

# What did you find?

June 2024 - Sept 2024



## Thank you for your support

In June 2024, in partnership with the local community, we launched a number of activities to collect important information to inform our oyster restoration activities. We counted shells to help identify historical oyster beds, looked at beach types to identify suitable restoration sites and checked in on the deployed oysters. A huge THANK YOU to everyone who attended an event, joined us on a beach or submitted a survey.

Together, over **230** members of the local community joined us at citizen science training events.

**402**  
people...

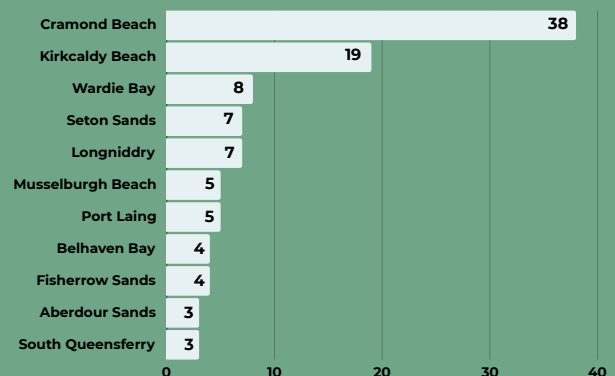


...conducted  
**130**  
surveys

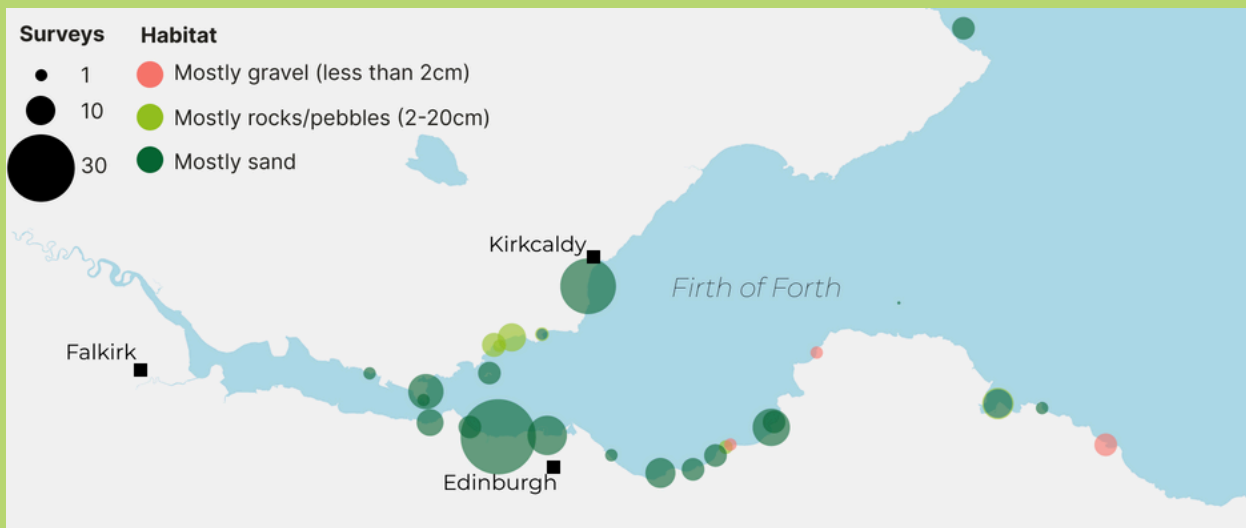


## Where did you survey?

Surveys were conducted on 31 beaches around the Firth of Firth. Top 10 beaches surveyed:



## Map of survey locations



## Oyster Observer Guide

Finding European flat oyster shells on beaches can indicate where historical oyster beds once thrived and could identify suitable habitats for restoration efforts.

A huge **3910** shells were counted. 73% of those (2845 shells) were identified as European flat oysters, the species we're restoring to the Firth of Forth. The project team are now investigating what the shell locations tell us about historical oyster sites.

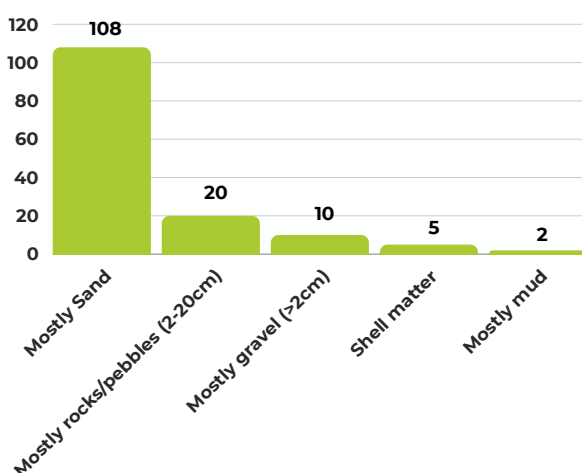
Shell fish species can be really difficult to tell apart, especially with older, worn shells. Based on your feedback, we're also working to improve our ID guides to support volunteers to identify them.



## Habitat Assessments

Oysters prefer to settle on other shell material or gravel sea beds. Surveying beaches around the Firth and Forth can help identify areas with suitable sea bed types which might sustain oysters.

**15** beaches which might offer suitable habitat types were identified.



## Monitoring oysters

We deployed oysters at two sites close to shore. Volunteers monitored the oysters and recorded a summer survival rate of **85%**



## What happens to the data?

Project partner, Heriot-Watt University, has been conducting in depth modelling of the Firth of Forth. They have been using different parameters like water temperature, seabed type, depth, currents and boat activity to map the most suitable sites to restore and sustain oysters. The data collected by the community can be added to the models and help build the map of suitable sites. This helps to make decisions on the best sites to return European flat oysters.