

Ellison Scar Mussel Inspection 18-05-23

Officers: AP, JH, GG, MC, ET

LW: 17:54 1.4m (Liverpool Tides)

The Ellison Scar mussel beds were inspected starting at Inner Ellison, then proceeding to Middle Ellison and Stinking Crag as shown in Figure 1. Due to limitations with the tide and ground conditions, officers were unable to reach outer Ellison.

Inner Ellison

Inner Ellison has had a sparse mussel settlement of approximately 50% coverage (Figure 2). The mussel was less than >10mm and has put down shallow mussel mud (Figure 3). The area closer to shore and further south was flat with uniform undersize mussel (Figure 4), with large boulders in the northern portion (Figure 4). There is an area of Sabellaria extending in patches from the outer area of Inner Ellison (Figure 1) towards Middle Ellison. The approximate area of the mussel was 10 hectares.

Middle Ellison

Middle Ellison has had a sparse mussel settlement of approximately 40-50% coverage (Figure 8), closer to the centre of the bed this is mixed in with mussel approximately 30mm in length which is hard in sand substrate (Figure 7). The area has a large number of boulders (Figure 5 & 6), and some shallow mussel mud. There is a large strip of Sabellaria extending out 20 m from the shoreward side of the bed towards the south (Figure 9). The approximate area of the mussel was 6 hectares.

Stinking Crag

Stinking Crag also had a large number of boulders and had received a 2023 mussel settlement though with sparse coverage. Sizable (>45mm), clean mussel was present in areas close to the offshore portion of the bed (Figure 10). Mussel in most areas was hard in and there was not much mud (Figure 10). There was evidence of previous scouring and resettlement (Figure 11). The approximate area of the mussel was 2.6 hectares.

