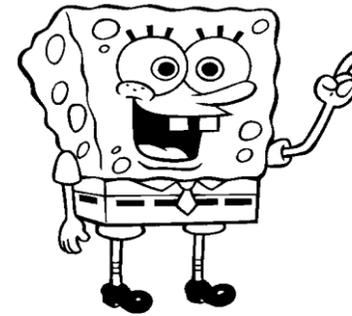


Have you seen a strange creature growing on a boat or on rocks?

It could be a freshwater sponge!

Sponges are covered in tiny holes and can be white, grey, or green. They also vary in size; generally they are a few centimetres across, but in the summer they can grow up to 1 metre across - hard to miss!

Look for: this growing on boats or this in water



NOT this.....

My request is that if you see any sponges, could you please send me some?

Sponge collection is very simple. I just need small (the size of a 1p piece) portions of the sponge. Don't worry about destroying the sponge; anything left behind will regenerate from even a small fragment. Just place the sponge in a clean, small container (an old bottle will work) with water (or actually a small amount of vodka is even better) and seal it. Then post it to me, or contact me. Alternatively, I can send you a "sponge sampling kit".

If it is possible to have a grid-reference, or latitude and longitude, that would be great. It goes without saying, but please don't put yourself at risk while collecting sponges and wash your hands afterwards.

THANK YOU! Karen Evans. Institute of Integrative Biology, University of Liverpool, Biosciences Building, Crown Street, Liverpool, L69 7ZB. UK.

kevans@liv.ac.uk