

Broadsands seagrass 15th August 2026

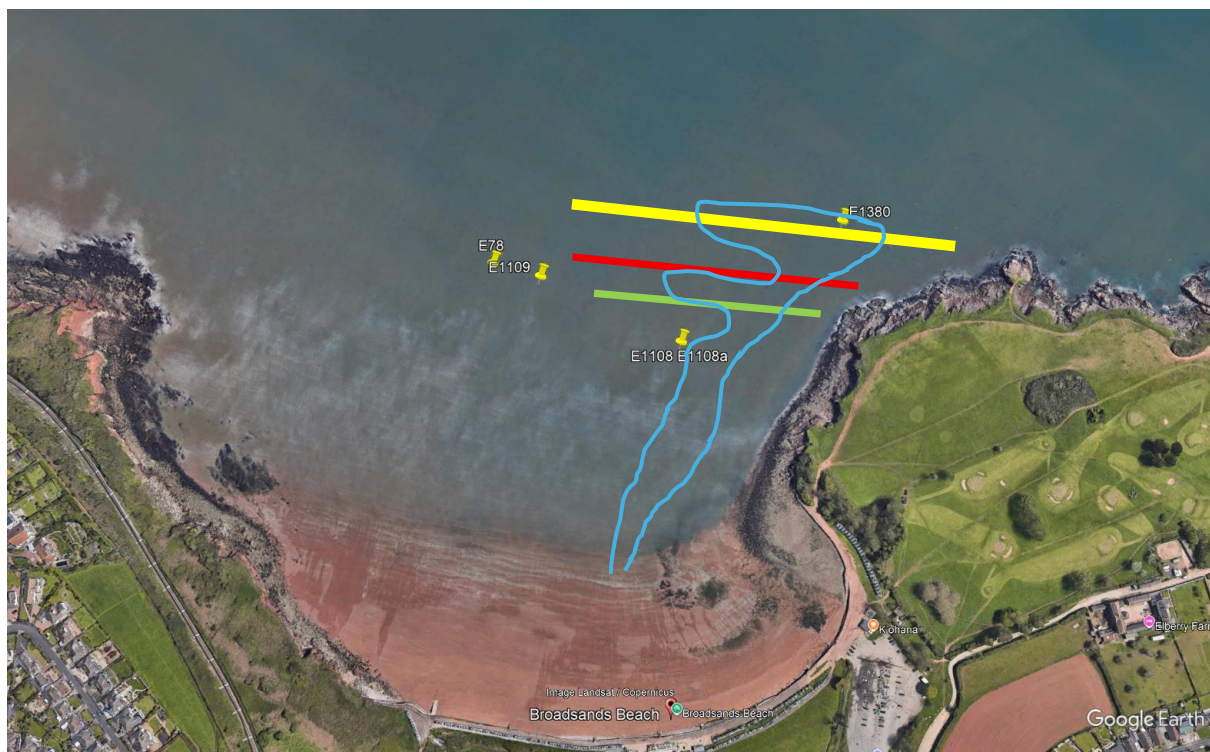
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The Seahorse Trust

Broadsands Bay is between Paignton and Brixham in Torbay, south Devon and is an east facing shallow bay with an extensive tidal range, which at high tide leaves very little sand exposed and at low tide a very wide beach. It has a freshwater pipe draining into the bay from the marsh behind the car parks on the south side and a freshwater pipe from the small brook on the north side.

The site is one of two in Torbay we dive to monitor seahorses. We conducted a 90 minute dive at Broadsands on the 15th of August and had mixed visibility, from zero metres closer to shore up to 5 metres out where the red and yellow lines are in the dive map below. The sea temperature was 20 degrees, and the light blue line below shows our dive track, going out on the right side and returning on the left.

It was an interesting dive with a few small (4 inches or so) Common Cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*), a shoal of Bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*), 2 juvenile Weaver fish (*Trachinus draco*) and some small wrasse and gobies of various species, but interestingly, considering there was a lot of food around, not much else.



Dive map for the dive on the 15th of August. The dive route is in light blue.

As my dive buddy Paul and I, went out and the visibility improved we came across a line of small clumps of seagrass in a rough line as illustrated by the green line in the dive map above. The line was along one axis (south, south west to north, north east) and was one plant wide and then came a gap of just sand.



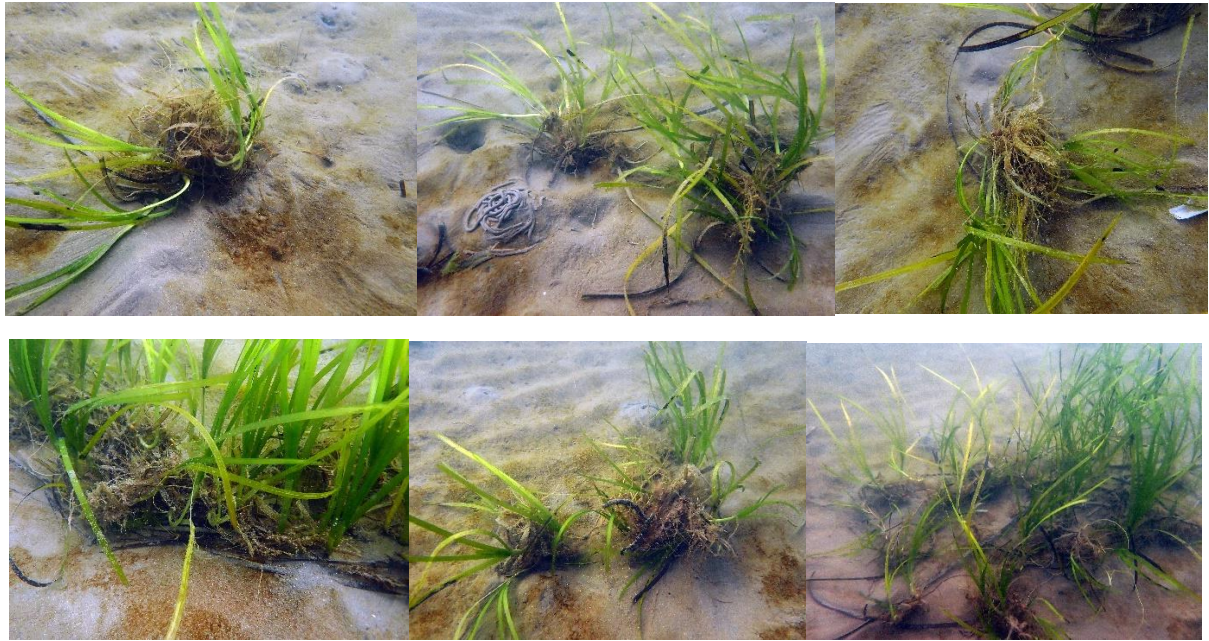
The first line were all healthy plants and showing good growth and were starting to join into a longer line on places.

