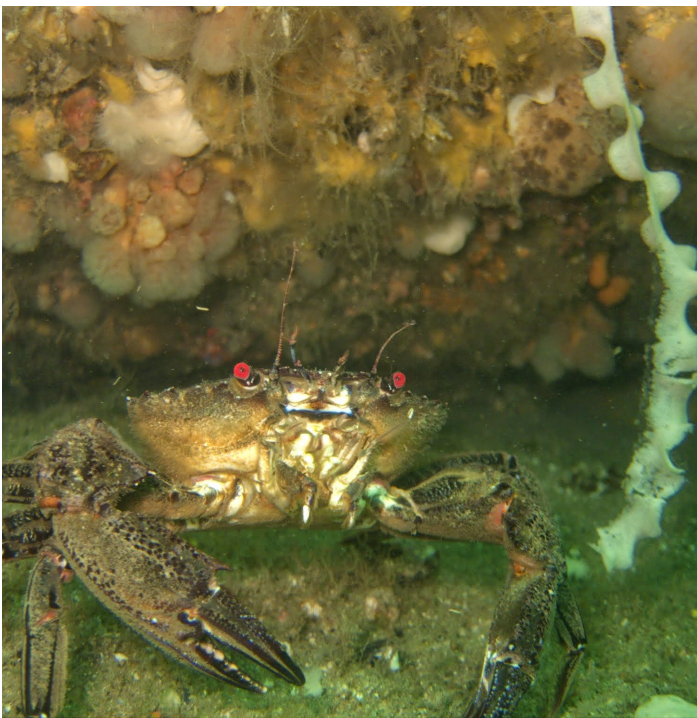


Velvet swimming crab (*Necora puber*)

Malacostraca (Arthropoda:Decapoda)



One of the most widespread, conspicuous and easily identifiable crabs in Irish waters due to the bright red eyes, violet tinges to the limbs and the soft, 'velvet' texture to the carapace when rubbed. Typically more aggressive than other species of crabs they are often observed in a fighting stance with the claws and swimming legs raised advancing towards divers. Unlikely to be confused with any other species of crab in Irish waters.



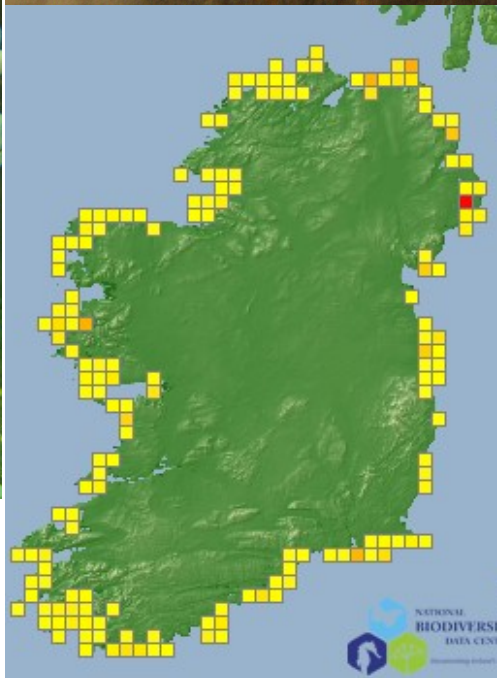
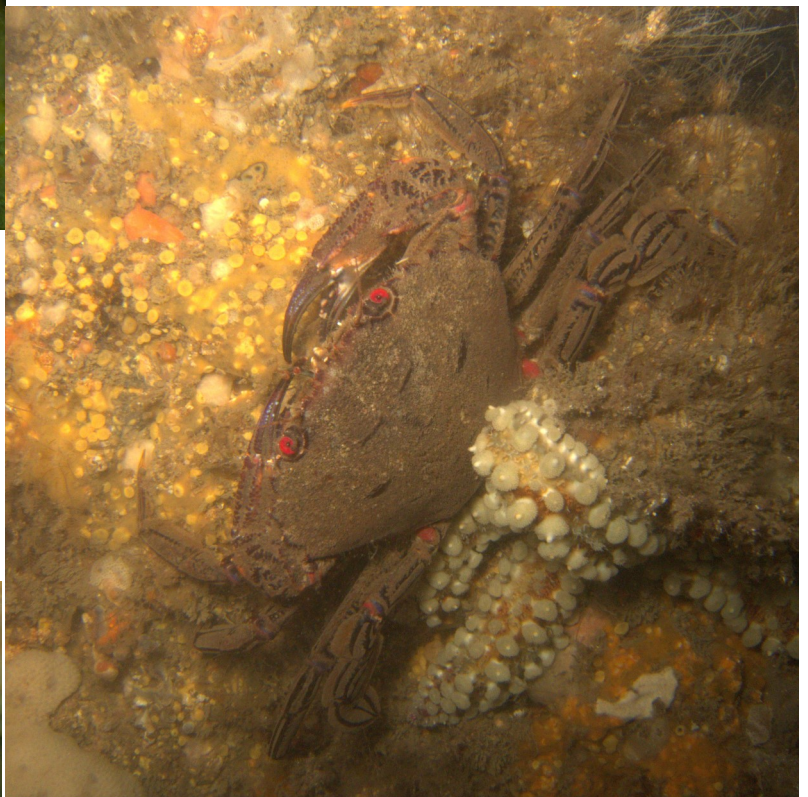
What dive sites can I see it at?

Found on all coasts they occur in any areas with suitable rocky habitat (generally not found in muddy habitats) they are seen common on sheltered shores.

Taxonomy: Arthropoda->Malacostraca->Decapoda->Brachyura->Portunoidea

IUCN Red List Categorisation: Not Assessed

Velvet swimming crabs are a member of the Brachyuran (or true crabs) of which there are 7,000+ species in the world. Principally feeding on brown algae, the animal component of their diet increases with depth, however they tend to be highly opportunistic feeders generally and diet largely depends on local food availability¹.



1. Norman, C.P. & Jones, M.B. (1992). Influence of depth, season and moult stage on the diet of the velvet swimming crab *Necora puber* (brachyura, portunidae). *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science*, 34(1) pg71-83.

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