

***Modiolus modiolus* horse mussel beds**

EUNIS Code: A5.621, A5.622, A5.623 and A5.624

National Marine Habitat Classification for UK & Ireland code: SS.SBR.SMus.ModT, SS.SBR.SMus.ModMx, SS.SBR.SMus.ModHAs and SS.SBR.SMus.ModCvar

The horse mussel *Modiolus modiolus* forms dense beds, at depths up to 70m (but may extend onto the lower shore), mostly in fully saline conditions and often in tide-swept areas. Although *M. modiolus* is a widespread and common species, horse mussel beds (with typically 30% cover or more) are more limited in their distribution. *Modiolus* beds are found on a range of substrata, from cobbles through to muddy gravels and sands, where they tend to have a stabilising effect, due to the production of byssal threads. Communities associated with *Modiolus* beds are diverse, with a wide range of epibiota and infauna being recorded, including hydroids, red seaweeds, solitary ascidians and bivalves such as *Aequipecten opercularis* and *Chlamys varia*. As *M. modiolus* is an Arctic-Boreal species, its distribution ranges from the seas around Scandinavia (including Skagerrak & Kattegat) and Iceland south to the Bay of Biscay.

See OSPAR Agreement 2008-07 for references