Explorers
Species Information Book
Animals taken from their natural environment must be returned to the seashore after the class activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common English Names</th>
<th>Irish Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JELLY ANIMALS - Cnidarians</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beadlet Anemone</td>
<td>Bundun coirineach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHELL ANIMALS – Mollusc (gastropods &amp; bivalves)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limpet</td>
<td>Bairneach coiteann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Mussel</td>
<td>Diúilicín</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRABS &amp; HARDY RELATIVES - Crustaceans</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Shore Crab</td>
<td>Portán glas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hermit Crab</td>
<td>Faocha ghliomaigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Prawn</td>
<td>Cloichéan coiteann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Shrimp</td>
<td>Séacla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Acorn Barnacle</td>
<td>Garbhán carriage coiteann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STARFISH - Echinoderms</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Starfish</td>
<td>Crosog mhara choiteann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FISH</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flatfish</td>
<td>Leathóg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Blenny (Shanny)</td>
<td>Ceannruán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfish (Gunnel)</td>
<td>Sleamhnóg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thick – lipped Grey Mullet</td>
<td>Lannach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Spotted Goby</td>
<td>Mac siobhain buí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Goby</td>
<td>Mac siobhain carraige</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where does it live?
- Anemones can often be found in rock pools, under seaweed and often between rock crevices where it is wet.
- For anemones to survive they need to stay in the water. With the changing environment conditions on the seashore, rock pools are like a little oasis.

What does it look like?
- Sea Anemones belong to the Cnidarians family, which are jelly animals. This means Anemones are invertebrates (spineless) and are relatives of the jellyfish.
- They have tentacles that are retractable and have a slimy surface to help keep the moisture in.

What does it eat?
- Sea Anemones like to eat small fish and shrimp. However, they scavenge anything that passes over their wavy tentacles. Their prey is drawn into the anemone’s stomach, the flesh is digested and any bones left are spat out.

What size is it?
- They can grow to approximately 2 – 7 cm in diameter.
Common Limpet
Bairneach coiteann

Where does it live?
- The Common Limpet can be found on rocky shores where it likes to hold on to hard surfaces with its foot.

What does it look like?
- The Common Limpet belongs to the mollusc family and is a gastropod. Animals that belong to the mollusc family have a fleshy body and a strong foot with a hard shell on the outside.
- Mollusc's that have a single shell are called Gastropods. The limpet has a single cone shaped shell. This shell protects them from drying out when the tide is out and being attacked by predators such as crabs and birds.
- They have one huge foot that acts as a watertight sucker under its shell. This helps the Limpet stick to the rocks.

What does it eat?
- Limpets move very slowly around the surface of the rock scraping microscopic plants that live on the rocks off with their tongue (like a file). They leave a trail of mucus (just like snails) behind them, which provides their direction of travel. After feeding, they return to their home base where they have carved out a little groove on the rocks.

What size is it?
- They grow up to 7cm.
Common Mussel  
Diúilicín

Where does it live?
- The Mussel can be found attached to rocks, stones and even other mussels in the lower and subtidal areas of the rocky shore. Mussels often live together with lots of other mussels in a large bed where there is a lot of movement of water.

What does it look like?
- The Common Mussel belongs to the mollusc family.
- It is a bivalve mollusc – which means that it has two shells. These shells are called valves. The valves are joined together by a ligament. It has a strong fleshy muscle inside the shell that keeps the shell closed.
- Common mussels are blue, black or brown in colour.

What does it eat?
- The Mussel will feed on tiny (microscopic) animals and plants in the water.

What size is it?
- It can grow up to 10cm in length.
Common Shore Crab
Portán glas

Where does it live?
- The Common Shore Crab is often found under rocks and seaweed on both rocky and sandy shores on the middle to the sub tidal year on the seashore. They can also be found in shallow waters in the ocean.

What does it look like?
- The Common Shore Crab belongs to the crustacean family and is related to the lobster, shrimp and prawn. Crustaceans have a hard “skeleton” on the outside of its body, which is called a carapace and jointed legs.
- The Common shore crabs carapace is broader at the front and has a serrated edge.
- Common Shore Crab varies in colour ranging from yellows, greens, browns to black which all provide the perfect camouflage under rocks and seaweeds.