Interestingly the plants were growing along the same line as the ripples in the sand, presumably benefitting from the dynamic environmental force of the current coming in and out of the bay, creating a oxygen rich, high energy environment. This was indeed a feature in the area, with seagrass in lines along these ripples.

After the gap of sand (about 3 metres), we came across another line of seagrass, this time not in such good condition which showed a lot of signs of stress, with their roots exposed. This line was about 3 to 5 metres wide and followed the same line of axis. It didn't look as though the roots had been disturbed by boat anchors, looked to be natural and it was over a wide area. They were hanging on in the sand by one or two roots, but the scour seemed to have exposed their roots quite a lot.

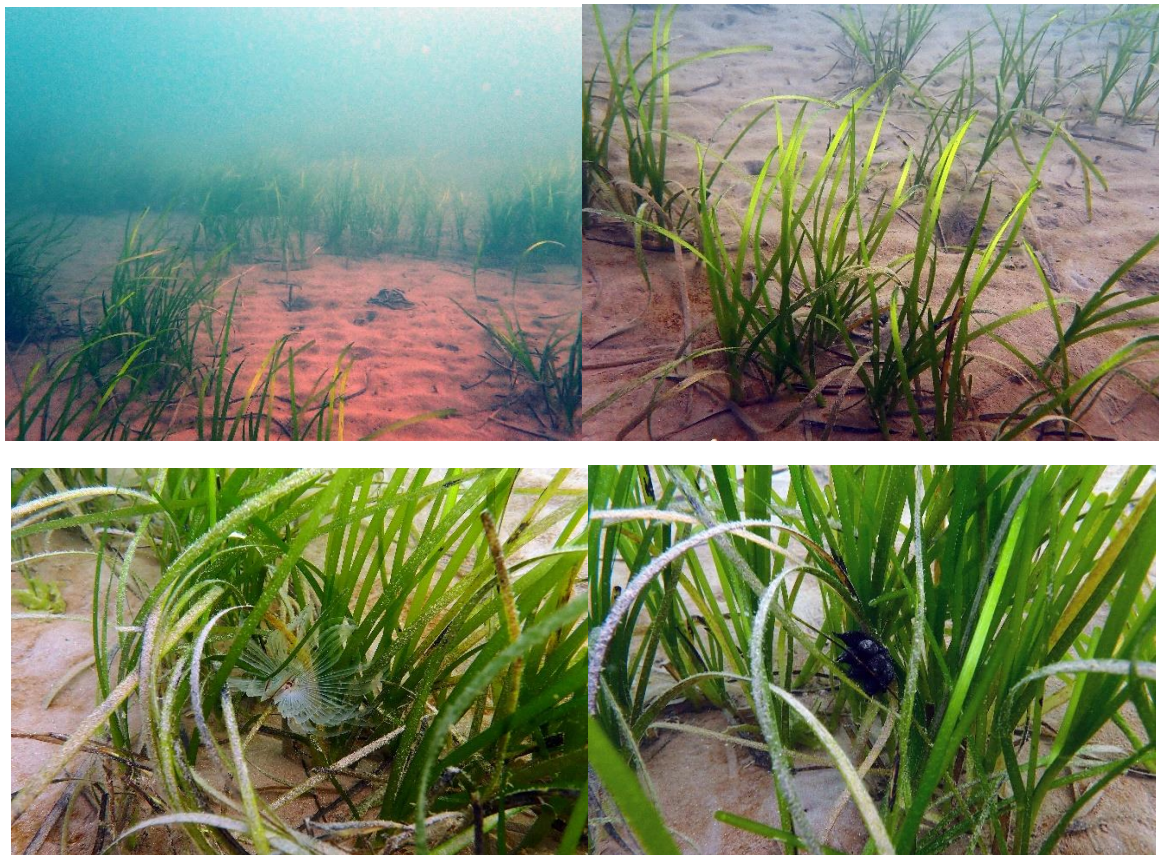


A good example of the roots being exposed in the seagrass, seemingly a natural occurrence as there was no sign of boat disturbance.



More images above of the roots exposed in the band of seagrass shown along the red band on the dive map above.

The band of root damaged seagrass then merged into much healthier looking seagrass, again in lines along the ripples in the sand but in long swathes and bigger, denser clumps. These clumps had fan worms and other species in them and looked much healthier, and the ecosystem was much livelier the closer inshore.



The seagrass further out was in a healthier condition, with a much more vibrant ecosystem.

The healthy seagrass was growing in long lines, following the line of the sand ripples.

