

Heysham Flat Mussel Inspection 09-05-23

Officers present: MC, GG
Tides LW 08:48 1.6m (Liverpool tides)

Officers inspected the mussel on Heysham Flat to assess if mussel was present and if seed settlement had occurred. Access to the outer skears was not possible across Dallam Dyke due to depth of water and timings.

There is a significant historic *Sabellaria alveolata* reef extending across the skewar from close to Conger Rock to Dallam Dyke (Figure 2 and 3). The reef is a mixture of remnant, dead reef and new live reef structures. The reef is in a similar location to last year, and the extent of the *Sabellaria alveolata* has been mapped from this survey (Figure 1).

There was very little mussel persisting from last year, but there was an extensive seed settlement across the majority of the skewar. The seed coverage over the entire skewar was predominantly 70-80%. The seed ranged in size from 2-3mm to 10mm, and covered all substrates, including cobble, dead shell, remnant and live *Sabellaria* sp. Knott End skewar also appeared to have a seed settlement.

Numerous bird species were present feeding in the area including oystercatchers and eiders.

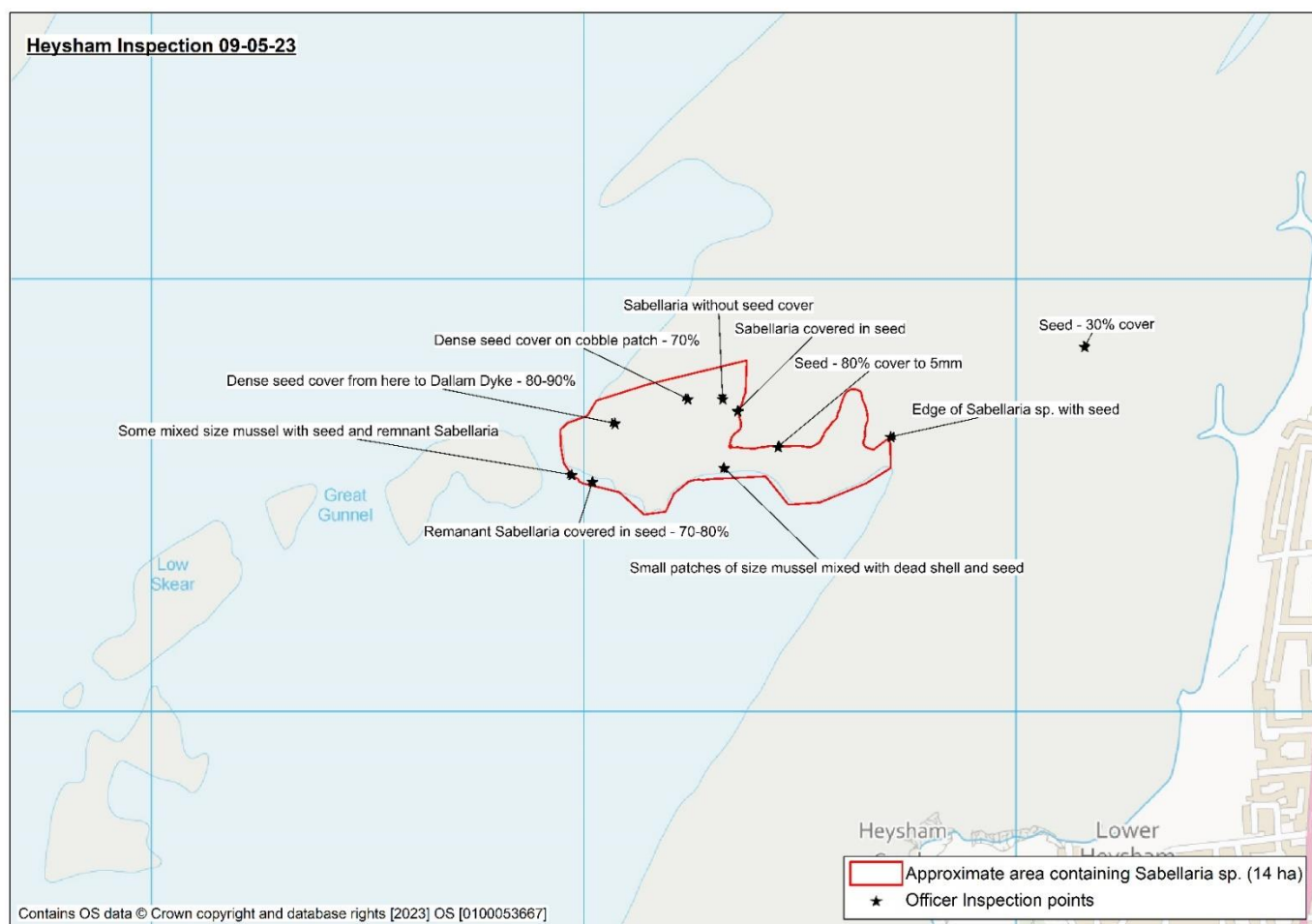


Figure 1. Map showing the extent of *Sabellaria* sp. on Heysham Flat survey 09-05-23.

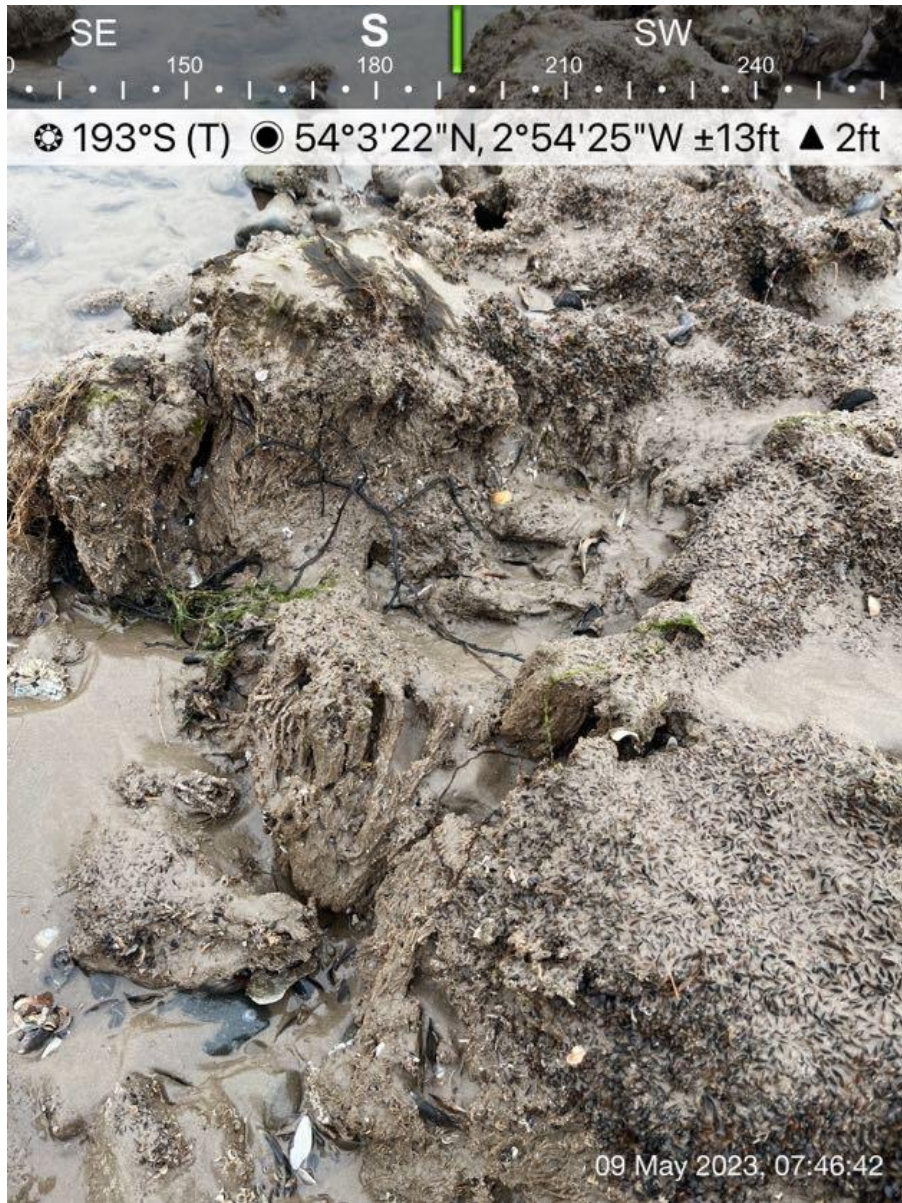


Figure 2: Remnant *Sabellaria* sp. covered in seed 09-05-23.

