# Appendix 7: Consideration of "species sensitivity" data

### Information originating in data supplied by Natural England

One set of data examined to assess species sensitivity originated from an upload by Natural England to the Huddle system (Charlie Moffat, 6 March 2017), in a spreadsheet titled "Copy of Indication of sensitivity of EA grab stations in the Wash 2011". This spreadsheet contained the following worksheets (Table 1):

*Table 1* Worksheets within document uploaded by NE on 6 March 2011 titled "Copy of Indication of sensitivity of EA grab stations in the Wash 2011"

Worksheet	Description
Stations	A list of station numbers, with associated latitudes and longitudes, and
and	sediment types. Identifies "number of 'sensitive' species present at
sensitive	station", "number of species at relatively high abundance" and
species	"number of taxa present", but does not identify sensitivity of any named
	species (there are no species named on this worksheet). No date or
	year given for sample data.
2011 EA	A list of station names, with numbers of named taxa present at each
Grab	station. Sensitivity for the taxa described in some instances, however
survey,	no references as to where this sensitivity data originated were listed.
The Wash	No precise date for sampling (2011 only, presumed from title).
Abundance	A list of station names, with numbers of individuals for each taxa
at each	(described in very broad terms e.g. "sponges", "hydroids", "worms")
station	from each station. No date or year given for sample data.
Presence	A list of station names, with numbers of individuals for each taxa
absence of	(described in precise terms – species, or genus, names in general)
sensitive	from each station. No date or year given for sample data. Data only
sp	given as presence (indicated by 1) or absence (indicated by blank
	cell). Calculates and sums the total number of species present at a
	station, and indicates those species "at relatively high abundance".
Catao	Seemingly no description as to how "high abundance" was calculated.
Cefas	A list of station names, with associated latitudes and longitudes. For
2014 opifouno	each station, EUNIS level 2 and broadscale habitat description,
epifauna	EUNIS Level 3 (for most), MNCR (Marine Nature Conservation
	Review) code and number of taxa recorded. Biota accorded one of 10
	"assemblages", and this was recorded for each station. No precise
	date for sampling (2014 only, presumed from title).

Further work was undertaken on data from worksheet "Presence absence of sensitive sp", to better understand the rationale behind the identification of species as "sensitive", and therefore be better able to examine our compiled dataset and extract relevant information.

Information on the intolerance, recoverability, sensitivity and confidence in the evidence, for the physical pressure *Abrasion* was obtained from the Marine Life Information Network (MarLIN) website displacement for as many species as possible.

The combined information on taxa considered "sensitive", as per the worksheet "Presence absence of sensitive sp", and the available information on sensitivity from the MarLIN system are presented as Table 2. This identified that of the 90 taxa listed in the worksheet, MarLIN information on sensitivity was available for 23 of these (Table 2; Figure 1). This indicated that, in general, the taxa for which there is MarLIN information available for exhibit low sensitivity/intolerance to the pressures examined.

From MarLIN						
		"Int" = Intermediate, "Mod" = Moderate, "NS" = Not Sensitive, "Tol" = Tolerant, "V" = Very				
Taxa as per worksheet "Presence absence of sensitive sp"	Abrasion Intolerance	Abrasion Sensitivity	Displacement Intolerance	Displacement sensitivity		
Abra alba	Int	Low	Int	V Low		
Aphelochaeta marioni	Int	Low	Tol	NS		
Aphrodita aculeata	Int	Low	Low	NS		
Arctica islandica <sup>(see Footnote 1)</sup>	High	High	NC	NC		
Asterias rubens	Int	Low	Low	NS		
Balanus crenatus	Int	Low	High	Mod		
Cerastoderma edule	Int	Low	Low	Low		
Echinocardium cordatum	High	Mod	Low	Low		
Flustra foliacea	Int	Low	High	Mod		
Lanice conchilega	Int	Low	Int	Low		
Macoma balthica (Taxon as per WoRMS taxon match - Limecola balthica)	Int	Low	Int	Low		
Molgula manhattensis	High	Low	High	Low		
Musculus discors	Int	Low	Low	V Low		
Mytilus edulis	Int	Low	Int	Low		
Nephtys hombergii	Int	Low	Tol	NS		
Nucula nitidosa	Int	Low	Low	Low		
Owenia fusiformis	Low	Low	High	Mod		
Polydora ciliata (agg)	Int	Low	Low	Low		
Psammechinus miliaris	Int	Low	Tol	NS		
Sabellaria spinulosa	Int	Low	High	Mod		
Spiophanes bombyx	Int	Low	Low	V Low		
Spisula solida	Int	Low	Int	Low		
Venerupis corrugata	Int	Low	Int	Low		