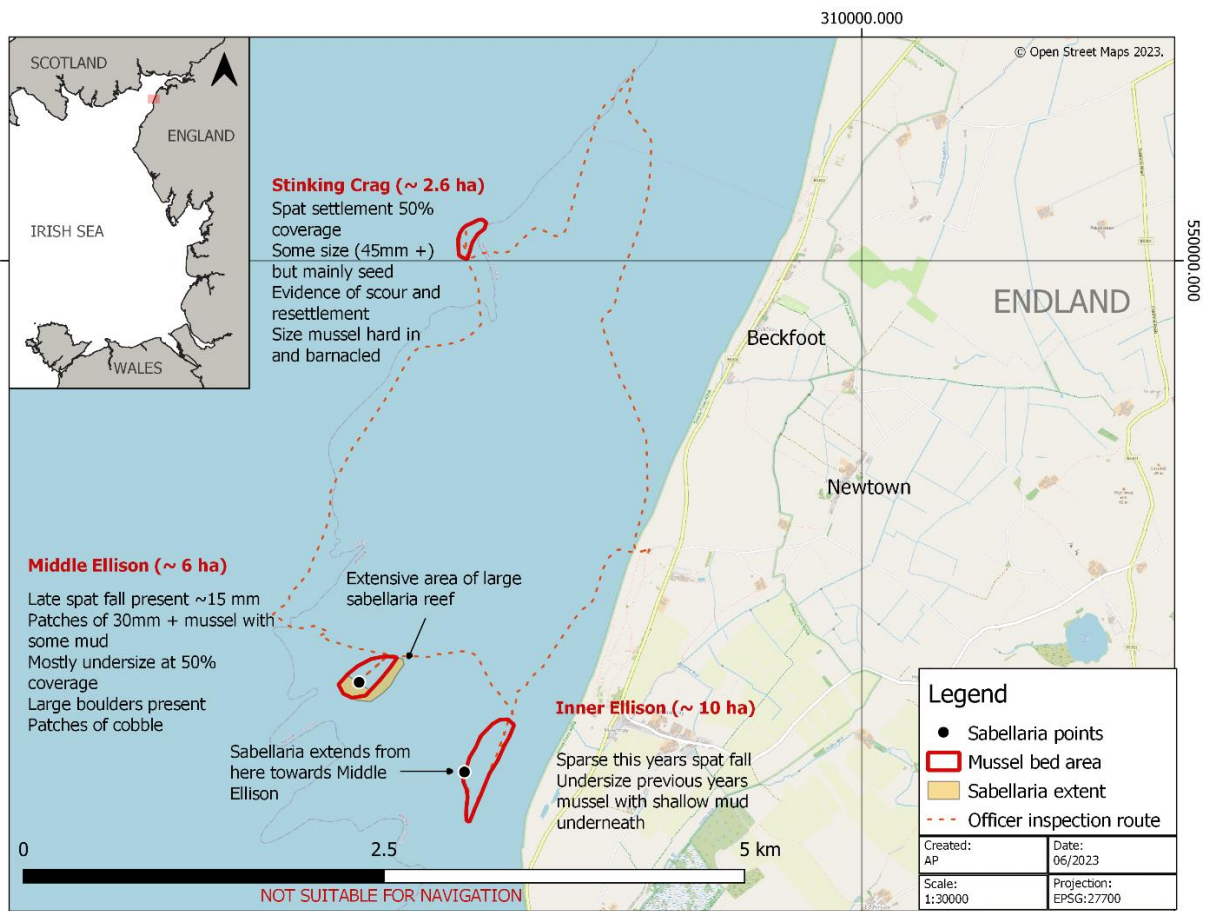


Figure 1. Overview of the mussel inspection 18-05-23

Inner Ellison:

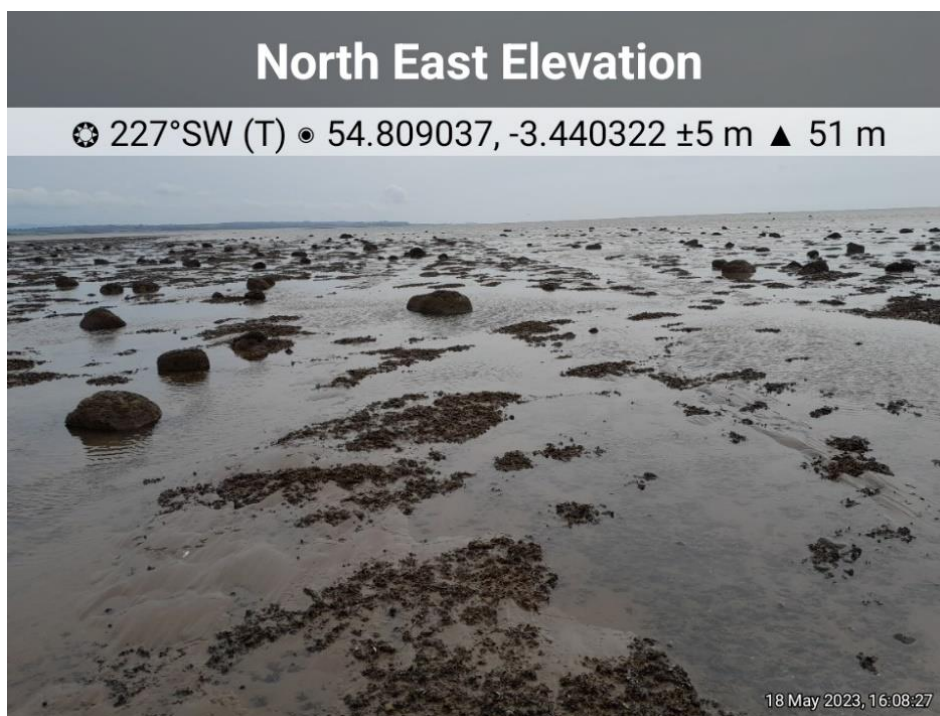


Figure 2. Large area of boulder on Inner Ellison



Figure3. Undersize mussel on Inner Ellison



Figure 4. Flat area of mussel with some mussel mud to the north of Inner Ellison

Middle Ellison:

