



# jellyfish ID Guide

While some jellyfish are harmless or have a very mild sting, others have a painful and even dangerous sting. **MCS would therefore recommend that, for your own safety, you do not touch jellyfish.**



## **Aurelia aurita**

Up to 40cm in diameter. Transparent, umbrella-shaped bell edged with short hair-like tentacles. Recognised by the four distinct pale purple gonad rings in the bell. Manubrium (mouth and arms, underside and centre of bell) bears 4 short, frilled arms. Mild sting.



## **Chrysaora hysoscella**

### **This jellyfish stings.**

Typically up to 30cm. Colour variable, but usually has pale umbrella-shaped bell with diagnostic brownish V-shaped markings, 32 marginal lobes and 24 long, thin tentacles, four long, thick, frilled arms hang from the manubrium.



## **Cyanea capillata**

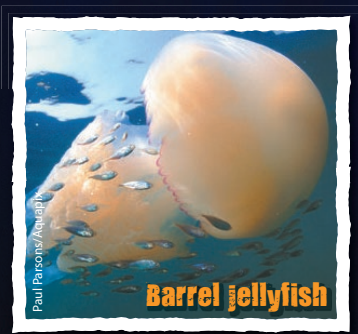
### **This jellyfish stings.**

Large, usually 50cm but can reach 2m in diameter. Large reddish brown, umbrella-shaped bell with a mass of long, thin hair-like tentacles as well as short, thick, frilled and folded arms.



## **Cyanea lamarckii**

Up to 30cm, similar shape to C. capillata but smaller with a blue bell through which radial lines can be seen. Mild sting.



## **Rhizostoma octopus**

Up to 1m in diameter. Robust with a spherical, solid rubbery bell, which can be white or pale pink, blue or yellow and fringed with purple markings. The bell lacks tentacles but eight thick, frilled arms hang from the manubrium. Mild sting.



## **Pelagia noctiluca**

### **This jellyfish stings.**

Up to 10cm. Has a deep bell with pink or mauve warts, 16 marginal lobes and eight marginal, hair-like tentacles. Manubrium bears four longer frilled arms with tiny pink spots.



## **Velella velella**

Not a jellyfish but a floating, solitary hydranth. Up to 10cm long and blue-purple in colour. Upright sail and chitinous float are diagnostic, with a mass of small tentacles surrounding the mouth on the underside. Occurs in vast swarms.



## **Physalia physalis**

### **This animal stings.**

Not a jellyfish, but a floating colony of hydrozoans. The oval-shaped, transparent float with crest is characteristic. Blue-purple in colour, with many hanging 'fishing polyps' below that may be tens of metres long. Extremely dangerous to humans due to their powerful sting. Rare in the UK but if found in numbers should be reported to the local authorities.

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