

Plaice

Pleuronectes platessa

Fish · Here all year · spawns in late winter



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A right-eyed flatfish with a smooth brown upper surface scattered with distinct bright orange-red spots, a pearly-white underside and a line of small bony knobs running behind the eyes. Plaice are found over sand and mud in the Solway and shallow inshore waters, and are among the most easily identified of our flatfish thanks to that spotting.

BEHAVIOUR

Plaice lie half-buried by day, flicking sand over themselves with a ripple of the fins, and feed on worms, thin-shelled bivalves and brittlestars, often nipping off the siphons of buried shellfish. They can change the intensity of their mottling to match the seabed. Spawning is offshore in late winter and early spring, and the drifting eggs and larvae later settle into shallow inshore nursery grounds.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Righteye flounders (Pleuronectidae)
SIZE	Commonly 25-40 cm
UK STATUS	Native; a commercially fished species with minimum landing sizes

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