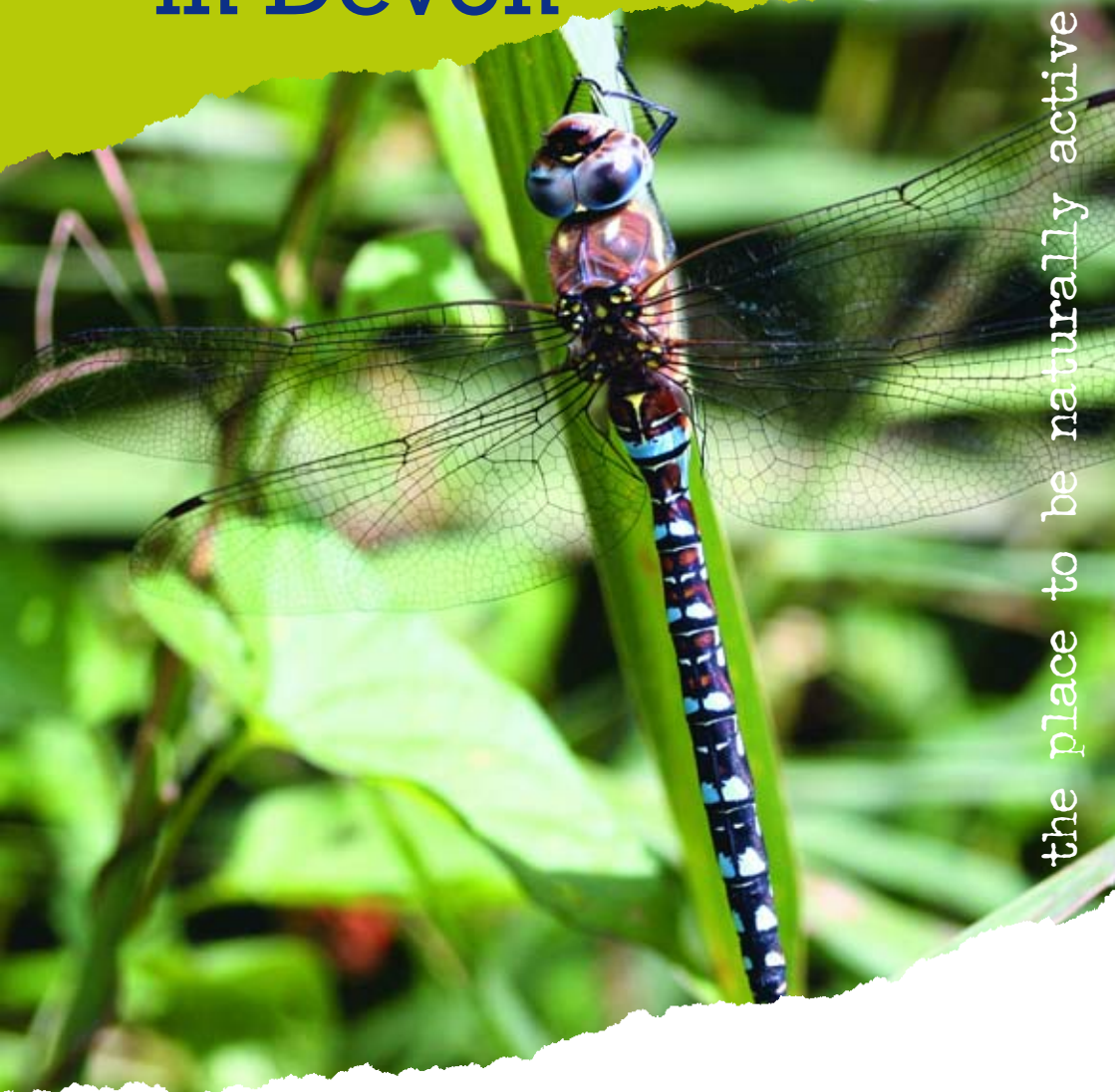


# Discovering wildlife in Devon

Devon

the place to be naturally active



[www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk)  
[www.visitdevon.co.uk](http://www.visitdevon.co.uk)

