



OCEAN
OBSERVATORY
BERWICKSHIRE



FLATFISH (Plaice, Dab and Flounder)

Scientific names: *Pleuronectes platess* (Plaice),
Limanda limanda (Dab), *Platichthys flesus* (Flounder)

FEATURED CREATURES!

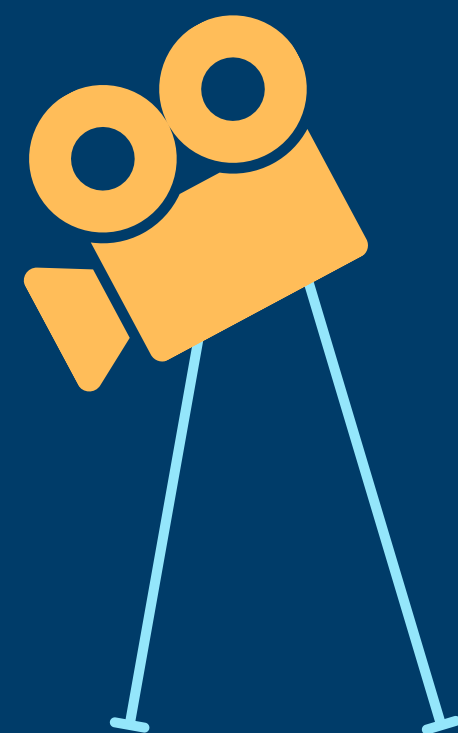
Conservation Status: All are relatively common. Plaice are fished heavily for fish and chips - they are slow growing and breed late, so need protection to make sure populations stay healthy.

Distinctive Features: All of these fish are brown and flat! Plaice have vivid orange spots, dab have darker brown speckles, and flounders have red spots duller than those of a plaice.



Flatfish are masters of camouflage. This plaice has colours and markings that are similar to the sandy or muddy seafloor they live on, and can even change colour to suit its surroundings! Flatfish can also burrow into the seafloor to hide themselves even better.

To film this footage featured in this deep-dive discovery pack, scientists deployed **BRUV** systems (Baited Remote Underwater Video). This is made up of a bait cage containing some tasty food near to an underwater camera. The camera is left running for several days, so that we can record all of the creatures who come to visit!



That's eye-mazing

When flatfish hatch, they are small, round fish. They swim in the water column and have one eye on each side of their head. After a few weeks, they move to the seafloor - and something magical happens. Their skull changes shape and the left eye moves onto the right side of their body. This allows them to lie flat on the seafloor and still use both eyes!

