

## Fair Isle Wildlife Club: Seaweeds at low tide, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2006

The most frequent question fired at me by the participants was “which ones are edible?” I was unable to answer this fully at the time, but attempt to put this right by making some culinary comments in the following table.

Species	English Name(s)	Notes
<i>Ulva lactuca</i>	Sea Lettuce	Edible
<i>Enteromorpha intestinalis</i>	Gutweed	Edible – culinary names: green nori (Japan) and tiger moss (China)
<i>Cladophora rupestris</i>		
<i>Blindingia minima</i>		
<i>Monostroma grevillei</i>		
<i>Leathesia difformis</i>		
<i>Laminaria saccharina</i>	Sugar Kelp; Sugarwrack; Poor Man’s Weather Glass; Sea Belt	Edible – dried fronds used in China & Japan (sweet)
<i>Laminaria digitata</i>	Oarweed; Tangle; Kelp	Edible – culinary name: kombu (added to soups or stews)
<i>Laminaria hyperborea</i>	Cuvie	
<i>Saccorhiza polyschides</i>	Furbelows	Can grow to more than 4 m, yet is annual!
<i>Alaria esculenta</i>	Dabberlocks; Edible Kelp	Edible – culinary name: wakame
<i>Fucus serratus</i>	Toothed Wrack	
<i>Fucus vesiculosus</i>	Bladder Wrack	
<i>Fucus spiralis</i>	Spiral Wrack; Twisted Wrack	
<i>Ascophyllum nodosum</i>	Knotted Wrack	Thickening agent for soups, jellies, etc.
<i>Pelvetia caniculata</i>	Channelled Wrack	
<i>Chorda filum</i>	Sea Lace; Mermaid’s Tresses	Edible – boiled or fried
<i>Himantalia elongata</i>	Thong-weed; Sea-thong	
<i>Porphyria umbilicalis</i>	Laver	Laverbread – Welsh speciality
<i>Palmaria palmata</i>	Dulse	Delicious nutty taste
<i>Chondrus crispus</i>	Irish Moss; Carrageen	Thickens soups, stews, desserts
<i>Corallina officinalis</i>		
<i>Polysiphonia lanosa</i>		
<i>Gigartina stellata</i>		Thickens soups, stews, desserts
<i>Enteromorpha linza</i>		
<i>Spongonema tomentosum</i>		
<i>Phycodrys rubens</i>		
<i>Plocamium cartilagineum</i>		
<i>Ahmfeltia plicata</i>		
<i>Desmarestia aculeata</i>	Landlady’s Wig	

### Notes

1. Photos of many of these seaweeds can be found on the internet.
2. *Gigartina stellata* was found at Shalstane after the main group had departed.
3. Those in red were collected and identified at Schoolton after the event.
4. Landlady’s wig comprised a pile of matted “hair” amongst all the cast seaweed on the high tide line. It took longest to determine because it was the “winter” form, and most of the field guides illustrate the summer type.

### Other finds

I was handed a couple of isopods (marine grey clocks) and an off-white spongy item. There were a few other “beasties” which emerged at Schoolton from the seaweed collected; and the ray on Sompal beach, which Pat Thomson photographed.

- The isopods were *Idotea granulosa*.
- The spongy item appears to be *Alcyonidium diaphanum*, which is related to dead man’s fingers.
- Another isopod, *Idotea neglecta*, was amongst the collected seaweed. Another crustacean was *Hyale nilssoni* – a 7 mm long “shrimp”. There were a number of the tiny flatworm, *Procerodes littoralis* and an even smaller ribbon worm; the nearest I could get to this was *Cephalothrix arenaria* but as this is only known from sandy substrates in Sweden I must assume my determination to be wrong! There were also some minute Cyclops type crustaceans, too small to see well even with the microscope and thus not identified.
- I determined the fish, from memory, as cuckoo ray *Raja naevus*, though I will need to refer to Pat’s photo for confirmation. That will have to await Pat’s return from holiday.

Most of these animals are known for Fair Isle but I can find no records for the *Alcyonidium*.

Nick Riddiford, Schoolton