irish Marine Turtle Strandings & Sightings Annual Report in March.



© Joanna Clegg



© Gonzalo Jara



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Portuguese Man O' War

Portuguese Man O' War are a jellyfish-like hydrozoan species. Rather than an individual animal, they are actually a colony of individual polyps which live and work together. They have a large gas-filled float which allows them to travel at the water's surface, where they use their trailing tentacles to catch small fish or crustaceans.

Normally found drifting in the warmer, open waters of the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans, they are relatively infrequent visitors to our shores. However, each year, we see a number of reports around the UK coastline, usually in the autumn and winter months, after strong westerly or south-westerly winds.

This year, February's conditions appeared just right for these to appear on southwest shores, with many reports along the west coast of Scotland and South West England.



© Peter de Lange

Violet sea snails (*Janthina janthina*) – Violet sea snails float at the surface on bubble rafts. Here, they feed on Portuguese Man O' War. We often see sightings of these two species come hand in hand as winds affect them in similar ways. We had a few reports of these this year too. Keep an eye out if you ever spot Portuguese Man O' War on the beach!



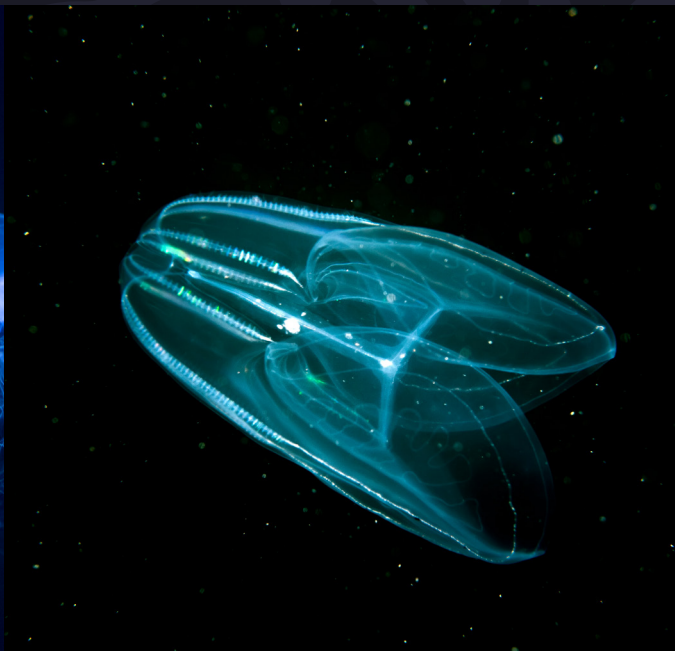
Other species

The eight species we record are the most commonly spotted around the UK, but each year we have reports of other jellyfish visiting our coastline.

Crystal jellyfish are not as often reported in UK waters; however, the number of reports (as a percentage of the total) rose from 1% (Oct 2020–Sept 2021) to 2.9% (Oct 2021–Sept 2022). An interesting observation which could indicate change in our ocean.

We will be continuing to monitor these rarer visitors over the next year, so please let us know if you spot any more unusual jellyfish on your trip to the seaside.

If you need help identifying any jellyfish species which you spot around the UK, tag us in your photos on social media [@mcsuk](#) with the hashtag [#JellyfishSighting](#) or [#TurtleSighting](#).



Thank you

A huge thank you for all of your reports of jellyfish and marine turtles around the UK. You joined hundreds of other people around the country in reporting wildlife. We use this data to track trends in how and when jellyfish and turtles use our waters.

We're turning 20!

Next year marks the 20-year anniversary of the Marine Conservation Society National Jellyfish survey, so please keep reporting your sightings to us, even over the winter months. Your sightings are essential in discovering more about our ocean and increase our ability to spot change. We're working closely with researchers to find new ways to share this data. Stay tuned!

