

A Century of Marine Citizen Science

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Since the inception of the Marine Biological Association (MBA) in 1884, studying marine life and sharing the knowledge gained with the public has been at its heart. Engaging those without any formal scientific training in the scientific process - now commonly called citizen science - furthers scientific knowledge and is a powerful tool for engagement and education. The following are a few highlights from more than a century of these activities by the MBA and associates.

= Still active in 2018

= Approximately 10 year interval

1884
The MBA is established to help answer fundamental questions about marine fish and invertebrate populations. Studies are supported by data and observations provided by the fishing industry and still are. The Plymouth Laboratory was opened in 1888.

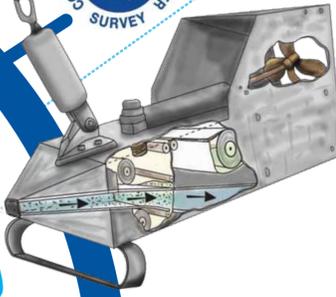
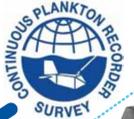


1904-1906
George Park Bidder proves the east to west flow of currents in the North Sea by deploying C1,000 'messages in bottles' and requesting their return in exchange for a shilling.

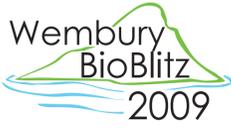


One of G.P. Bidder's bottles was recovered in Germany in **2015**, setting the official world record for the oldest message in a bottle ever found.

1931
Sir Alister Hardy begins regular use of the **Continuous Plankton Recorder (CPR)**, towed by merchant vessels, deployed and retrieved by volunteers. The design is being used to this day with few modifications and is still deployed by volunteers from a range of vessels. The CPR Survey is now operated by the MBA in Plymouth.



2009
The MBA, Natural History Museum, London (NHM), and OPAL run the first public marine **BioBlitz** in the UK. Now an annual event generating important species distribution data. Including species new to science. www.mba.ac.uk/bioblitz



2010 - 2014
MBA Researchers work with Cornwall wildlife trust to engage yacht owners in monitoring non-native species on marinas and hulls.

2011
The **Mitten Crab Recording scheme** is run in partnership with the NHM to investigate distribution and spread of an invasive species. Mittencrabs.org



2017
Crab Watch aims to increase our knowledge of European crab distribution especially invasive species. Developed as part of the H2020 funded SeaChange & ENVRI+ Projects. www.mba.ac.uk/crabwatch



2005
The Shore Thing is launched One of the UK's first marine citizen science initiatives for school groups and volunteers. www.mba.ac.uk/shorething



2006
The MBA develops '**Alien Invaders**' with Holbeton Primary School Contributing data to at least two published scientific papers.



2014
The public are asked to contribute records of an invasive seaweed through the MBA led **Wakame Watch**. www.wakamewatch.org



2016
The MBA is a partner in the Newcastle University led, **Capturing Our Coast** Project. Engaging volunteers in a range of intertidal scientific investigations and providing training and social events to increase participation. www.capturingourcoast.co.uk

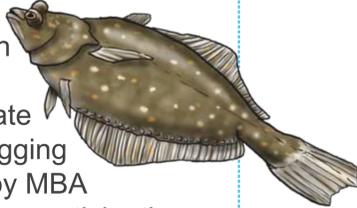


2000
Sealife Survey developed for WWF by the MBA's MarLIN program, to collect and disseminate marine life records from the public. The Sealife Survey continues today and is run by the MBA. Data is archived in in DASSH (The Archive for Marine Species and Habitats Data) and made available through UK and International portals. www.sealifesurvey.org



1989
Term '**Citizen Science**' First used by R. Kerson to describe public participation in scientific research.

1976 - 1980
MBA scientists seek help from the fishing community in the capture of tagged and branded flounder to investigate migration and site fidelity. Tagging studies are still undertaken by MBA researchers, who often rely on participation by anglers, divers and commercial fishers to return tagged animals.



1967
Accounts and data collected by local residents is used by the MBA in the study of impacts of oil and dispersants on the shore following the **Torrey Canyon** oil spill.

