



**Hampshire &  
Isle of Wight**  
Wildlife Trust

**Boskalis**  
Westminster

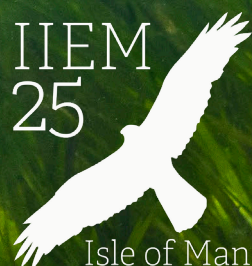


CHARLOTTE CORNELIUS



# Seagrass Restoration in the Solent a Journey towards a **WILDER** Seascape.

**17<sup>th</sup> September 2025**



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*Senior Specialist – Marine Conservation*  
**Ellie Parker**  
*Marine Officer – Seagrass Restoration*





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# Spectacular Seagrass

- Only marine flowering plants
- Found in shallow, sheltered coastal areas
- One of the most productive ecosystems in the world
- Biodiversity, coastal protection, fisheries support, blue carbon and wellbeing!
- Over 70 species of seagrass worldwide – three of which can be found in the Solent: *Zostera marina* and *Nanozostera noltei*, *Ruppia spp.*



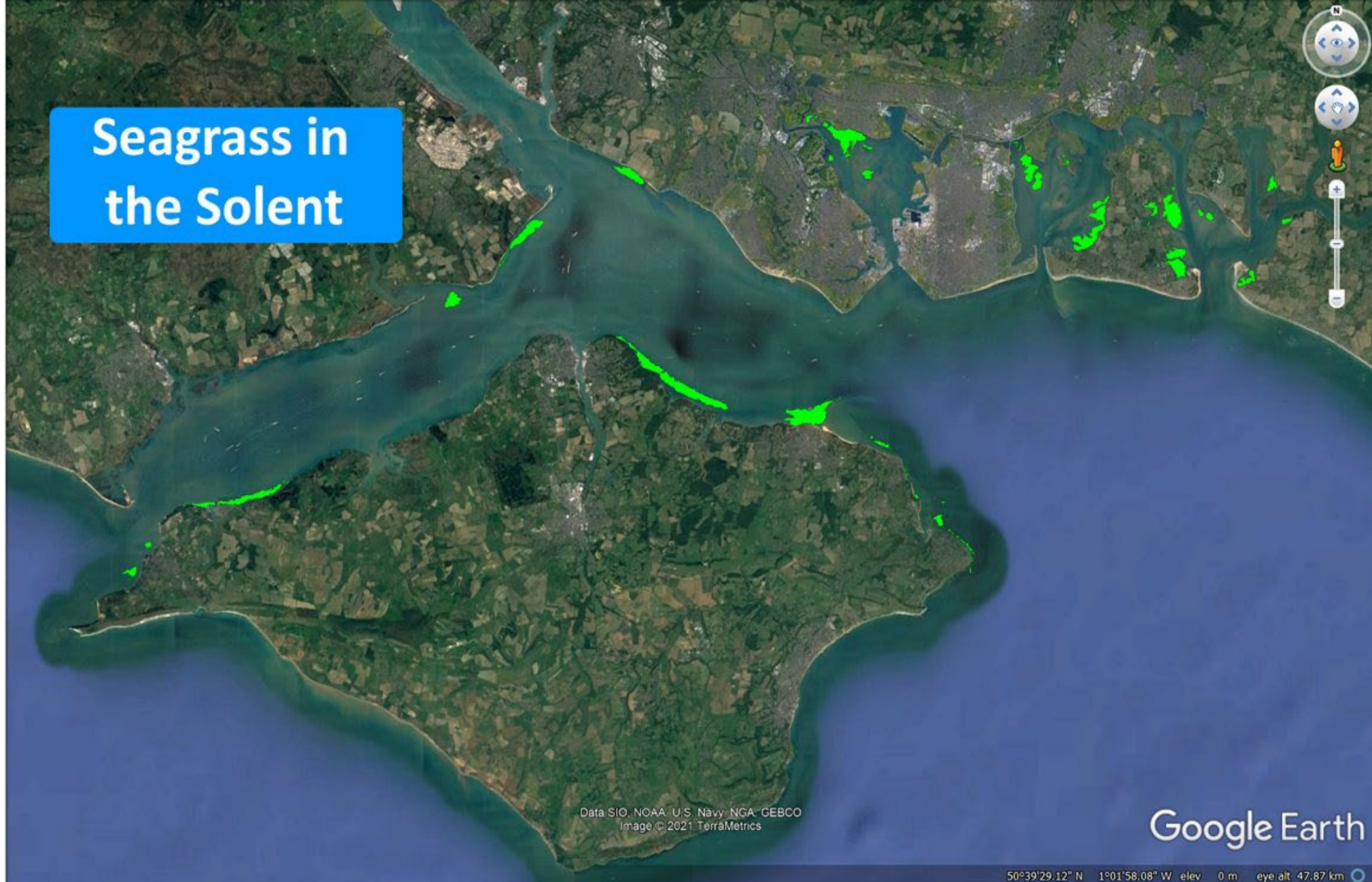
© Tim Ferrero





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## Seagrass in the Solent



Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO  
Image © 2021 TerraMetrics

Google Earth

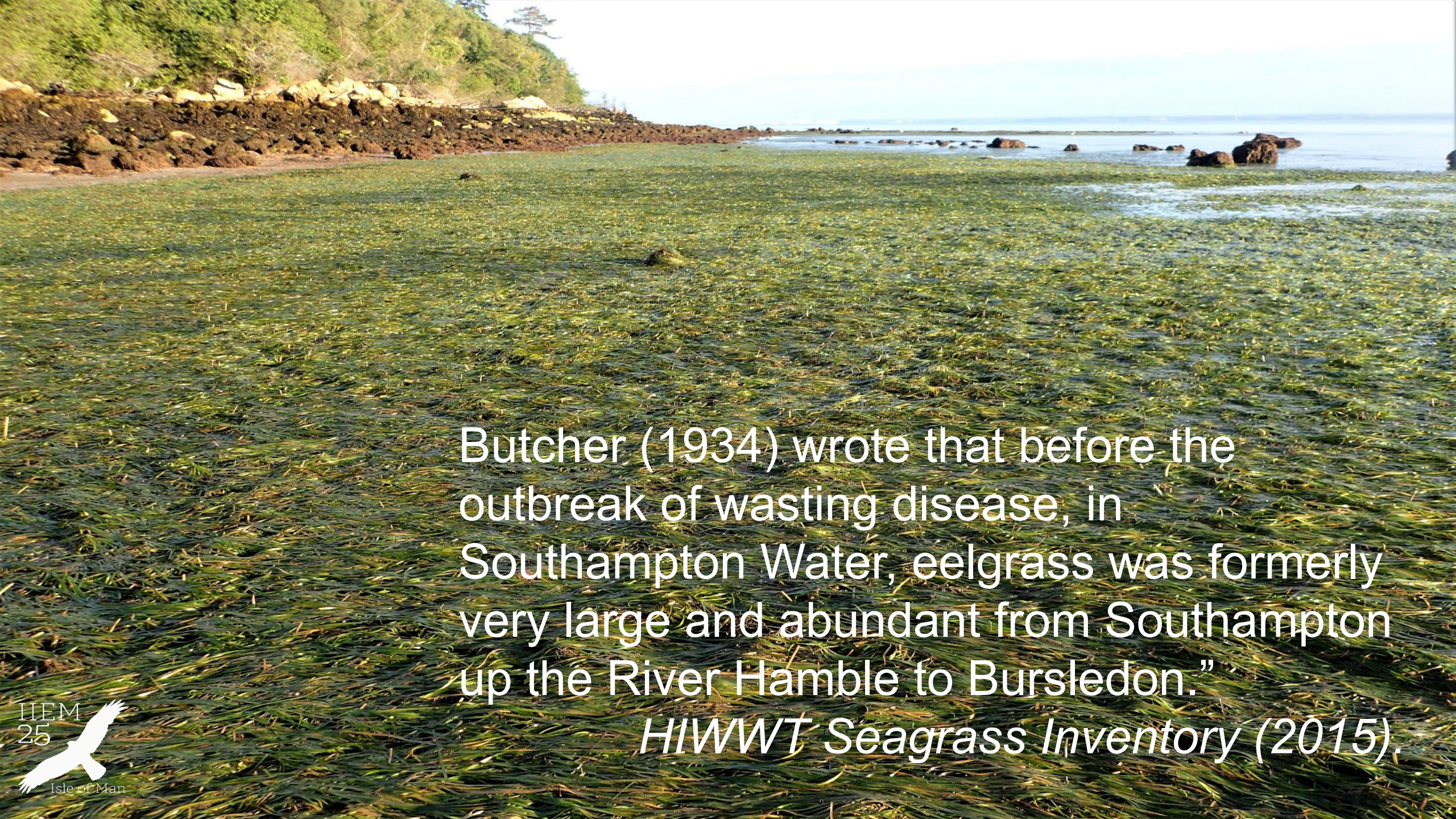
50°39'29.12" N 1°01'58.08" W elev 0 m eye alt 47.87 km

