

## Common names Shanny

## Scientific name *Lipophrys pholis*



Photo by Greg Bessant



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- The Shanny can grow up to 16cm long.
- They can live for up to 10 years.
- They live in rockpools, under seaweed and rocks and in crevices.
- Their skin is slimy and without scales
- To reproduce the female lays her eggs under rocks in rockpools or in crevices and they are immediately fertilized by the male. The male looks after the eggs and fry until they are free swimming.
- Shanny's are commonly found around the coast of Britain and Ireland.
- They can move from rockpool to rockpool by 'walking' with a wiggle using their pectoral fins



**Common name**

**Shanny**

**Scientific name**

**Lipophrys pholis**

### Description

This fish is a member of the large Family Blenniidae with a smooth, elongated body, a dome shaped head and protruding eyes. It can grow to a maximum size of 16cm and it can live for 10 years. They usually live alone. Their colour is variable and can be changed quite quickly, from shades of green to buff depending on their environment. They are scale less and can therefore ease into tight spaces. Older animals develop a fleshy ridge on their forehead.

### Habitat and shelter

The Shanny lives in rockpools, under seaweed and rocks and in crevices. At high tide they emerge to forage on the shore. They can move from rockpool to rockpool by 'walking' with a wiggle using their pectoral fins.

### Feeding

Feeding consists broadly on small crustaceans including small crabs and sand hoppers. Barnacle tentacles are their favourite food. Their horny mouth allows them to break up the shells of the crustaceans before swallowing them.

They are predated by gulls and larger birds.

### Reproduction

In the spring and summer months the female lays her eggs under rocks, in crevices and in rock pools, where they are fertilised immediately by the male. The eggs take about two months to hatch out and are looked after by the male until the fry are free swimming.

### Additional information

There are just a few species of Blenny in the UK species. The Shanny - or Common Blenny - is the only species found on the shore. The sexes are virtually impossible to tell apart. They are one of the most common shore fish in Thanet. When comparing it to a goby it is recognised by it's lack of tentacles.

### Fun facts

The skin is slimy and without scales!

### References

Key to the Fishes of Northern Europe, Allwyne Wheeler, Warne 1978

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