

Real Life

by Gerald Legg

Bognor Rocks, and the close by Barn Rocks and Waldrons Reefs, Sussex, consist of low lying fossil rich reefs of calcareous sandstone in the London Clay 0-25 to 2 m high that curve out from the beach west of Bognor Regis to a little over 1 km off shore.

This can be a shore dive (shallow at low water!), but a boat makes it easier to get further out with diving at high water gives 6-8 m. Associated with these rocks, approximately five km offshore, is the Waldrons (or Waldrens) Reef a designated site of marine conservation interest.

The surrounding seabed consists of rippled sand with exposures of clay, boulders, cobbles, pebbles gravel and sand. The reefs are undercut with crevices, gullies, overhangs and small caves offering refugia for many marine animals including lobsters, crabs and several fish species.

Horizontal faces are dominated by seaweeds including reds and small *Laminaria* beneath which is a sparse sessile fauna. The steeper surfaces are extensively colonised by animals with many species of sponges, anemones and ascidians (notably *Molgula*) dominant here, with some bryozoa (sea mats) and hydroids (sea firs). High fish diversity and abundance with Corkwing Wrasse, Ballan Wrasse, Goldsinney, Pollack, Toppot Blenny, SandEels, Gobies, Gurnard, and Cat Shark occur.

Oh, and a discarded traffic cone.



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*ISO 100 /f11 / 1/125 sec. Olympus E30
/ Olympus Zuiko digital f4-42mm 1:3.5-5.6, Ikelite housing, Nikonos SB 105
strobe manual set at 1/4 power.*

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