[hiwwt.org.uk](http://hiwwt.org.uk)



For a wilder Hampshire & Isle of Wight





Butcher (1934) wrote that before the outbreak of wasting disease, in Southampton Water, eelgrass was formerly very large and abundant from Southampton up the River Hamble to Bursledon.”  
*HIWWT Seagrass Inventory (2015).*







# Seeds of Hope...



# **Seeds of Hope...**

- **Protect what we have...**
- **Restore what we've lost...**





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# Osborne Bay

## Voluntary No Anchor Zone (VNAZ)

- Installed 2024
- First year of monitoring completed



IIEM  
25



Isle of Man



# Seeds of Hope...

- **Protect what we have**

Legislation: **Progress**

Behaviour Change: **In Progress**

- **Restore what we've lost**

Natural Recruitment: **Possible with the right conditions**

Assisted Restoration: **Potential to speed things up**





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# Solent Seagrass Restoration Project

## Locations

- Farlington – Seed Collection & Restoration  
(*N. noltei* / *Z. marina*)
- Langstone E. - Restoration
- Chilling – Seed Collection  
(*N. noltei*)
- Seaview – Seed Collection & Restoration  
(*Z. marina*)







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# ELSP Solent Seascape Project

## Locations

- Calshot – Seed Collection & Restoration (*Z. marina*)
- Chilling – Seed Collection & Restoration (*N. noltei*)
- Hamble – Restoration (Intertidal *Zostera*, initially)



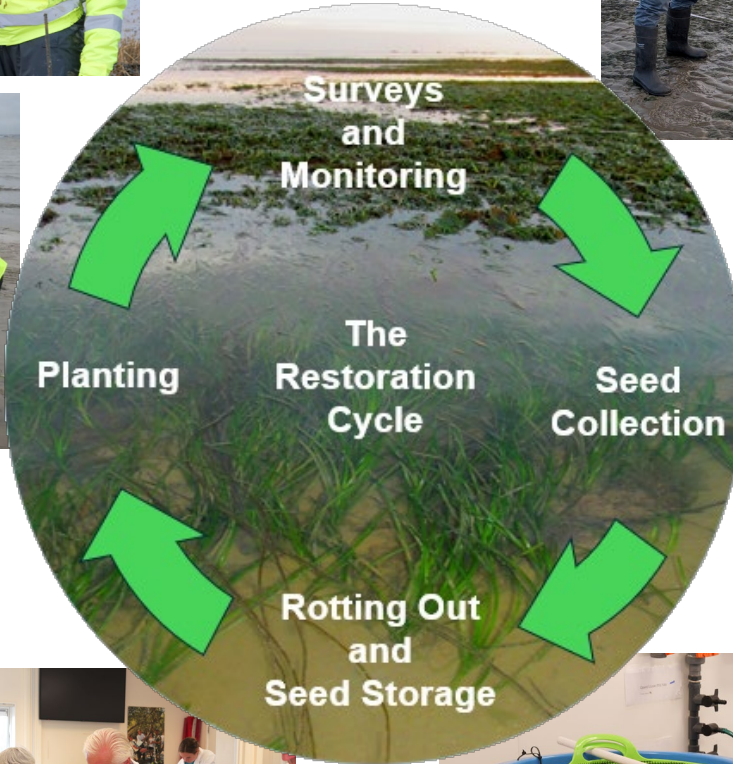




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# We couldn't do this without our volunteers!

