

1st Oct 2024 – 30th Sept 2025

Annual Wildlife Sightings Report

Which jellyfish did you spot the most?

1,327 jellyfish were reported to us this year – but which were spotted the most?

76% of sightings were of individuals or small groups (1-20), with a slight decrease in the number of large blooms (100+ individuals) than last year.

There was a particular **increase in sightings of mauve stinger blooms**, with half of sightings being of 21-100+ individuals, including 35% being of 100+ individuals – a **31% increase from last year and the highest on record**.

Moon jellyfish blooms also increased significantly, with 21% of sightings involving blooms of 100+, up 68% from last year and the highest proportion since 2016/17.

In contrast, 98% of Portuguese man o' war and 86% of By-the-wind-sailor sightings were in the 1-20 range.

This year we saw a large increase in the number of barrels spotted, with a 230% increase in sightings compared to

Moon jellyfish

Moon was the **most spotted species for the second year in a row**. 316 were spotted, making up almost 24% of all sightings. These were mostly recorded in July, when over one third of sightings occurred.

last year placing the species in second place (up from fifth last year). These were heavily reported along the west coast of the UK.

There has also been a **large decrease in Portuguese man o' war sightings**, with 83% fewer reported this year. It was the second-least spotted species, compared to second-most in 2024. This may be due to there being fewer storms (six compared to last year's 12).

Bloom of moon jellyfish, the most commonly spotted jellyfish
© Paul Naylor



1. Moon
23.8%

2. Barrel
23.3%

3. Compass
17.1%

4. Lion's mane
9.7%

5. Blue
9.6%

6. Mauve stinger
3.7%

7. Portuguese man o' war
3.5%

8. By-the-wind-sailor
0.5%

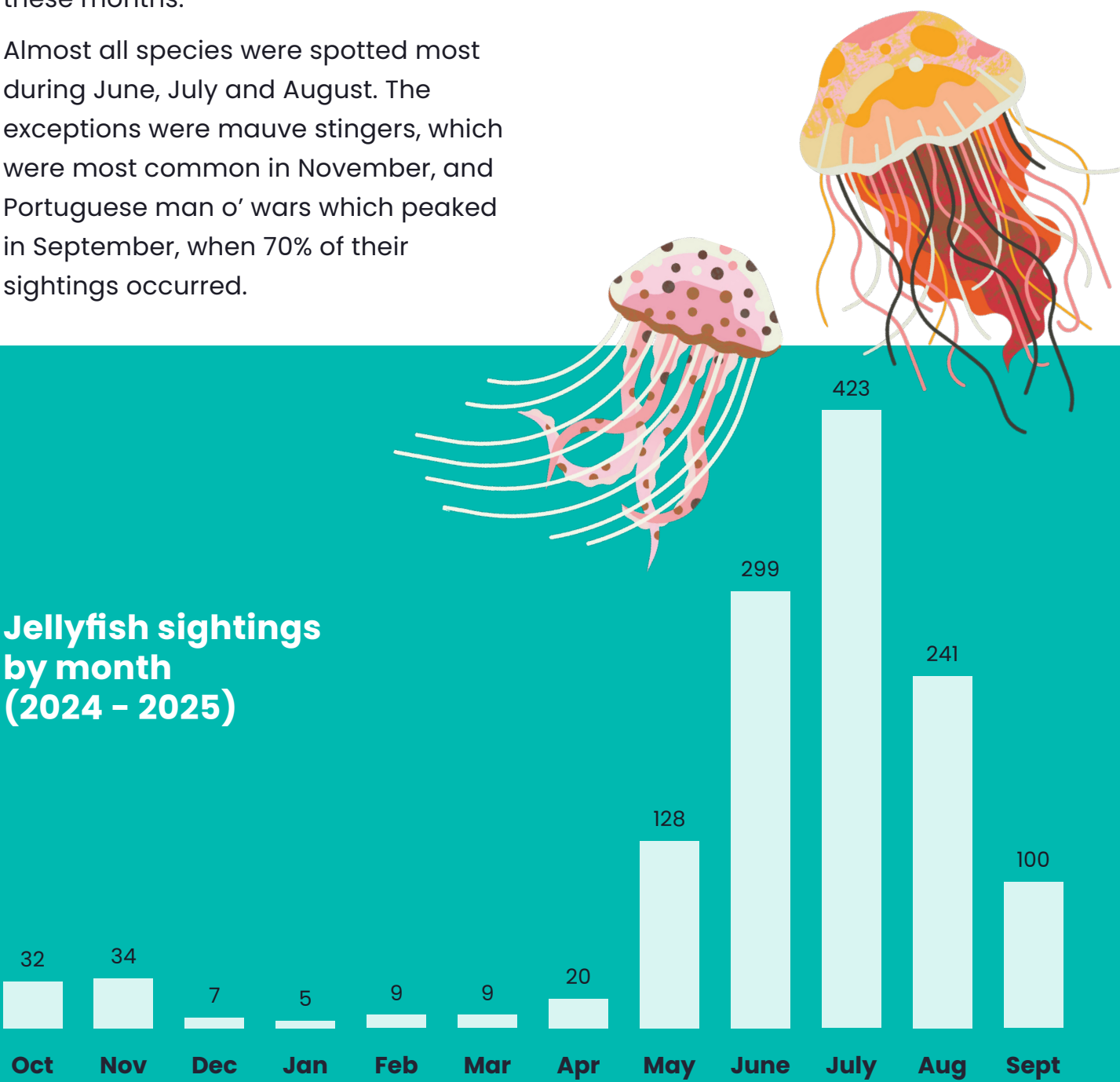
When did you spot wildlife?