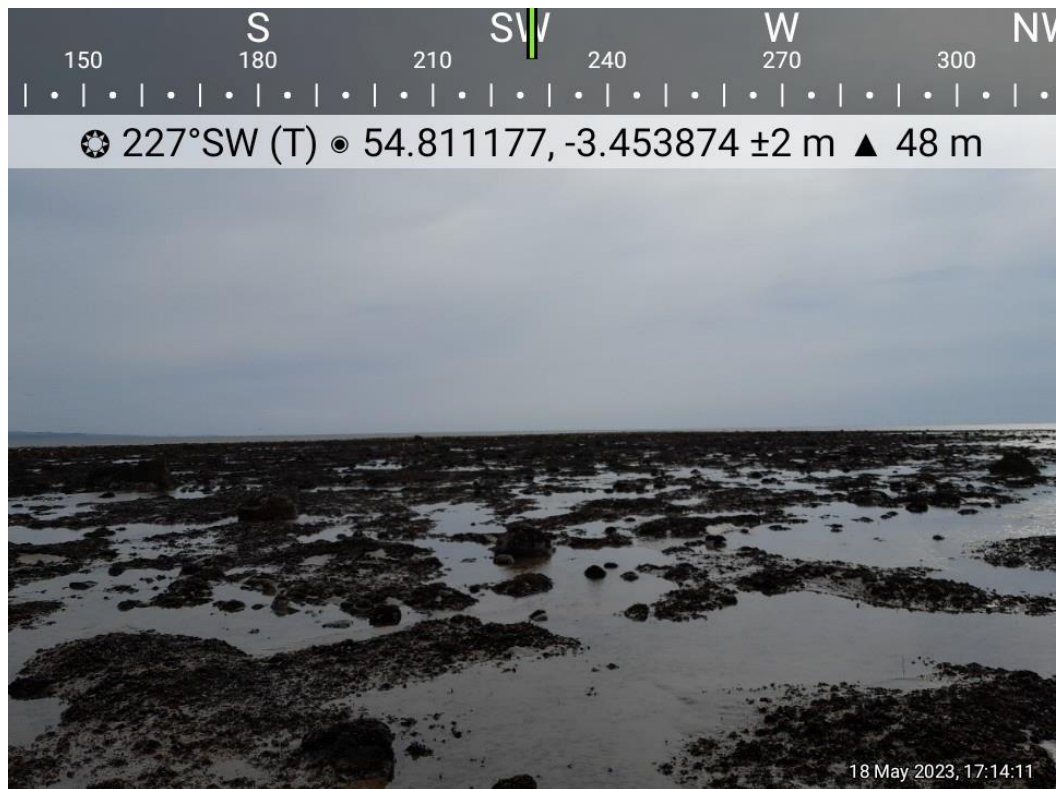


Figure 5. Boulders on Middle Ellison

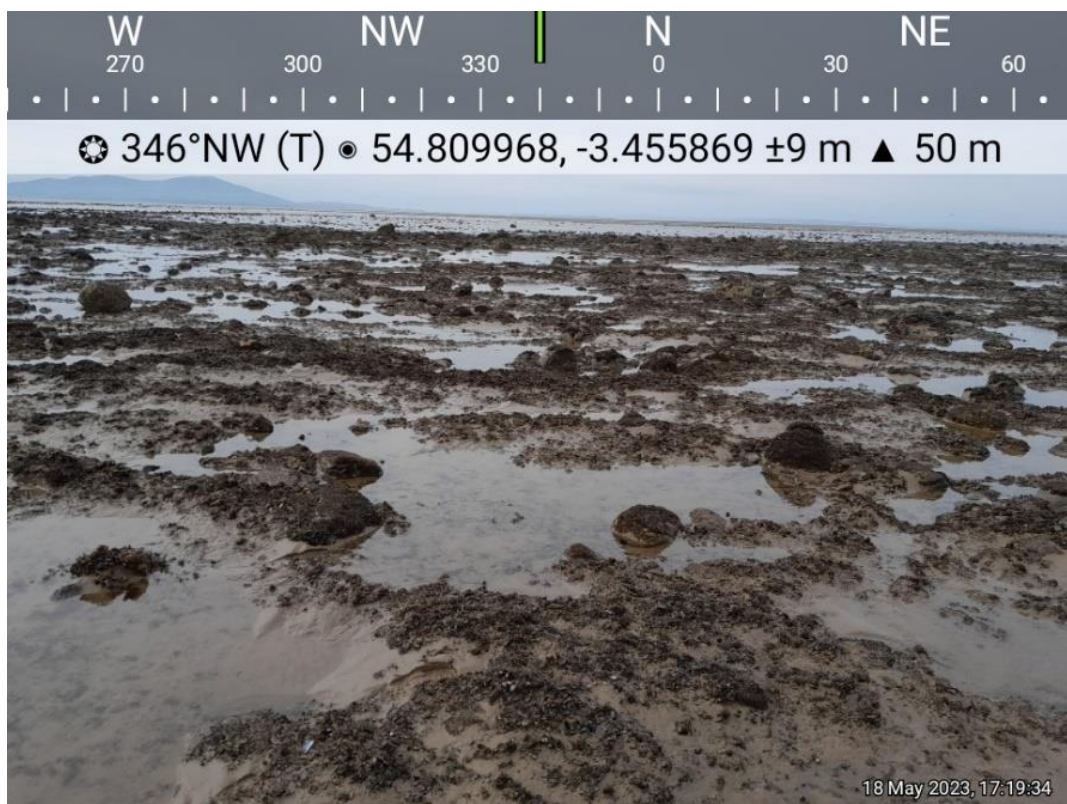


Figure 6. Boulders and mix of mussel sizes with sparse coverage on Middle Ellison