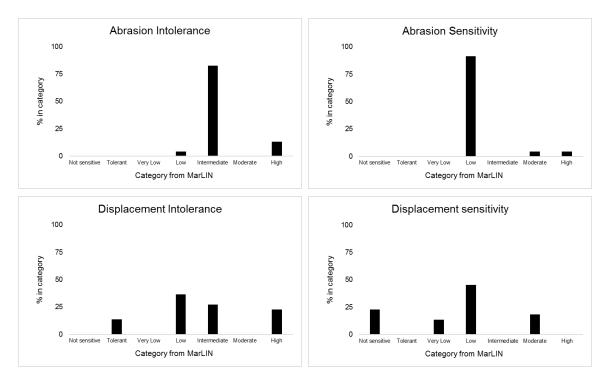
*Table 2.* Taxa as per worksheet "Presence absence of sensitive sp" with associate sensitivity information from MarLIN system

#### Footnotes

1: *Arctica islandica* – no data available on sensitivity etc. in MarLIN system; this information taken from MarESA system. (<u>http://www.marlin.ac.uk/species/detail/1519</u>) "NC" = No Content, no information available within MarESA system.

Alcyonidium diaphanum	Macrochaeta
Ampelisca diadema	Macropodia
Amphipholis squamate	Magelona johnstoni
Angulus fabula (Taxon as per WoRMS taxon match - Fabulina fabula)	Maja brachydactyla
Aricidea minuta	Minuspio cirrifera (Taxon as per WoRMS taxon match - Prionospio cirrifera)
Ascidiella aspersa	Myrianida
Balanidae	Nephtys cirrosa
Barentsia	Notomastus
Bugula	Nucula nucleus
Capitella	Nuculana minuta
, Caulleriella alata	Nuculidae
Caulleriella zetlandica (Taxon as per WoRMS taxon match - Chaetozone zetlandica)	Ophiura albida
Chaetozone christiei	Ophiura ophiura
Cirriformia	Ophiuridae
Cirriformia tentaculate	Pagurus bernhardus
Clymenura	Pedicellina
Crossaster papposus	Pholoe baltica (sensu Petersen)
Eucratea loricate	Pholoe inornata (sensu Petersen)
Eumida	Polycirrus
Eumida bahusiensis	Pomatoceros triqueter (Taxon as per WoRMS taxon Match - Spirobranchus triqueter)
Eumida sanguinea	Psamathe fusca
Glycera lapidum (agg)	Pseudocuma (Pseudocuma) longicorne
Golfingia elongate	Pseudomystides limbata
Grania	Scoloplos armiger
Halecium	Sertularia
Harmothoe extenuate	Sphaerosyllis taylori
Harmothoe impar (agg)	Spio martinensis
Hesionura elongate	Spirobranchus lamarcki
Hydrallmania falcata Hydrobia ulvae	Spisula Syllides
(Taxon as per WoRMS taxon match -	Symues
Kurtiella bidentate	Syllis armillaris
Laonice bahusiensis	Tellina fabula (Taxon as per WoRMS taxon Match - Fabulina fabula)
Lepidonotus squamatus	Thyone fusus
Loxosomella varians	Tubificoides benedii
	Tubificoides galiciensis

Tubificoides pseudogaster (agg)
Venerupis senegalensis (Taxon as per WoRMS taxon match - Venerupis corrugata)



*Figure 1.* Graphic representation of percentage of taxa in each category for which information is available in MarLIN system for Abrasion Intolerance and Sensitivity, and Displacement Intolerance and Sensitivity. Categories on X axis are (left:right): Not sensitive, tolerant, very low, low, intermediate, moderate and high.

For "sensitivity", 91% of the taxa were in the "low", "very low" or "not sensitive" category when considered against the pressure "abrasion", and 82% of taxa were in the "low", "very low" or "not sensitive" category when considered against the pressure of "displacement". For "intolerance", 4% of taxa were in the "low" category, 83% in the category "intermediate" when considered against the pressure "abrasion", and 50% of the taxa were in the "low" category "intermediate" when considered against the pressure "abrasion", and 50% of the taxa were in the "low" category, 27% in the category "intermediate" when considered against the pressure "displacement". See table 3 for summary of this.