Jellyfish were spotted year-round, with the most recorded in July (423). There were more sightings recorded in May and June, with increases of 55% and 11% respectively – this may be due to the particularly warm weather we had in these months.

Almost all species were spotted most during June, July and August. The exceptions were mauve stingers, which were most common in November, and Portuguese man o’ wars which peaked in September, when 70% of their sightings occurred.

This year we received more reports in Autumn and Spring too, with 12% of sightings taking place in each of these seasons. We saw fewer in Winter though, with a drop of 58% compared to last year.

Jellyfish sightings by month (2024 – 2025)

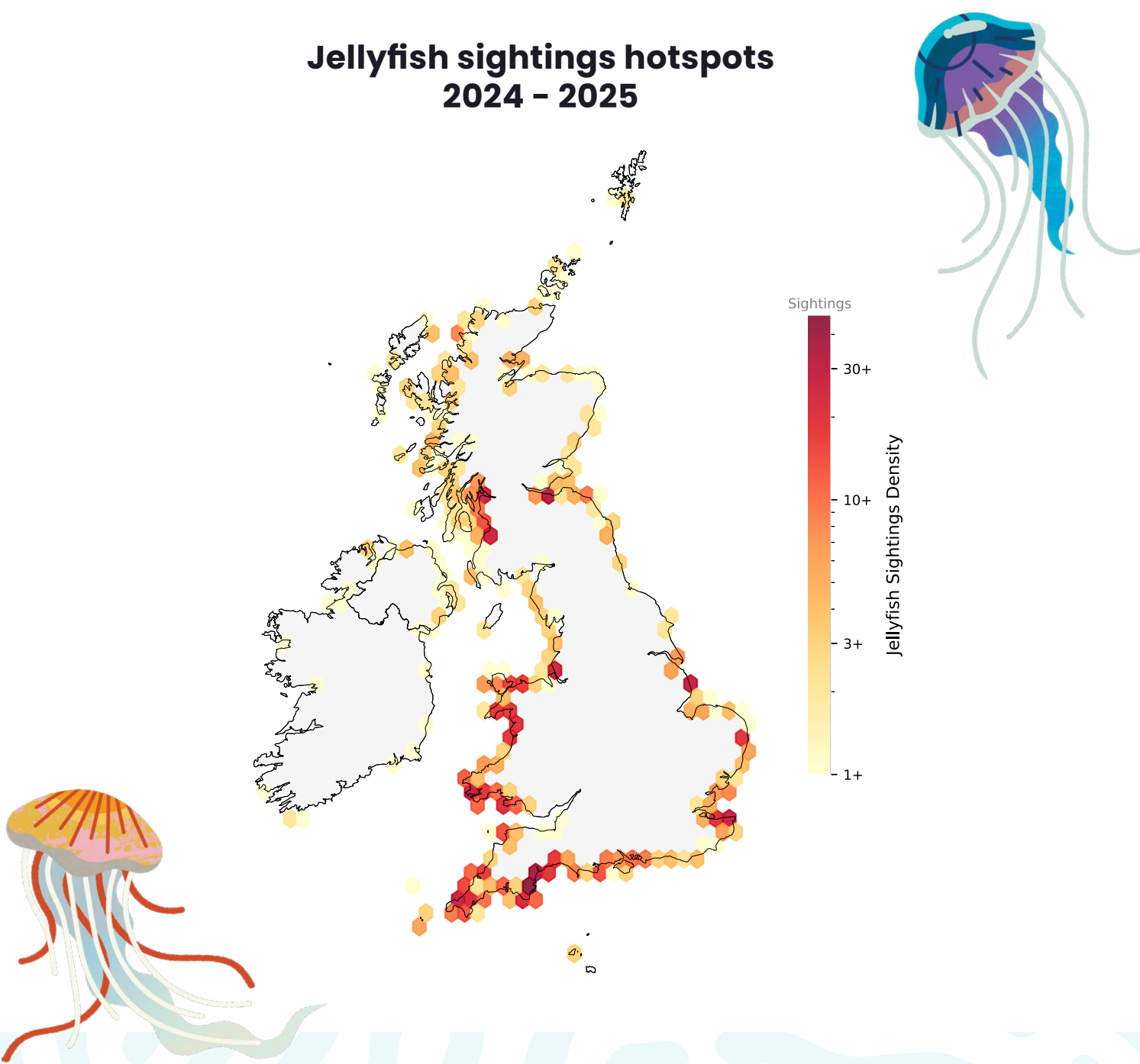


Where did you spot them?