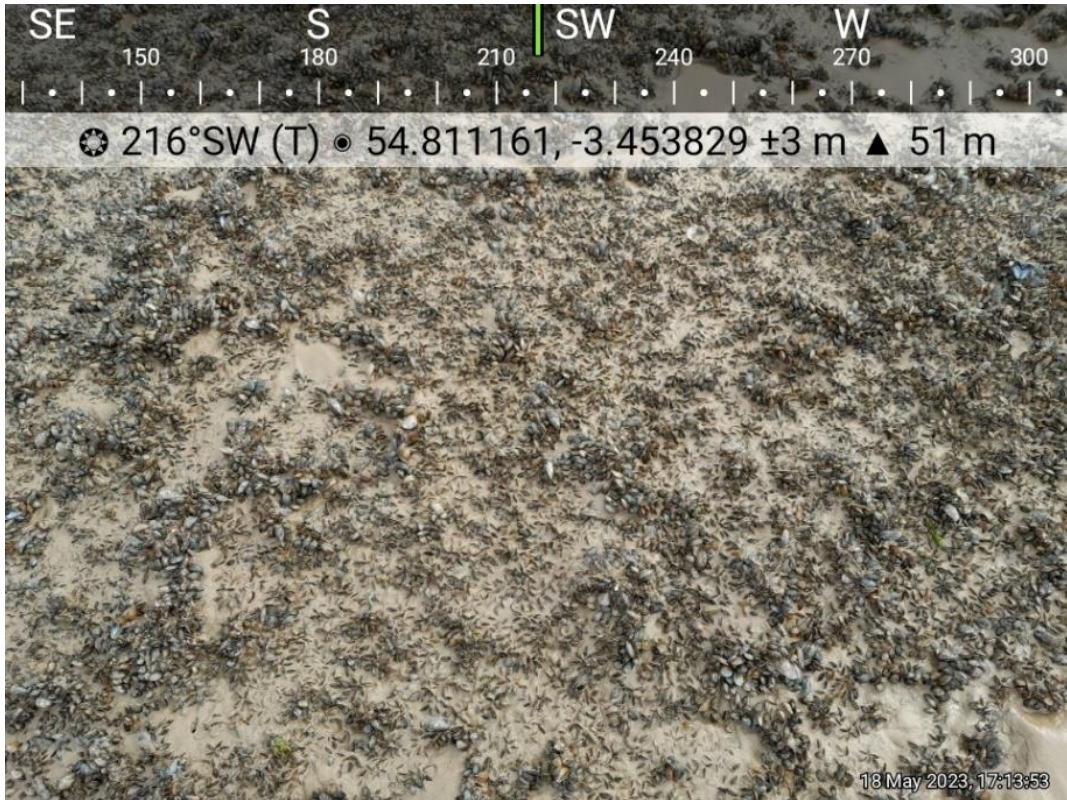


Figure 7. Undersize mussel hard in

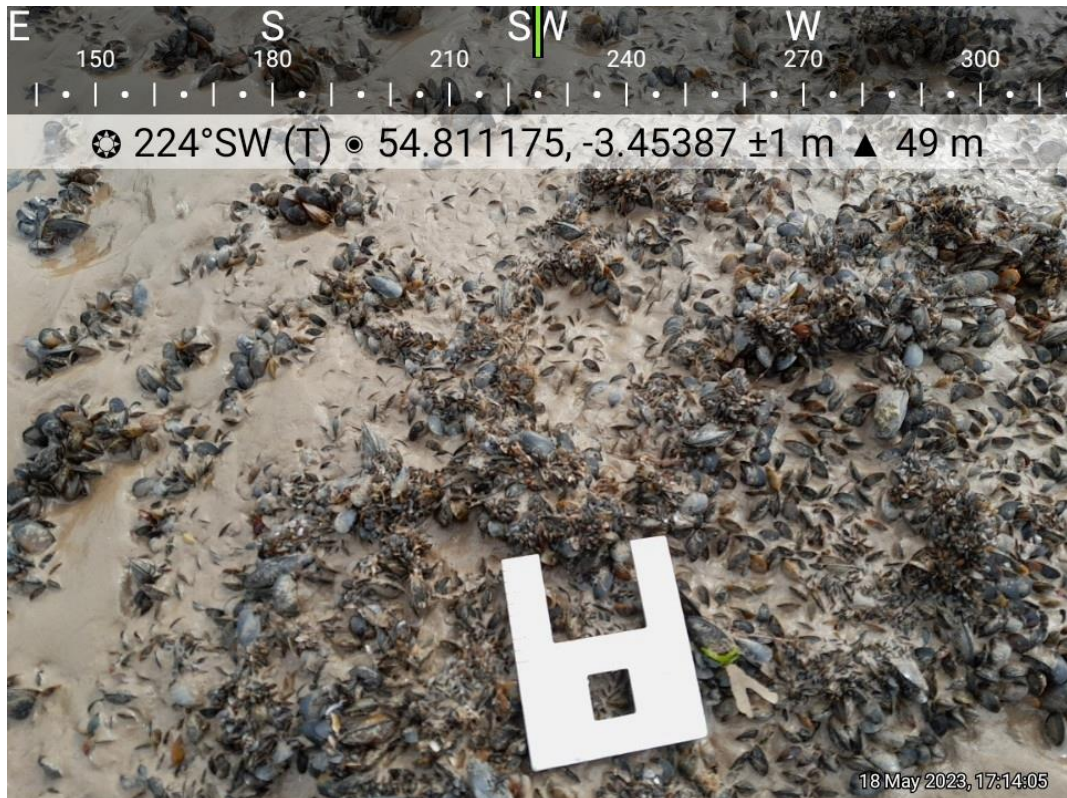


Figure 8. Mix of size classes on Middle Ellison and evidence of 2023 settlement