To determine which species to examine further and to better understand trends in abundance and distribution of sensitive species, any species which returned in any of the categories sensitivity or intolerance to the pressure "abrasion"; or the categories sensitivity or intolerance to the pressure "displacement", a level of "intermediate" or higher sensitivity, was screened in for further examination.

This approach resulted in all 23 of the species for which MarLIN information is available being taken forward for further examination. This is considered a precautionary level of examination, as many of these species exhibit "low" sensitivity

to both abrasion and displacement. For these 23 species, the number of records, and total numbers of individuals, within the Eastern IFCA compiled dataset (generated as described below), are presented in Table 4.

	Abrasion Intolerance	Abrasion Sensitivity	Displacement Intolerance	Displacement sensitivity
Not sensitive	0	0	0	5
Tolerant	0	0	3	0
Very Low	0	0	0	3
Low	1	21	8	10
Intermediate	19	0	6	0
Moderate	0	1	0	4
High	3	1	5	0

*Table 3.* Summary of numbers of taxa showing various levels of Sensitivity and Intolerance to two pressures for taxa for which information is available in MarLIN system

# Explanation for the processing of data that originated in the Environment Agency data request

Data on benthic biota present in the Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC was collated from data requests to the Environment Agency (NR55938, 4 August 2017). The datasets were then compiled and put into a single format to create one large spreadsheet containing all data the Environment Agency provided to Eastern IFCA (this data included surveys by the Environment Agency, Natural England and contractors of the two organisations). The final dataset covered a period from 1973 to 2015, although not all years within this period were represented. The WoRMS Taxon Match Service (WoRMS, 2017) was used once the datasets had been compiled to correct for taxa that had been recorded using multiple synonyms, previous names, or with typographical errors in names (these corrections are detailed in Table 2 and 4). Data for each sample was normalised to an area of 0.1m<sup>2</sup>, the standard area of a day grab.

*Table 4.* "Sensitive species" from worksheet "Presence absence of sensitive sp", with number of individuals and number of records from Eastern IFCA compiled dataset

Species	Within Compi	Within Compiled Dataset		
	No. Individuals	No. Records		
Abra alba	26206	391		
Aphelochaeta marioni	725	63		
Aphrodita aculeata	36	25		
Arctica islandica	1	1		
Asterias rubens	51	27		
Balanus crenatus	2775	22		
Cerastoderma edule	7139	72		
Echinocardium cordatum	39	23		
Flustra foliacea	(Footnote 1)	94		
Lanice conchilega	28746	334		
Macoma balthica (Taxon as per WoRMS taxon match - Limecola balthica)	24900	159		
Molgula manhattensis	657	30		
Musculus discors	1	1		
Mytilus edulis	5244	263		
Nephtys hombergii	18818	534		
Nucula nitidosa	181	19		
<i>Nucula nucleus</i> (This species is listed as a distinct species within the Eastern IFCA compiled dataset. It is not identified within the data from worksheet "Presence absence of sensitive sp", but is included here, as it is well represented in the Compiled Dataset)	3786	119		
Owenia fusiformis	74	20		
Polydora ciliata (agg)	648	42		
<i>Polydora</i> (This is listed as a distinct taxon within the Eastern IFCA compiled dataset. It is not identified within the data from worksheet "Presence absence of sensitive sp", but is included here, as it is well represented in the Compiled Dataset)	3144	58		
Psammechinus miliaris	13	9		
Sabellaria spinulosa	39549	180		
Spiophanes bombyx	31557	493		
Spisula solida	36	10		
Venerupis corrugata	56	13		
Footnotes –	•	•		

1. A colonial animal, only recorded as "present" within any sample rather than being counted.

#### Information originating within Catchpole et al. (2008)

An additional list of species was determined from the list of bycatch species as per Catchpole *et al.* (2008), identifying several epibenthic species (Table 5). The number of records, and total numbers of individuals, within Eastern IFCA's compiled dataset is also presented, as an indication of which species are sufficiently well represented in the dataset to support further examination.

Although the specific species *Ophiothrix fragilis* was not well represented in the compiled dataset, 'brittle stars' in general were. Examination of variations in Brittle star<sup>1</sup> abundance over time when examined by depth range and EUNIS code were conducted and graphed (Appendix 8j).