We received the most reports of jellyfish in England, with more than half of all sightings occurring here. The top species spotted varied geographically, with barrel taking the number one spot in both Wales and Scotland, while moon ranked first in England.

Most lion’s mane sightings occurred in Scotland, where 68% of the species were reported. Meanwhile, mauve stingers were largely found on along the south-west coasts of England and Wales.

Jellyfish sightings hotspots 2024 – 2025



Other species

Crystal jellyfish were the most commonly spotted 'other' species
 © Shutterstock / Norma347



As well as the six jellyfish and two hydrozoan species we monitor, we also receive reports of 'other' species, such as crystal, comb, and cross jellies, and sea gooseberries. We're increasingly receiving reports of these species, which may indicate changes in our ocean.

This year, **there were fewer 'other' jellyfish sightings reported**, with a drop of almost 15% compared to last year. 116 were reported, **45% of which were crystal jellyfish** – this was the most spotted 'other' species last year, too.

We received more reports of comb jellies compared to last year, with 30 spotted (an 11% increase), accounting for 34% of 'other' sightings (18% last year).

These aren't actually jellyfish but ctenophora; they're bioluminescent, meaning they can scatter light and create rainbow effects.

16 sea gooseberries were recorded – **up almost 30% from last year**. These comb cnidarians have the appearance of gooseberries and are phosphorescent, meaning they can glow in the dark.

Reports of **cross jellies slightly increased** compared to last year (11%), but these were the least spotted 'other' species. 12 were recorded, with most seen in May, August and September.

Crystal jelly

© Shutterstock / Martin Prochazkacz



Comb jelly

© Pêter Bardsley



Sea gooseberry

© Shutterstock / Ross Mahon



Cross jelly

© Shutterstock / Annie Leblanc



Turtles

Leatherback turtle
 © Shutterstock / ACégan



This year, we received **12 reports of marine turtle sightings** – an increase of three compared to last year. Nine of these were leatherbacks, with one loggerhead spotted in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland, and two unidentified also reported. The majority were spotted in the UK's south-west, and **all but one were spotted in the sea**, with only one stranded turtle (a leatherback) reported.

These were mostly spotted in Summer, which is when leatherbacks head to our waters to feed on jellyfish – although three were also reported in Autumn. They're the largest marine turtle species, and the only one with a soft leathery shell instead of a hard one.

Unlike last year, **we received no reports in Winter** – this is good news as these sightings tend to be juvenile hard-shelled marine turtles that get carried here by strong winds and currents. They're not suited to the UK and Ireland's cold waters, and we work with other organisations to help rehabilitate stranded hard-shelled turtles where possible.

Your turtle sightings will be added together with other organisations' reports and shared in the British & Irish Marine Turtle Strandings & Sightings Annual Report in Spring 2026.

Turtle sightings 2024 – 2025

- Leatherback
- Loggerhead
- Unidentified





Barrel jellyfish

Submitted by Alexandria Gregory



Moon jellyfish

Submitted by Catherine Gemmel



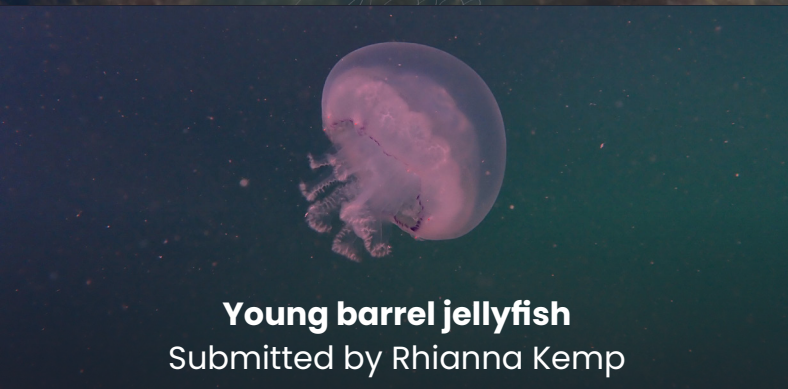
Compass jellyfish

Submitted by Maria Munn



Crystal jellyfish

Submitted by Pauline Norman



Young barrel jellyfish

Submitted by Rhianna Kemp



Portuguese man o' war

Submitted by Veronica Jones

A huge **thank you** to everyone who reported their sightings of jellyfish and marine turtles around the UK and Ireland. You joined hundreds of other people in reporting wildlife and contributing valuable data to help us better understand our ocean.

Your sightings enable us to track how and when jellyfish and turtles use our waters. We monitor these trends which can indicate changes happening in our seas. This helps us prove that our ocean is facing problems and push for solutions that are backed by science.

This is a key part of our work and by reporting your sightings, you're playing a vital role in protecting our seas. We'll be continuing to collect and analyse your reports of jellyfish and marine turtles, so please report any you see to us here:

mcsuk.org/sightings and send us your photos for the chance to be featured in our Your Ocean members' magazine!

The kind support of your Membership enables us to continue this work.

[Sign up here](#) to join a community of ocean enthusiasts and receive access to some members-only exclusives.



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