

[News story: Public reminded of the rules around seahorses](#)

The Government is reminding people of the conservation rules protecting seahorses following [reports of a pair being discovered](#) at Babbacombe, Devon.

Both seahorse species found in UK waters – long snouted (hippocampus guttulatus) and short snouted (hippocampus hippocampus) – are protected under the [Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981](#) and all species of seahorse are protected under the Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES.)

If you want to carry out an activity that would disturb a seahorse, or other [UK or European protected species](#), you must have a marine wildlife licence, [administered in England by the Marine Management Organisation](#). Such activities could include taking photographs, filming or surveys.

Intentionally disturbing seahorses without appropriate permission could lead to enforcement action. The MMO will consider applications for licences for scientific or education purposes on a case-by-case basis.

Where divers may incidentally encounter seahorses the MMO recommends the following guidelines are followed:

- [Divers' protocol from Dorset Wildlife Trust](#)
- [Divers' protocol from the Seahorse Trust](#)
- [Wildlife Safe \(WiSe\) scheme guidelines](#) for taking part in research or filming

Details of wildlife licences and applications are published online [on the marine licensing public register](#).