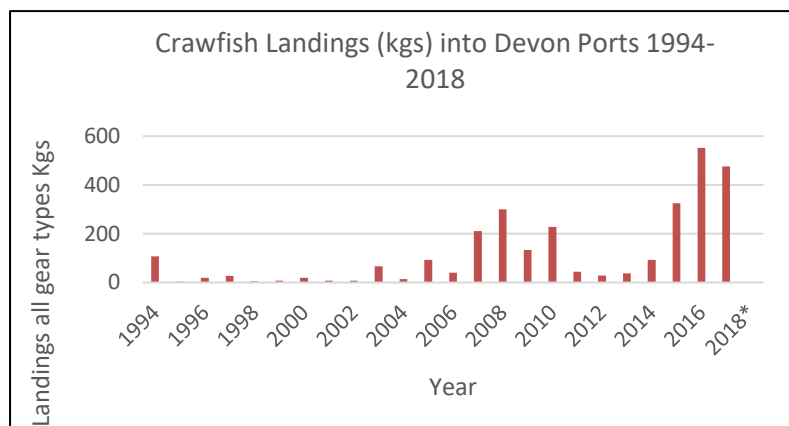


Devon and Severn IFCA News

Devon & Severn IFCA starts a programme of research on the Spiny Lobster or Crawfish

D&S IFCA has commenced a series of research studies working with members of the fishing industry, academics and Cornwall and Isles of Scilly IFCAs.



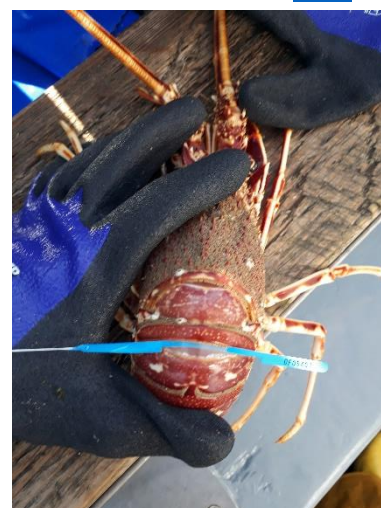
Sighting of juvenile spiny lobsters (or crawfish) have increased since 2014 after many decades of reduced populations, in particular along the Devon coast. In April 2019, D&S IFCA, Isles of Scilly IFCA and Plymouth University organised a workshop with attendees including members of the fishing industry, Defra, MMO, Natural England, SW IFCAs,

processors and academics to discuss spiny lobster (or crawfish) populations and fisheries in the South West of England. D&S IFCA officers presented the results of data already collected



by fishers on the location, size and sex of spiny lobsters caught. The workshop discussion highlighted the need to collect further data to fill gaps in knowledge and help inform future management. This was a very successful workshop with all engaged in the need to increase our understanding of the spiny lobster. A summary presentation can be view [here](#).

Members of the fishing industry have been asked to continue to collect data on their spiny lobster catches. Some tagging of spiny lobsters has commenced, and this will be increased over the next few months. This will help understand the growth of individuals between moults and the movement and migrations along the coast. The University of Exeter is currently looking at population genetics of the European lobster and has now included the spiny lobster in this study. Fishers and IFCA officers are collecting samples from spiny lobsters along the Devon coast for this genetic analysis. Further measurements are also being taken from spiny lobsters caught, which include carapace length, width, and total length.



This work is a really good example of many sectors, organisations, and individuals coming together to fill evidence gaps and help provide information to aid the development of management, not only to protect this species in MCZs where it is a feature of conservation importance, but to allow for a sustainable fishery in other areas along the SW coast.

This work is outlined in the [D&S IFCA Annual Plan \(2019-20\)](#) along with other work being undertaken by D&S IFCA