Fish utilisation of UK managed realignments and adjacent established saltmarsh, as an indicator of habitat restoration success.

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Fishes were collected between Oct 2004-Nov 2005 from three managed realignment sites and adjacent saltmarshes on the Blackwater Estuary, UK using a hand-held static trawl net and a stationary fyke net. Twelve species were found during this period with peak abundance between June-September 2005. Species- and size-specific seasonal trends in these intertidal nurseries are discussed. Gut fullness (% IR) of Group 0+ bass, *Dicentrarchus labrax* L. (n=206, 17-37mm) was significantly higher on the ebb tide than the flood in the established saltmarshes and the managed realignment areas, indicating important feeding activity in these old and new intertidal habitats. Feeding success and ontogenetic dietary shifts in this commercially and recreationally important species, are discussed in terms of assessing the success of managed realignment areas from the microhabitat to landscape scale, with the aim of augmenting habitat valuation for economic justification of future managed realignment schemes.