



Spotting Seaweeds in Wales - reds and greens

There are around 450 different kinds of seaweed in Wales! Try looking for some of these and share your finds with us on Twitter @CardiffCurator. Take care on the shore, make sure you know if the tide is coming in or out, and keep an eye on your route back to the beach.

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Find more nature guides or get in touch with our museum scientists for help with identification: museum.wales/collections/on-your-doorstep



Dulse to 50 cm*
Palmaria palmata

This edible seaweed can be made into crisps or used as seasoning. It is common on rocky shores and also grows on other large seaweeds, such as Kelp.

Older parts of the seaweed can have patches of Sea Mats on them. Sea Mats are colonies of small animals (bryozoans) living on the surface and look like a fine white mesh.

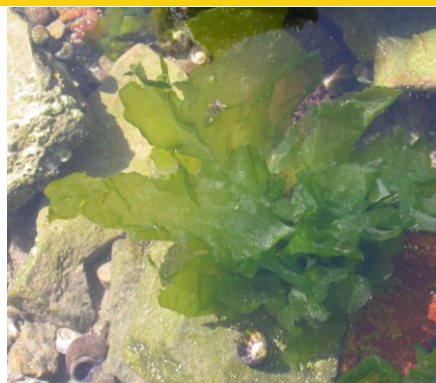
* Measurements give the length of the seaweed. However size is very variable in seaweeds, so these are a very rough guide.



Laver 2 cm to 1 m*
Porphyra and *Pyropia*

Laver are flat red seaweeds just one cell thick but strong enough to survive storms on rocky shores. They can be long and narrow or almost round in shape, with a large colour range from red to green-black.

Out of the 5 species in Wales, the common Tough Laver (*Porphyra umbilicaulis*) is the main one used to make Laverbread. People also eat *Porphyra* in Ireland and Japan, where it is known as Slake and Nori. It feels, and looks, like stretchy plastic.



Sea Lettuce to 1 m*
Ulva lactuca

Sea Lettuce is also known as Poor Man's Laver. It is thin and flat like Laver but is a brighter green colour. Older Sea Lettuces often have holes in. Look for this common seaweed across the whole shore.

Think twice before eating this common seaweed as it often grows in places of high nutrients caused by pollution.

There are around 15 related sea lettuces and *Ulva* species that are hard to tell apart.



Siphoned Feather Weed 10 cm*
Heterosiphonia plumosa

One of the many small, highly branched seaweeds you can find on rocky shores. A close look can reveal their beautiful intricate branching.

You can also find seaweeds in the Marine Gallery and collections behind the scenes at National Museum Cardiff. This specimen from the Lewis Weston Dillwyn collection was collected in the 1800s.



Coral Weed 10 cm*
Corallina, *Ellisolandia* and *Jania*

These rock-hard red seaweeds contain calcium carbonate. This gives them a toughness that stops animals from eating them.

They are common around the edges of rock pools. Their pink branches are divided into small sections, ending in white tips.

Seas becoming more acidic because of climate change may have a bad effect on these seaweeds.