Figure 9. Extensive Sabellaria field on Middle Ellison

Stinking crag:

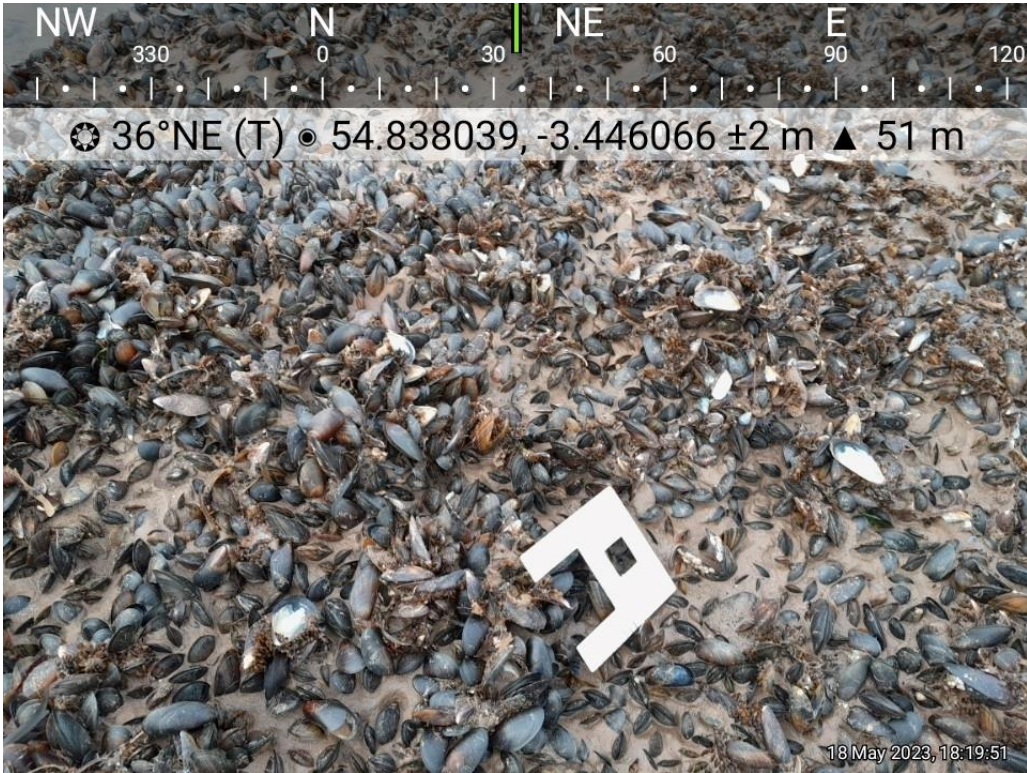


Figure 10. Clean size mussel on stinking crag



Figure 11. Evidence of scour and re-settlement on Stinking Crag