

UNDER HIGHLAND SEAS



DRAGONET *Callionymus lyra*. A common fish that lives in sandy areas, often burying itself to hide from predators. The male here is brightly coloured with a long dorsal fin.

West Scotland has a long and intricate coastline. We live adjacent to a lot of sea where biodiversity is very rich. Some of these creatures are well known because they are fished for eating, but others may be less familiar.



MOON JELLYFISH *Aurelia aurita*, often found in large groups, is a harmless filter feeder that floats near the surface, propelling itself by expanding and contracting its dome-shaped body. The four purple rings are its reproductive organs.



VELVET SWIMMING CRAB *Necora puber* has velvety hair on its shell. This pair has found a temporary home under soft coral *Alcyonium digitatum*.



PURPLE SEA SLUG *Flabellina pedata* climbing a stem of kelp. Both this one and the four-lined Sea Slug *Polycera quadrilineata* [inset] are carnivorous animals.



FLAME SHELL *Limaria hians*. This beautiful mollusc lives hidden in a nest in the seabed. Thousands of flame shell nests build up into reefs.



LOBSTERS *Homarus gammarus* are powerful crustaceans living among rocks and come out into the open to feed. A **PRAWN** *Nephrops norvegicus* [inset] is evading capture by creel, a sustainable, traditional fishing method.



STARFISH The bright Sunstar *Crossaster papposus* lives on the seabed and eats other starfish, while black **BRITTLESTARS** *Ophiocomina nigra* catch food from passing currents. **FEATHERSTARS** *Antedon bifida* [insets] filter food from the currents with finely feathered arms.



The **CLOAK ANEMONE** *Adamsia carciniopados* lives only on shells of the **HERMIT CRAB** *Pagurus prideauxi* eating its host's waste food. When threatened it releases stinging streamers to protect itself and its host.



DAHLIA ANEMONES *Urticina felina*. Although flower-like in appearance, these anemones are carnivorous animals and envelop unsuspecting prey in their sticky tentacles.