Devon  
County Council 

# Discover wildlife in Devon



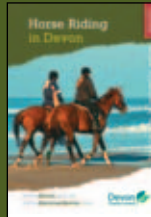
Devon is unsurpassed for the beauty and quality of its landscape. The beaches, shores and estuaries, the traditional farmed landscape with its rolling fields, woods and hedgerows, the lowland heaths, the moors and uplands - all these make Devon one of the most stunning destinations in Britain.

Where else can boast two National Parks, five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, twelve estuaries punctuating over 400 km of coastline, a

UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and England's first natural World Heritage Site, the Jurassic Coast?

But Devon's wealth of beauty does not stop there! Look closer at Devon's natural landscape and you will find a sheer abundance and variety of wildlife that few areas in Britain can rival. The rich and largely unspoilt landscape supports many different types of habitat and these provide a home to a fascinating diversity of plants and animals. Its natural wealth can be

## If you enjoy Devon's Countryside...



...visit

[www.visitdevon.co.uk](http://www.visitdevon.co.uk)

to download a copy of Devon Cycling, Horse Riding, Walking or Geology brochures

found in over 50,000 hectares of nature reserves, 210 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 33,000 miles of hedgerows.

This booklet will help you to discover Devon's wildlife. It points you in the direction of a number of sites where, with a little care and attention, you can get out and about to enjoy some of the pleasures Devon's natural environment has to offer. Most of the featured sites are nature reserves - located throughout the County and offering a variety of different wildlife experiences. From a gentle stroll through a Country Park to a more adventurous trek across open moorland, there is something for all to enjoy, whether you are an experienced naturalist or not.

Don't forget, Devon's environment has something to offer throughout the year, not just in the spring and summer. Indeed, some sites are best visited out of season, such as our estuaries,



© Pauline Rook, Countryside Agency

many of which support large numbers of migrating and wintering birds. Other sites, such as our heaths and moors, take on their own unique beauty during the winter months.

To top this all off, access to these nature sites and wildlife habitats has never been better. An integrated bus and train network, 3500 miles of footpath, 734 miles of bridleways and 150 miles of the National Cycle Network allow you to explore these world class assets without the use of a car.

Make your visit even more special and help to preserve Devon's natural beauty for others. All of the sites featured are special for wildlife, but they can only provide a glimpse of what Devon has to offer.

There are many more locations to explore and further information on these can be found at [www.visitdevon.co.uk](http://www.visitdevon.co.uk).



© Andy Hay/RSPB

# The Coast



Devon is unique in the UK in having two separate coastlines, with a total length of over 400 km. The north coast has dramatic, towering cliffs, whereas the gentler southern coast is punctuated by frequent estuaries, many actually deep river valleys that have been drowned by rising sea levels in the distant past. Coastal grasslands, heaths and woodlands; cliffs; rocky shores and pools; sand dunes and the mudflats and saltmarsh of no fewer than twelve estuaries are all home to a wealth of plants and animals.

The cliffs are often host to a variety of wild flowers and provide a home to nesting sea birds. For example, Berry Head, in Torbay, has the largest guillemot colony on the south coast of England. The exotic looking little egret is now a common sight on Devon's southern estuaries, and both coasts have wonderful opportunities for messing about in rock pools. Looking out to sea, you may be lucky enough to see a basking shark.

The South West Coast Path runs along both coasts, offering great access and spectacular views at any time of year.

# The Moors

Devon has two National Parks: Dartmoor and Exmoor (which also lies in Somerset). These uplands support extensive areas of heath and moor, blanket bog and mire, and these are joined by small farms, fast flowing rivers and oak woods rich in mosses and lichens. These habitats support an abundance of plants and animals, from red deer to dormice, from breeding birds to rare butterflies.

