

Devon and Severn IFCA News

Survey work for the Live Wrasse Fishery has commenced

D&S IFCA Environment officers are now undertaking onboard observer surveys as part of the fully documented fishery.



The Live Wrasse Fishery re-opened for commercial fishers on 16th July 2019 following a closed fishing period from 1st May to 15th July to recognise the spawning period. There are currently four commercial fishers potting for wrasse in Plymouth Sound. Four species are currently targeted, goldsinny, ballan, corkwing and rock cook and are used as cleaner fish in Scottish salmon farms.

The fishery developed in the D&S IFCA's District in 2015, with management measures being introduced in 2017 through the [Potting Permit Byelaw Permit Conditions](#). These include a limit of 120 pots per vessel, Minimum and Maximum Conservation Reference Sizes for landings, temporal and spatial closures and the implementation of a fully documented fishery. As part of the fully documented fishery, fishers are required to allow D&S IFCA officers on board their vessels to collect data as well as complete weekly landings forms.

The data collection programme aims to capture spatial and temporal trends in catch per unit effort (CPUE) and landings per unit effort (LPUE) providing an opportunity for D&S IFCA to closely monitor the fishery. Data obtained in 2018 showed a decline in LPUE but a slight increase in CPUE compared to 2017. Results from the [2018 report](#) were presented to the D&S IFCA Byelaw & Permitting Sub Committee (B&PSC), who decided that the fishery should be monitored for a third year. Environment Officers are therefore currently undertaking onboard observer surveys in order to capture data on CPUE and LPUE for the third year in a row.

This three-year dataset will allow for a comprehensive review to be conducted at the end of the year. The completed set of results will then be presented to the B&PSC in February 2020 who will determine the future of this fishery.

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