The only other species for which there may potentially be sufficient records within the compiled dataset to allow meaningful analysis were *Carcinus maenas* and *Asterias rubens*. However, examination of the dataset revealed that for these species, there were no cases were more than three animals were recorded per sample, with the vast majority being one or two individuals. Therefore, there will be no indication of trend of abundance, and examination would only show when the grab samples randomly encountered these patchily distributed animals. Accordingly, no further examination of these species was conducted.

Specie	Turne	Within compiled dataset			
Species	Туре	No. Individuals	No. Records		
Carcinus maenas	Shore crab	Epibenthic	63	37	
Liocarcinus spp.	Swimming crab	Epibenthic	3	2	
Asterias rubens	Starfish	Epibenthic	51	27	
Ophiothrix fragilis	Brittlestar	Epibenthic	2	2	
N.B. Although the number			hin the compiled	dataset is low,	
for generic "brittlestars" the	ere are numerous re	cords			
Macropodia spp.	Tiny spider crab	Epibenthic	16	13	
Pomotoschistus minutus	Sand goby	Fish			
Pleuronectes platessa	Plaice	Fish			
Merlangius merlangus	Whiting	Fish			
Clupea harengus	Herring	Fish			
Limanda limanda	Dab	Fish			
Sprattus sprattus	Sprat	Fish			
Agonus cataphractus	Pogge	Fish			
Osmerus eperlanus	Smelt	Fish			
Gadus morhua	Cod	Fish			
Syngnathidae Pipefish		Fish			
Platichthys flesus Flounder		Fish			
Pegusa lascaris Sand sole		Fish			
Liparis liparis	Sea-snail	Fish			
Taurulus spp.	Scorpion fish	Fish			

*Table 5.* Bycatch species recorded from a study in The Wash (Catchpole *et al.*, 2008), with numbers of individuals, and records, within Eastern IFCA compiled dataset.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Abundance in spreadsheet listed for *Ophiothrix fragilis, Ophiura, Ophiura albida, Ophiura ophiura, Ophiuridae* and *Ophiuroidea* were included in this assessment.

Dicentrarchus labrax	Bass	Fish	
Echiichthys vipera	Lesser weaver	Fish	
Solea solea	Sole	Fish	
	5 bearded		
Ciliata mustela	rockling	Fish	
Raja clavata	Thornback ray	Fish	
Lycodes esmarkii	Eelpout	Fish	
		Free	
Sepiola atlantica	Little cuttlefish	swimming	

### Information originating within the MarLIN 'BIOTIC' system

The taxa list in the dataset compiled by Eastern IFCA was submitted to the MarLIN Biological Traits Information Catalogue (BIOTIC) (MarLIN, 2006). BIOTIC generated information on the biological traits of taxa within the list that it held sufficient information on. This information was then used, following a method outlined by de Juan and Demestre (2012), to investigate the possible sensitivity of species found in The WNNC SAC to beam trawling. De Juan and Demestre (2012) evaluated the adequacy of using an indicator of trawl disturbance based on position, feeding, motility, size and other attributes. The paper proposed the trawl disturbance index, which uses the biological traits mentioned, as a tool for fisheries managers to assess ecosystem health. While the data available from BIOTIC was not sufficient to follow the exact method used in the paper, as traits differed slightly (Table 6), it was used to scope out species that were not sensitive by removing those associated with "Score 0" traits (species known to be burrowers, scavengers, highly mobile, small (≤2cm), and/or robust).

*Table 6.* Traits provided by BIOTIC that best match those used in de Juan and Demestre (2012) to investigate the sensitivity of species to trawl disturbance

Trait identified by de Juan and Demestre (2012)	Associated BIOTIC Trait Used
Position	Habit
Motility	Mobility
Feeding	Feeding method
Size	Size
Other attributes	Fragility

The species remaining after those with "Score 0" traits were scoped out, and those with insufficient data to investigate sensitivity were removed, are listed in Table 7. The number of records, and total numbers of individuals, within the Eastern IFCA "compiled dataset" is also presented in Table 7, as an indication of which species are sufficiently well represented in the dataset to support further examination.

Following these methods the species identified as sensitive and taken for further examination are detailed in Table 8.