What does it eat?
Explorer Education Programme

Species Information Book

- Crabs are known as the scavengers and predators on the seashore. The Common Shore crabs can survive out of the water for a short period and can therefore move around the seashore eating small animals and even other crabs.

**What size is it?**

- The Common shore crabs carapace can grow up to 6cm in size.
Hermit Crab
Faocha ghliomaigh

Where does it live?
- The Hermit Crab is found in the lower and subtidal areas on the seashore in sandy or shallow water.

What does it look like?
- The Hermit Crab is a type of crab and belongs to the crustacean family.
- The Hermit Crab does not have a hard carapace (skeleton) on the outside of its body.
- Hermit crabs use empty shells to protect their soft twisted abdomens (like a suit of armour). They have ten jointed legs in which the two front legs are like large grasping claws. Its other legs are small.
- As the Hermit Crab body grows, it will often look for empty molluscs such as dog whelk shells that it will use to protect its body.

What does it eat?
- Hermit crabs are omnivores (eating plants and animals) and scavengers (eating dead animals that they find).

What size is it?
- The Hermit Crab can grow up to 3 -10cm in size.
Common Shrimp
Séacla

Where does it live?
- The Common Shrimp is often found on the sandy and muddy areas where the tide has gone out in the middle to the subtidal areas on the seashore.

What does it look like?
- The Common Shrimp belongs to the family known as crustaceans.
- The Shrimps pigment is typically sandy coloured with speckled shades of brown spots and is often well camouflaged.
- Its body is broad and flat and has ten pairs of legs. It has jointed legs at the front, which enables it to walk. Attached to its abdomen it has legs that are like paddles, which it uses to swim.
- It also has long antennae, which are used to feel for food, and pincers (first pair of walking legs) which it uses to feed with.

What does it eat?
- The Common Shrimps mainly eat small plants and animals called plankton, which are floating around in the water.

What size is it?
- It can grow up to 5cm long.
Common Prawn  
Cloichéan coiteann

Where does it live?
- The Common Prawn can be found in rock pools in the lower subtidal area of the seashore.

What does it look like?
- Prawns is also a crustacean and are related to the Common Shrimp, however are almost translucent in colour and usually has stripped markings. This allows them to blend well against sand, rocks and seaweed making them very difficult to see.
- The prawn are decapods, which means it has ten legs. It first pair of walking legs have pincers. Toward the rear of the body there are five pairs of swimmerets, these are used to swim forward. However, if aggravated the prawn can flex its abdomen, flicking the tail and propel itself backwards.
- The prawn’s legs are longer than those of the shrimp’s. However, like the shrimp, prawns have their eyes on the end of stalks and has two pairs of antenna in which one is used to detect food.

What does it eat?
- Prawns like to eat other prawns and the remains of other dead animals.

What size is it?
- The Common Prawn can grow up to 7cm in size.
Where does it live?

- Barnacles are tiny crustaceans (like crabs) that cover large areas of rocks, stones and shells ranging from the upper to lower areas of the seashore.

What does it look like?

- The barnacle has a tiny coned shaped shell that protects its body. Barnacles are found in masses fixed to rocks.
- If you look very closely, you can see their shells are like little houses with a door that opens at the top. The shell has an opening at top covered by six plates.

What does it eat?

- Barnacles are suspension feeders. When covered by water they eat phytoplankton and zooplankton, microscopic plants and animals in the water that stick to their feeding appendages.

What size is it?

- They can grow up to 1.5cm in size.
Common Starfish
Crosog mhara choiteann

Where does it live?
- Starfish are found on rocky, sandy and gravel shores.

What does it look like?
- Starfish belong to the family called echinoderms.
- They have five arms that can be rough like sandpaper to touch. Underneath their arms, they have tiny tubes that are like suckers.
- The starfish has no bones and has two stomachs….. A squirt of stomach acid and the mussel flesh becomes a lovely soup.

