

# Devon and Severn IFCA News

## Live Wrasse Fishery Research Report 2018

Analysis of data collected during the second year of the fully documented fishery (2018) has been carried out.



The implementation of a fully documented live wrasse fishery is now in its second year with the season opening in July 2018. Four commercial vessels operate within the Devon & Severn IFCA district targeting ballan, goldsinny, corkwing and rock cook. Devon & Severn IFCA officers have been undertaking on-board observer surveys to capture temporal and spatial trends in catch per unit effort (CPUE). These data will be compared to that collected in 2017 in order to establish any trends in CPUE and to help inform the future management of the fishery. Initial analysis of the data has been completed and the report can be found [here](#).

### What data is being collected?

Under the Potting Permit Byelaw conditions, fishers are required to complete landings forms, which include the total number of wrasse retained per day, location fished, and the number of pots fished per location. In addition, Devon and Severn IFCA officers carry out on-board observer surveys, recording the start and end of each string and number of pots per string. Each wrasse is identified to species level, measured, sexed where possible, and identified if spawning by the presence of milt or eggs. The ultimate goal of the fully documented fishery is to monitor proxies of abundance and stock structure, to look at trends in the stock in relation to fishing pressure and environmental variables.

### What conclusions can be made from the data?

Initial analysis indicates a decrease in landings per unit effort (LPUE) for 2018 compared to 2017 as well as a reduction in the occurrence of above-average catches over the same time frame. Whilst trends in LPUE are assumed to reflect patterns in the true abundance of wrasse in Plymouth Sound due to conflicting results in catch rates from onboard observer surveys combined with the complex nature of the fishery, additional analyses are required to better understand the observed trends (see [report](#) for details). Due to the fishery taking place within a European Marine Site it should continue to be closely monitored for a further year before any definitive conclusions can be made.

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