

Coastal Waters: Gail Ross

Hello, my name is Gail Ross. I am a former Member of the Scottish Parliament for Caithness, Sutherland and Ross, and I was also the Nature Champion for Seagrass.

Seagrasses are flowering plants found in shallow waters all around the coasts of Scotland - from the great firths of the east to the sea lochs, islands, sounds and voes of the north and west.

Seagrasses are a key feature of Scotland's coastal waters, and they form dense 'meadows', which provide shelter for a variety of marine wildlife, including rare species such as stalked jellyfish. They also act as nursery grounds for commercially important fish and play a significant role in stabilising the seafloor with their roots.

Scotland's coastal waters contain many different types of marine habitats, including seagrass meadows, rocky reefs, sea lochs, kelp forests, and flame shell beds, among others. These habitats offer shelter, feeding and breeding grounds, and attachment surfaces for a wide array of organisms. They also contribute to oxygen production and nutrient cycling, while some habitats can help to protect our shores against coastal erosion.

Protecting and conserving Scotland's coastal waters and their diverse habitats is essential for maintaining the biodiversity and integrity of these vibrant marine ecosystems.