Dartmoor and Exmoor have quite different personalities. Dartmoor, for example, is known for its rugged nature, punctuated by impressive granite rock outcrops (tors). Exmoor, equally dramatic, has its wonderful coast with heaths and woods. Both, though, are fundamental to Devon's character and wealth of wildlife. They will reward and inspire any visitor.

This booklet highlights a few specific sites within Dartmoor and Exmoor, but there is a lot more that can be explored. Much of the open country has public access (over 47,000 hectares on Dartmoor and 18,000 hectares on Exmoor) and there are extensive networks of footpaths. Why not get out and experience their stunning natural beauty for yourself?

You do not need to be an intrepid adventurer of the wild moors. For example, the Granite Way is an 11 mile cycle and walkway running between Okehampton and Lydford, offering views of some of the landscape and wildlife of the north-west edge of Dartmoor. It forms part of the Devon Coast to Coast cycle route which, heading south, passes the western fringes of Dartmoor before running through the wooded Plym Valley on the way to Plymouth.





© Rob Wolton / Natural England

Dartmoor National Park Authority operates a Wealth of Wildlife project, which aims to bring visitors closer to Dartmoor's wildlife through a network of wildlife friendly accommodation providers and attractions.

For further information on Dartmoor and Exmoor:

### Dartmoor National Park:

call 01822 890414 or visit [www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/laf-wealthofwildlife](http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/laf-wealthofwildlife), or call the Dartmoor Tourist Association on 01822 890567.



### Exmoor National Park:

call 01398 323665 or visit [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk) or [www.visit-exmoor.co.uk](http://www.visit-exmoor.co.uk)



## Bird watching in Devon

Watching birds is one of the most popular of wildlife activities, and Devon has much to offer. Devon's mix of habitats supports a wide range of species, including many which are of particular significance. Be it wintering avocets on the Exe Estuary; Dartford warblers on the heaths of east Devon or the girl buntings of the south Devon farmland (to name but a few), even the most enthusiastic bird watcher will find something to amaze and inspire. Most of the sites listed in this booklet provide good opportunities for bird watching, but further sites and information are available in other publications.

### Further information on Devon's wildlife and its conservation.

- Visit Devon: [www.visitdevon.co.uk](http://www.visitdevon.co.uk)
- Devon County Council: [www.devon.gov.uk/biodiversity](http://www.devon.gov.uk/biodiversity)
- Devon Wildlife Trust: [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org)
- The Woodland Trust: [www.woodland-trust.org.uk](http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk)
- Where to watch birds in Devon & Cornwall, written by David Norman and Vic Tucker and published by Christopher Helm.
- Secret Nature of Devon, written by Andrew Cooper and published by Green Books.

# Discover wildlife in Devon



## Key to abbreviations used in this booklet

<b>LNR</b>	Local Nature Reserve	<b>SPA</b>	Special Protection Area
<b>MNR</b>	Marine Nature Reserve	<b>SSSI</b>	Site of Special Scientific Interest
<b>NNR</b>	National Nature Reserve	<b>VMCA</b>	Voluntary Marine Conservation Area
<b>SAC</b>	Special Area of Conservation		

## Dartmoor and Western Devon

1. Dunsford
2. The Granite Way
3. Lydford Gorge
4. The Templar Way
  - a) East Dartmoor Woods and Heaths
  - b) Stover Country Park
  - c) Jetty Marsh

## Southern Devon

5. Andrew's Wood
6. Berry Head
7. Bovey Heathfield
8. Haldon Forest
9. Plym Bridge Woods
10. Warleigh Point
11. Wembury VMCA

## Eastern Devon

12. The Axe Estuary
13. Axmouth to Lyme  
Regis Undercliffs
14. East Devon Pebblebed  
Heaths
15. The Exe Estuary
16. Grand Western Canal
17. The Otter Estuary
18. Trinity Hill