BioticID	Species	Size	Fragility Habit	Feeding Method	Mobility	Within Compiled Dataset		
BIOLICID	Species	5120	Traginty	Παριτ	r eeunig wethou	WODINTy	No. Individuals	No. Records
4109	Sabellaria spinulosa	S-M	Intermediate	Tubiculous	3,2	10	39549	180
4129	Cancer pagurus	M-L	Intermediate	Free living	22	5	7	6
4237	Amphiura filiformis	М	Fragile	Free living	3,2,4,5	5,6	3	3
4250	Mytilus edulis	М	Intermediate	Attached	3,2	8,10	5244	263
4286	Carcinus maenas	S-M	Fragile	Free living	8	5	63	37
4302	Modiolus modiolus	М	Intermediate	Attached	3,2	8,10	58	3
4330	Conopeum reticulum	S-M	Fragile	Attached	2	10	(Footnote 1)	85
4340	Flustra foliacea	М	Fragile	Attached	3,2	10	(Footnote 1)	94
4403	Electra pilosa	S-M	Fragile	Attached	2	10	(Footnote 1)	87
4406	Spio filicornis	S-M	Fragile	Tubiculous	4,5	6	2	2
4410	Owenia fusiformis	S-M	Fragile	Tubiculous	3,2,4,5	6	74	20
4538	Obelia longissimi	M-L	Fragile	Attached	3	10	(Footnote 1)	5
5989	Alcyonidium diaphanum	M-L	Intermediate	Attached	2	10	(Footnote 1)	18
5999	Bathyporeia elegans	S-M	Intermediate	Free living	4,5	6	836	146
6006	Hydrallmania falcata	М	Fragile	Erect	3	10	(Footnote 1)	73
6011	Mediomastus fragilis	S-M	Fragile	Tubiculous	5	6	12303	264
6025	Thyone fusus	М	Fragile	Free living	4	5	30	16
6029	Amphipholis squamata	S-M	Fragile	Free living	NC	5	712	89
6032	Sertularia cupressina	L	Fragile	Erect	22	10	(Footnote 1)	9
6035	Abietinaria abietina	M-L	Fragile	Erect	22	10	(Footnote 1)	3
6039	Harmothoe spp.	S-M	Intermediate	Free living	NC	NC	(Footnote 2)	
	Harmothoe impar	By far the most abundant species of the genus within the dataset			433	59		
6173	Pagurus bernhardus	S-M	Intermediate	Free living	4,22,2	5	13	3
6226	Aonides paucibranchiata	S-M	NC	NC	4,5	6	2357	80
6500	Travisia forbesii	S-M	NC	NC	4,5	6	30	8
6528	Spio martinensis	S-M	Fragile	Tubiculous	4,29	6	3502	180

Table 7 Identification of species within Eastern IFCA Complied Dataset showing potential sensitivity after WebRef2

#### Footnotes

1: A colonial animal, only recorded as "present" within any sample rather than being counted.

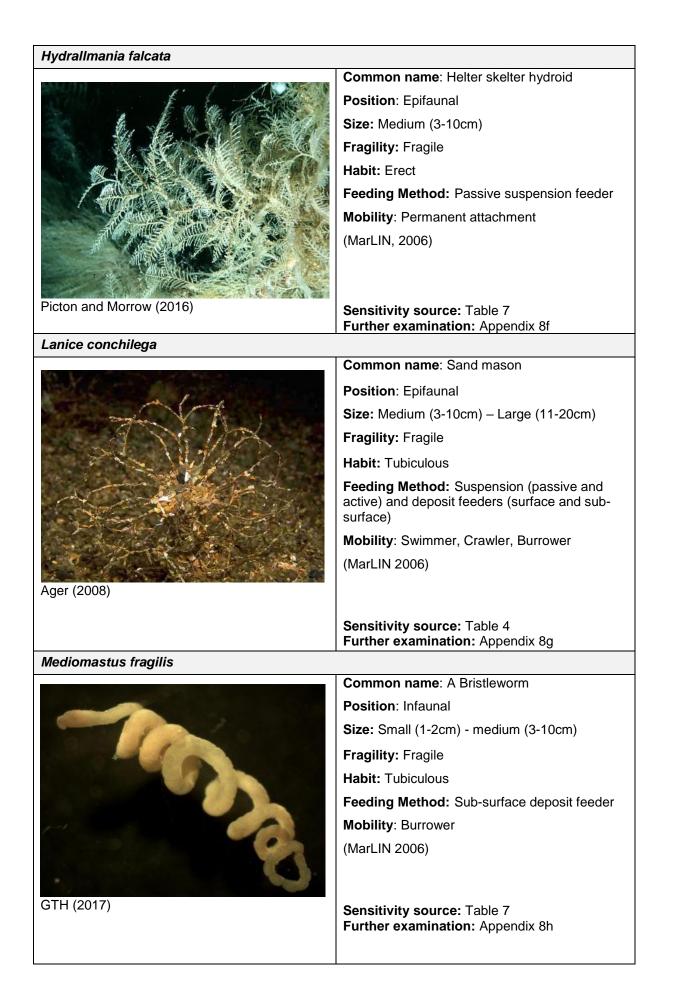
"NC" = No Content, no information available within the BIOTIC system