- Launched the **Solent Seagrass Champion** volunteer role in January 2022
- Fastest growing volunteer programme at the Trust
- We now have over 270 Solent Seagrass Champion volunteers signed up from the two counties and afar
- 600+ hours on seed collection this summer alone!







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# Deployments

## Seaview, IoW:

Four plantings in in 2022, 2024 and 2025  
78,000 *Z. marina* seed in total

## Langstone Harbour (Farlington):

Five plantings in 2021, 2022, 2023, 2025 and 2025  
39,200 Intertidal *Zostera* seed



## Calshot:

Two plantings in 2024 & 2025 - 20,000 *Z. marina*  
50,000 *Z. marina* seed in total

- Seed “Pod” and “Ravioli” bag
- Three seed densities 15, 30 and 45/pod
- Dispenser Injection Seeding
- Different seed densities and planting patterns



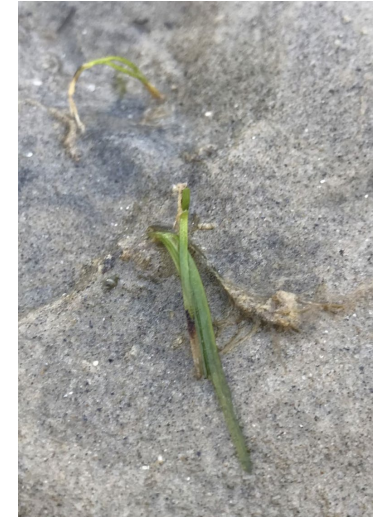




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## How are we doing?

- We have grown plenty of seedlings
- More monitoring for continued growth
- Work to do to increase germination success in the field
- Ongoing issues with water quality and algal growth
- Drive to continuously improve our seed handling and “husbandry”















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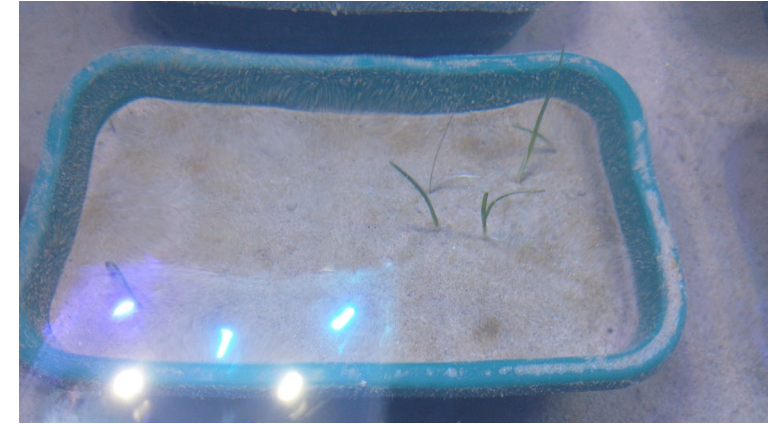
## Germination trials

- Uresha Rodrigo started trials to uncover crucial insights into the factors influencing successful seagrass establishment
- Investigated controlled aquarium conditions vs natural outdoor settings and seed colouration
- Controlled variables including sediment type and light regimes

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Westminster



UNIVERSITY OF  
PORTSMOUTH







3 May · 🌐



On 10 April, 2,000 seagrass seeds were planted directly into the seabed by ... [See more](#)



Ali Scuba + 781

21 comments 40 shares



Like



Comment



Send



Share





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# Hamble Planting 2025

## First seagrass on the Hamble in nearly 100 years!

**[Embargoed until 23<sup>rd</sup>  
September]**







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## Plans for 2025/6 onwards...

- Continue training for Seagrass Survey Leaders
- Seagrass-Watch Surveys ongoing 2025
- Upscaling deployments in Spring 2026
- Further planting on the Hamble
- Seed collection in Summer 2026
- Explore opportunities to research historic seagrass extent in the Solent







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# **Thank you!**

# **Any questions?**

**@psammonaut**

**<https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/seagrass-restoration>**

**hiwwt.org.uk**



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