

# Sea mouse (*Aphrodita aculeata*)

Polychaeta (Annelida:Phyllodocida)

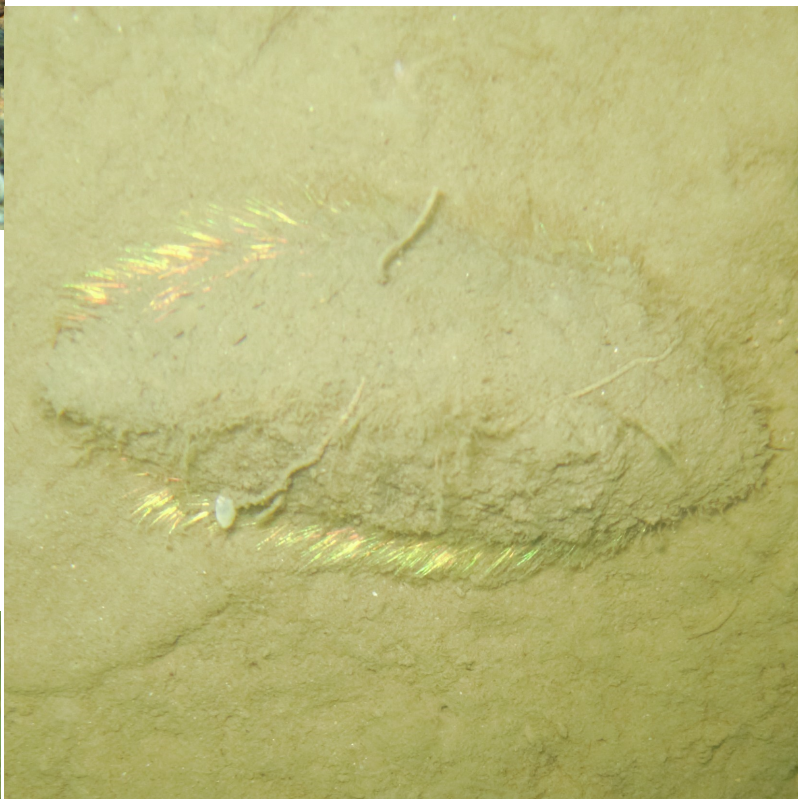


When species is fully exposed on the surface as above the hairy appearance and bright colouration to the chaetae makes it easily identifiable. More typically they are partially or wholly buried within the sediment (right and below) and can be slightly harder to identify. However the large size, conspicuous chaetae and bright yellow colouration of the chaetae makes it unlikely to be confused with any other species. Found from the sublittoral to deep water.

Taxonomy: Annelida->Polychaeta->Phyllodocida->Aphroditidae

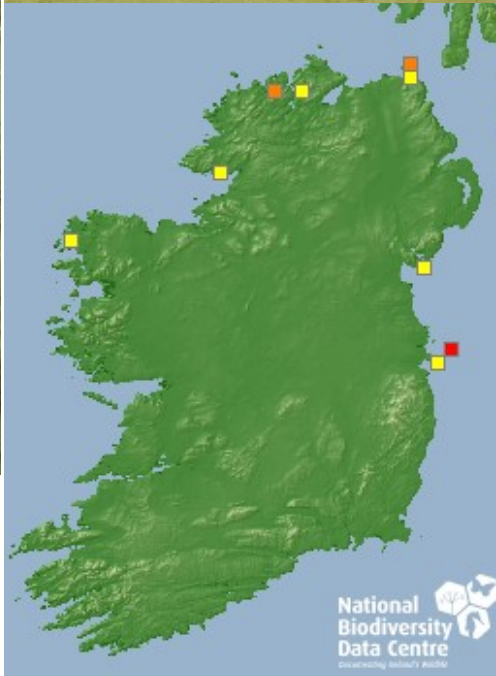
IUCN Red List Categorisation: Not Assessed

Despite its appearance this species is a polychaete worm, more closely related to a lugworm or sand mason, despite its sea slug like appearance. Typically found on soft bottoms this bioturbating species, one that disturbs the sediment by feeding and moving, is important for species richness in areas where they are present.



What dive sites can I see it at?

Likely to be seen on any soft bottom site though they are difficult to spot as they burrow in the sediment. Found on all British coasts it is likely under recorded in Ireland.



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