For details of coding used for traits, see WebRef 3

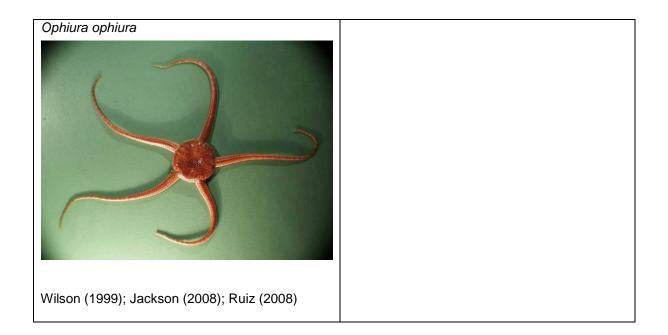
2: No species identified within the BIOTIC system. Harmothoe impar included here as it is the most represented member of the genus within the Compiled Dataset.

*Table 8* Species identified as sensitive and examined further. For each species, the traits used to assess sensitivity are listed, along with the Appendix that details further examination.

Abra alba		
	Common name: White furrow shell	
	Position: Infaunal	
and the second	Size: Small (1-2cm)	
	Fragility: Intermediate	
	Habit: Burrow dwelling	
	<b>Feeding Method:</b> Suspension (passive and active) and deposit feeders (surface and subsurface)	
	Mobility: Burrower	
	(MarLIN, 2006)	
Budd (2007)		
	Sensitivity source: Table 4	
Bathyporeia elegans	Further examination: Appendix 8c	
	Common name: Sand hopper	
	Position: Infaunal	
	Size: Small (1-2cm) - medium (3-10cm)	
	Fragility: Intermediate	
ANDIA	Habit: Free living	
Constant and a second	Feeding Method: Deposit feeders (surface and sub-surface)	
Stars -	Mobility: Burrower	
	(MarLIN, 2006)	
Richards (2008)	Sensitivity source: Table 7	
	Further examination: Appendix 8d	
Flustra foliacea		
	Common name: Hornwrack	
	Position: Epifaunal	
	Size: Medium (3-10cm)	
	Fragility: Fragile	
Contraction of the	Habit: Attached	
	<b>Feeding Method:</b> Suspension feeder (passive and active)	
	Mobility: Permanent attachment	
CALL AND CALL	(MarLIN, 2006)	
	Sensitivity source: Table 7	
Tyler-Walters and Ballerstedt (2007)	Further examination: Appendix 8e	
	1	



<i>Mytilus edulis (</i> Mytilidae <i>)</i>	
	Common name: Common mussel
	Position: Epifaunal
	Size: Medium (3-10cm)
	Fragility: Intermediate
MANACIES	Habit: Attached
	Feeding Method: Suspension (passive and active)
	Mobility: Temporary or permanent attachment
Tyler-Walters (2008)	(MarLIN 2006)
	Sensitivity source: Table 7
	Further examination: Appendix 8i
Ophiuroidea	Common name: Brittle stars
Ophiothrix fragilis	
	Position: Epifaunal
	Size: Small (1-2cm) - medium (3-10cm)
	Fragility: Fragile
Ashiritan and a state of	Habit: Free living
	<b>Feeding Method:</b> Suspension (passive and active), deposit feeders (surface and sub-surface), Predator, Scavenger
- I	Mobility: Swimmer, Crawler, Burrower
	(MarLIN 2006)
Ophiura albida	Sensitivity source: Table 5 Further examination: Appendix 8j



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## Web References

WebRef 1	WoRMS taxon Match service.
	http://www.marinespecies.org/aphia.php?p=match
	Accessed 6 December 2017
WebRef 2	MarLIN BIOTIC Traits Information Catalogue
	http://www.marlin.ac.uk/biotic/upload.php
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WebRef 3	BIOTIC - Biological Traits Information Catalogue
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