



MarLIN

Marine Information Network

Information on the species and habitats around the coasts and sea of the British Isles

Sole (*Solea solea*)

MarLIN – Marine Life Information Network
Marine Evidence-based Sensitivity Assessment (MarESA) Review

Al Reeve

2007-02-01

A report from:

The Marine Life Information Network, Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom.

Please note. This MarESA report is a dated version of the online review. Please refer to the website for the most up-to-date version [<https://www.marlin.ac.uk/species/detail/2136>]. All terms and the MarESA methodology are outlined on the website (<https://www.marlin.ac.uk>)

This review can be cited as:

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Freshly caught specimen of *Solea solea*.
 Photographer: Andrew Marriott
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See online review for
 distribution map

Distribution data supplied by the Ocean
 Biogeographic Information System (OBIS). To
 interrogate UK data visit the NBN Atlas.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Researched by | Al Reeve | Refereed by | Admin |
| Authority | (Linnaeus, 1758) | | |
| Other common names | Dover sole, common sole, black sole | Synonyms | <i>Solea vulgaris</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) |

Summary

🔍 Description

Solea solea is a strongly compressed flatfish with eyes and snout on the right hand side. It is oval in shape with a rounded head and can grow up to 70 cm in length but is more commonly between 30-40 cm. Depending on the substratum the colour of the sole can vary between grey, reddish brown and grey-brown with dark blotches. The sole has two well developed pectoral fins, and the dorsal and anal fins connect to the base of the tail. The anal and dorsal fins have a narrow white margin and the upper pectoral fin has a distinct dark spot at the free end. There is also a series of fine stubble-like filaments around the head.

📍 Recorded distribution in Britain and Ireland

Solea solea is found off the coast all around Britain and Ireland.

📍 Global distribution

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🏠 Habitat

Solea solea is usually found on sandy and muddy seabeds and also in estuarine habitats. The sole is present from depths of 1 to around 70 m, except in winter when it moves offshore and can be

found down to depths of around 120 m.

↓ Depth range

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Q Identifying features

- Oval shaped flatfish with eyes on the right hand side.
- Both pectoral fins well developed and the upper one has a black spot near its margin.
- The dorsal and anal fins are connected to the base of the tail by a distinct membrane.
- Rounded head with snout positioned to the right of the eyes.
- Colour varies with substratum and can be grey, reddish-brown to blotchy brown.
- Grows to a maximum length of 70 cm, commonly sized 30-40 cm.

🏛️ Additional information

The sole is similar to the solenette (*Buglossidium luteum*) however the solenette is much smaller, growing to a maximum of 13 cm, and has a less developed upper pectoral fin. *Solea solea* is also known as common or Dover sole and is an important food fish.

The sole is included in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan for commercial marine fish. It is, however, vulnerable to over exploitation and populations may be declining.

✓ Listed by



🔗 Further information sources

Search on:



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Datasets

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