

Light bulb sea squirt(*Clavelina lepadiformis*)

Asciadiacea (Tunicata:Aplousobranchia)



Colonial sea squirts attached at the base by stolons they have a characteristic white line running the length of the zooid with a white ring around the top, giving the 'light bulb' appearance. Typically found in relatively large colonies as shown they die back beginning in summer and typically start appearing in ones or twos in winter. May occasionally be confused with the golfball squirt (*Diazona violacea*) which lacks the white lines.



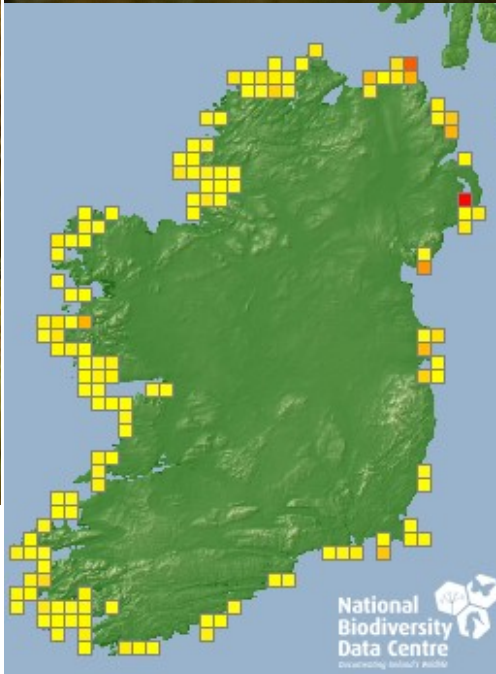
What dive sites can I see it at?

Found on all Irish coasts this species is present at a large number of both sheltered and offshore sites but is often overlooked due to its small size.

Tunicata->Asciadiacea->Aplousobranchia->Clavelinidae

IUCN Red List Categorisation: Not Assessed

A fairly widespread species it is found from Norway to the Mediterranean. A so called cryptic invader: genetic studies have revealed the Atlantic population has invaded the Mediterranean populations range and they now inhabit different habitats (Mediterranean within harbours and inlets, Atlantic without), though morphologically (in appearance) they are identical¹.



1. Turon, X., Tarjuelo, I., Duran, S. and Pascual, M., 2003. Characterising invasion processes with genetic data: an Atlantic clade of *Clavelina lepadiformis* (Asciadiacea) introduced into Mediterranean harbours. In *Migrations and Dispersal of Marine Organisms* (pp. 29-35). Springer Netherlands.

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