



MarLIN

Marine Information Network

Information on the species and habitats around the coasts and sea of the British Isles

Turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*)

MarLIN – Marine Life Information Network
Marine Evidence-based Sensitivity Assessment (MarESA) Review

Dr Harvey Tyler-Walters

2008-04-24

A report from:

The Marine Life Information Network, Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom.

Please note. This MarESA report is a dated version of the online review. Please refer to the website for the most up-to-date version [<https://www.marlin.ac.uk/species/detail/1917>]. All terms and the MarESA methodology are outlined on the website (<https://www.marlin.ac.uk>)

This review can be cited as:

Tyler-Walters, H., 2008. *Scophthalmus maximus* Turbot. In Tyler-Walters H. and Hiscock K. (eds) *Marine Life Information Network: Biology and Sensitivity Key Information Reviews*, [on-line]. Plymouth: Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom. DOI <https://dx.doi.org/10.17031/marlin.sp.1917.1>



The information (TEXT ONLY) provided by the Marine Life Information Network (MarLIN) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 2.0 UK: England & Wales License. Note that images and other media featured on this page are each governed by their own terms and conditions and they may or may not be available for reuse. Permissions beyond the scope of this license are available [here](#). Based on a work at www.marlin.ac.uk

(page left blank)



See online review for
distribution map

Distribution data supplied by the Ocean
Biogeographic Information System (OBIS). To
interrogate UK data visit the NBN Atlas.

Researched by Dr Harvey Tyler-Walters
Authority (Linnaeus, 1758)

Refereed by Admin

**Other common
names** -

Synonyms *Scophthalmus maxima*, *Psetta
maxima*, *Scophthalmus
maxima*

Summary

🔍 Description

A large, rounded flatfish with a broad body only one and a half times as long as wide. Usually 50-80 cm in length but can occasionally reach up to 1 m in length. The turbot lays on its right side with left side uppermost. The eyes are on the upper left side. The mouth is large, curved and to the left of the eyes. The dorsal fin starts at the snout in front of the left eye. Neither the dorsal or anal fins continues under the tail. The skin bears no scales but scattered strong bony tubercles on the upper body surface instead. The lateral line is strongly arched over the pectoral fin. Colouration is variable and the fish can change colour to match its background. It is usually a dull sandy-brown to grey, with minute brown, blackish or greenish specks scattered over the body and extending onto the fins. The tail is strongly speckled to its tip. The underside is white occasionally with darker blotches.

📍 Recorded distribution in Britain and Ireland

Found around the coasts of Britain and Ireland but are most common in the south.

📍 Global distribution

Found from the Arctic Circle in Norway and Iceland, south along the European coast and the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean.

Habitat

Found on sandy bottoms, gravel or shell gravel from about 20 m to a depth of 80 m but occasionally on muddy bottoms or areas of mixed sand and rock. Young fish may be found inshore in the breaker zone or in shore pools. May also occur in brackish waters.

↓ Depth range

-

Q Identifying features

- Body almost circular in outline, about one and a half times as long as wide.
- Dorsal fin with 57-80 rays and anal fin with 43-58 rays.
- The dorsal and anal fins do not continue under the tail.
- The skin lacks scales which are replaced by scattered bony tubercles.
- The tail is densely speckled and the body covered with spots and speckles, although it is well camouflaged.

Additional information

The turbot may be confused with the brill *Scophthalmus rhombus* which lacks bony tubercles and has a frilly front edge to its dorsal fin. Turbot is a valuable commercial food fish.

✓ Listed by

Further information sources

Search on:

    NBN WoRMS

Bibliography

Dipper, F., 2001. *British sea fishes* (2nd edn). Teddington: Underwater World Publications Ltd.

FishBase, 2000. *FishBase. A global information system on fishes*. [On-line] <http://www.fishbase.org>, 2001-05-03

Wheeler, A., 1969. *The fishes of the British Isles and north-west Europe*. London: Macmillan.

Whitehead, P.J.P., Bauchot, M.-L., Hureau, J.-C., Nielson, J. & Tortonese, E. 1986. *Fishes of the North-eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Vol. I, II & III*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Datasets

Fenwick, 2018. Aphotomarine. Occurrence dataset <http://www.aphotomarine.com/index.html> Accessed via NBNAtlas.org on 2018-10-01

Isle of Wight Local Records Centre, 2017. IOW Natural History & Archaeological Society Marine Records. Occurrence dataset: <https://doi.org/10.15468/7axhcv> accessed via GBIF.org on 2018-09-27.

Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre, 2017. Fish: Records for Kent.. Occurrence dataset <https://doi.org/10.15468/kd1utk> accessed via GBIF.org on 2018-09-27.

National Trust, 2017. National Trust Species Records. Occurrence dataset: <https://doi.org/10.15468/opc6g1> accessed via GBIF.org on 2018-10-01.

NBN (National Biodiversity Network) Atlas. Available from: <https://www.nbnatlas.org>.

OBIS (Ocean Biogeographic Information System), 2019. Global map of species distribution using gridded data. Available from: Ocean Biogeographic Information System. www.iobis.org. Accessed: 2019-03-12