

Devon and Severn IFCA News

Teign Estuary Mussel Surveys

D&S IFCA completes its annual mussel surveys within the closed public mussel beds of the Teign Estuary



On Saturday the 28th and Sunday the 29th of September, over the spring tide, D&S IFCA conducted its annual mussel surveys within the currently closed public mussel beds of the Teign Estuary.

Why do the survey?

The purpose of these surveys, as described in D&S IFCA's [2019-20 Annual Plan](#), is to monitor mussel distribution and to determine whether the mussels have recolonised the beds, following significant declines in recent years.

D&S IFCA has used the [Temporary Closure of Shellfish Beds Byelaw](#) to prohibit any person removing mussel from the public shellfish beds. The public mussel beds in the Teign and the Exe Estuaries have been closed since 1st May 2019. D&S IFCA has produced posters for both the [Teign](#) and the [Exe](#) to demonstrate where the closures apply.

How was the survey done?

Conditions across both days were relatively adverse with strong winds and patchy rain, neither of which were a hinderance to the survey team. The surveys were conducted on multiple transects crossing the public beds on the Salty and at Polysteps utilising the Dutch wand method to gain data on mussel density and distribution. The D&S IFCA Environment Team refer to a [standard operating procedure](#) so the survey work is consistent each time it is undertaken.

What were the findings?

Preliminary survey findings suggest that despite the substrate consisting of vast amounts of dead mussel shell, live mussel was in fact found to be mostly absent over both survey areas with little sign of population recovery. A detailed report on the exact nature of these findings will be published in due course by D&S IFCA. The 2018 Teign Estuary Mussel Stock Assessment can be viewed [here](#).

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