



When did you first hear about the Newquay Marine Group?

I've lived in Cornwall all my life so I when I heard about the group it was probably just after they first began. At the time, I was an aquarist at the blue reef aquarium and we got invited to an event (probably the fish festival) so I became involved that way. I started joining their meetings, then became a member around 2013, and started helping them with the rock pool side of things.

What do you love to do with the Newquay Marine Group?

For me it's all about the rock pooling, I love going out and collecting information that is valuable to us because it's important to know what's there and what's changing. But also interacting with the people, is a great thing. We've had people of all sorts of ages and backgrounds come join us and I think is the most rewarding thing about the group is telling people about what's there that they didn't know about before because it really opens your eyes to a new world.

What's your favourite species?

When I'm rock pooling, I look for a Painted Topshell, they're a climate change indicator so if you find them it's not the best news as they're supposed to be more in the south, but they're beautiful when you find them and they're easy to identify. My second favourite for rock pools is a Bootlace Worm, I've not seen very many of them, they're incredibly long and they're pretty awesome when you see them.

What do you do outside of the Newquay Marine Group?

For my day job, I'm lecturer in animal science over at Cornwall collage in Newquay. I also teach at Falmouth Marine school about the animal husbandry side of things as well as basic science. When I'm not teaching, it's the allotment for me.

Has Newquay marine group helped you with your work or work with your students?

Yes, I'd say it has – a lot of the students get involved naturally with the group so they work quite well together. It's given them opportunity, work experience, and pride in doing their bit for the community. Me personally, it definitely enhances skills like presentation skills because I was never really the most confident with crowds, but when you're stood at the harbour interacting with the general public, it's a very different thing from being a teacher. It gives you very different set of skills to ones that I would utilise here or would have utilised in the past.

Has Newquay Marine group helped with work at the aquarium?

I think so yes, the aquarium and Newquay Marine Group do work along side each other because the aquarium presents species of animals that the Newquay Marine Group finds or is looking for.

What would you say to someone wanting to get involved with the group or in the marine industry?

For the Newquay Marine Group, the major thing is to enjoy it because it shouldn't feel like a chore. People get involved because they want to, but the key thing is that you'll get plenty from it. For me, I wanted to do my bit, despite not being on the committee with the group as I live far away, I've always kept with them because I think what they do is a great thing and I want to be part of that great thing. All you need is one person, and they can change something and I think that's the whole purpose of it. If you're thinking about working in marine-based jobs, getting that work experience and getting your name out there really helps. You've got to be motivated – give it a go!