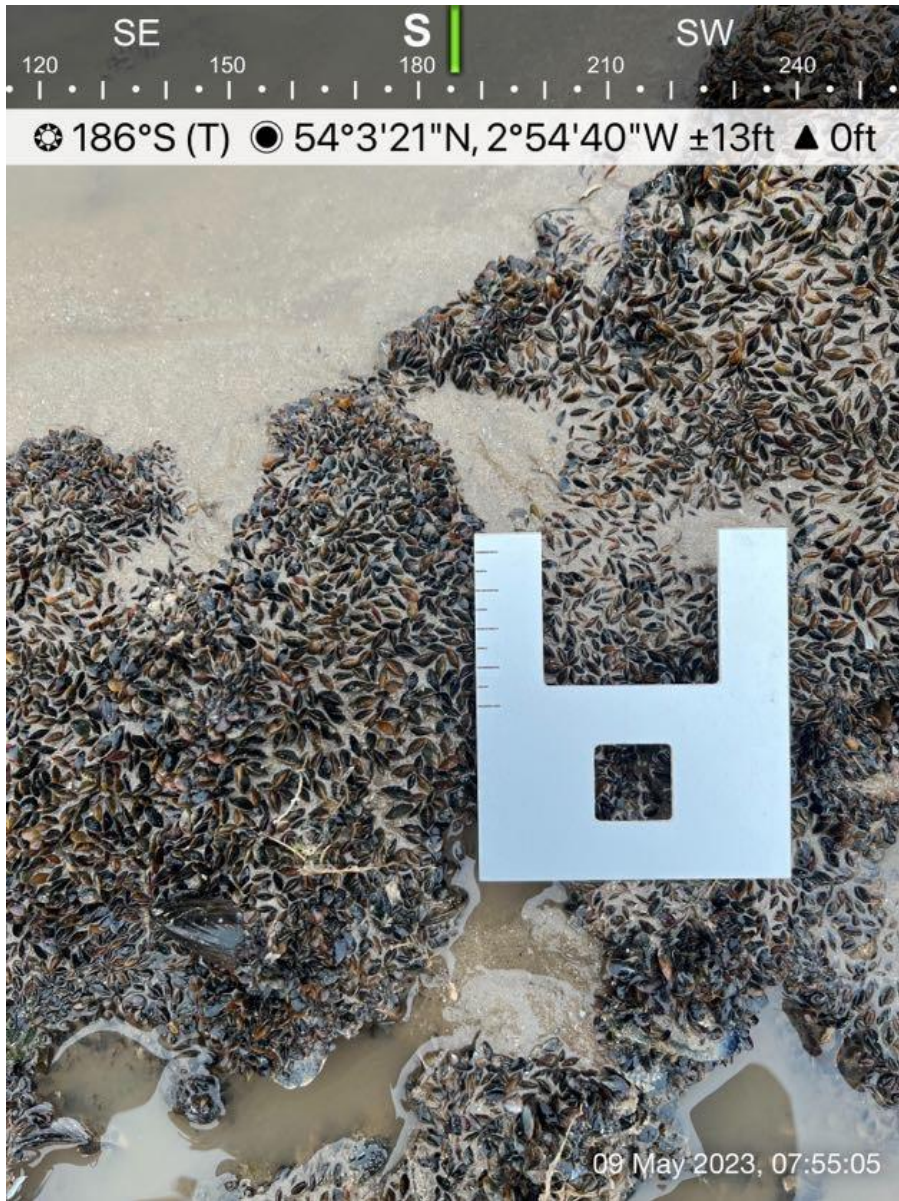


Figure 3: Seed settlement at Heysham 09-05-23.



Figure 4: Mixed seed, mussel and dead shell 09-05-23.



Figure 5: Live *Sabellaria alveolata* covered in dense seed settlement 09-05-23.