What does it eat?
- Starfish like to eat mussels, oysters, and worms.
They use their arms to sense food and when found crawl over its prey to have a little feast. They are so strong that can they wedge shells open to find food with its arms…. watch out mussels!

**What size is it?**

- Common starfish can grow up to 50cm in size. However, ones found on the seashore are usually much smaller.
Flatfish
Leathóg

**Where does it live?**
- Young flatfish can be found in the sub tidal area on the seashore in shallow waters or in sandy-bottomed rock pools.

**What does it look like?**
- Flatfish are flat with their face and mouth on top of their body.
- They change colour to suit their environment – so they can camouflage against their predators.
- They bury themselves with only their eyes showing above the surface of the sand.

**What does it eat?**
- They like to eat shrimp and sand hoppers.

**What size is it?**
- Flatfish found in rock pools can range in size from 2cm to 8cm. An adult at sea can grow up to 40cm
Common Blenny (Shanny)  
Ceannruán

Where does it live?
- Blennies are often found in rock pools or at an extremely low watermark.

What does it look like?
- They are olive green and brown in colour.
- Blennies are recognisable for its face that looks like a clown with wide lips.
- Its pectoral (chest) fins are often spread out like hands to allow it to hold onto the rocks against the force of the waves.

What does it eat?
- It likes to eat crustaceans such as small crabs and barnacles.

What size is it?
- Blennies can grow up to 16cm in size.
Butterfish (Gunnel)
Sleamhnóg

Where does it live?
● Butterfish can be found in the lower and subtidal areas of the seashore. They like to hide under rocks and stones when the tide is out.

What does it look like?
● The Butterfish (Gunnel) gets its name from its tiny scales and slimy skin – which makes it slippery like butter.
● Its eel like shape and has dark spots along each side of its dorsal fin.

What does it eat?
● It likes to eat small shrimp and worms.

What size is it?
● The Butterfish can grow up to 20cm in length
Thick-lipped Grey Mullet
Lannach

Where does it live?
- The Grey Mullet (juveniles) are found in coastal inshore waters and on occasions in intertidal pools during the summer in large groups or shoals. As it gets older, it is found in estuaries, harbours and sandy bays where the river flows into the sea.

What does it look like?
- The Thick Grey Mullet has a relatively small but flattened head. It has a small mouth in which the snout is longer than the upper jaw.
- It is bluish grey, with the sides being silver. As it matures, a degree of stripping occurs lengthwise along the mid and upper sides of its body.

What does it eat?
- As the Thick Grey Mullet survives on a poor diet, it has to scrape algae off rocks, piers and rubbish.

What size is it?
- Juvenile Grey Mullet are very small. As the fish matures, they can grow up to 30 - 50cm in size.
Two Spotted Goby
Mac siobháin buí

Where does it live?
- The Two-spotted Goby swim in groups in rock pools found in the lower and subtidal areas on the seashore.

What does it look like?
- The Two-spotted Goby gets its name from the two spots it has on either side of its tail.
- The females have two spots (one of each side) at the base of their tail.
- The males have four spots. In addition to having two (one of each side) at the base of the tail they also have two (one on each side) behind their pectoral fin.
- The Two-spotted Goby are smaller than other types of Gobies and have a slender body.

What does it eat?
- They like to eat microscopic plants and animals in the water and can grow up to 6cm in length.

What size is it?
- The Two-spotted Goby can grow up to 6cm in size.
Rock Goby
Mac siobháin carrage

Where does it live?
• The Rock Goby is found on the lower and subtidal areas on the rocky shore amongst seaweeds and in rock pools.

What does it look like?
• The Rock Goby has a dark brown – almost black in colour.
• The Rock Goby has two dorsal fins. It has a distinctive band (usually yellow – brown) at the top of its dorsal fin.
• Its pelvic fins are a fan shape and are used to stop the fish being washed away by waves.

What does it eat?
• Rock Gobies eat tiny shrimps and generally, anything they cannot swallow all at once.

What size is it?
• The young Rock Goby are usually about 5cm in length. The adults can grow up to 12cm.