## Northern Devon and Exmoor

19. Braunton Burrows
20. Dunsdon
21. Halsdon
22. Lundy
23. North Devon VMCA
24. Rackenford & Knowstone Moors
25. The Taw-Torridge Estuary
26. Upper & Lower Tamar Lakes
27. Watersmeet

# Dartmoor and Western Devon

## 1. Dunsford, Dartmoor

**Nearest town:** Moretonhampstead

**OS grid reference:** SX 805883

& SX 784893

**Status:** SSSI, SAC



**Management:** Devon Wildlife Trust

Lying on the eastern edge of Dartmoor National Park, this woodland reserve consists primarily of sessile oak on the steep valley slopes above the River Teign. Ash predominates on the wetter slopes and the extensive floodplain. Ferns and mosses are abundant. Dunsford is one of the best sites in south-west England for the wild daffodil, with stunning displays in spring. Other characteristic woodland plants include common cow-wheat, wood anemone, bluebell and wild garlic. The fauna is also rich, including pied flycatchers, green woodpeckers, dormice, otter and the rare high brown fritillary butterfly.



Dunsford

### Facilities:

A number of paths run throughout the reserve; some paths are easy access.

### Access:

**Bus:** the reserve lies on the Exeter to Moretonhampstead bus route. **Road:** The main entrance is at Steps Bridge. There is a Dartmoor National Park car park next to the Steps Bridge tea rooms, on the Exeter to Moretonhampstead road (B3212). There is also an entrance at the opposite end of the reserve, not far from Clifford Bridge.



Wild daffodil

For further information on this site, please view [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call 01392 279244.



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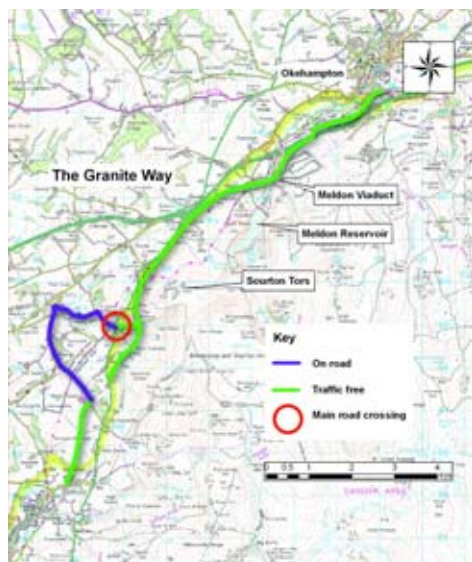


Meldon Viaduct, Granite Way

## 2. The Granite Way, Dartmoor

The Granite Way is an 11 mile cycle and walkway running between Okehampton and Lydford, mostly following the course of the former Southern Region railway line. The route is mostly traffic free and these sections are largely wheelchair accessible. A leaflet with further details is available from Tourist Information Centres. The Granite Way has great views of some of the landscape and wildlife that the north-west edge of Dartmoor has to offer. It also provides opportunities to experience some of this at first hand. For example:

- From Sourton (SX 535904) there is access to the open moor and the rugged landscape of Sourton Tors.
- From Meldon (SX 559923) it is a short walk to Meldon Reservoir (which also has car parking). The reservoir provides a circular walk and from here there is access to some wonderful and dramatic open country, including Black-a-Tor Copse National Nature Reserve, an excellent example of high oak woodland, granite boulders and moorland.
- Nearby, at Meldon Viaduct (SX 565923) there is access to Meldon Woods, which has impressive displays of bluebells in spring. There is also a visitor centre and café. There is a limited train service from here to Okehampton (from where there is a service to Exeter on summer Sundays).



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## 3. Lydford Gorge, Dartmoor

**Nearest town:** Tavistock  
**OS grid reference:** SX 503839  
**Status:** SSSI  
**Management:** National Trust



© NPL/David Noton

1.5 miles long and including the spectacular 90 ft high White Lady waterfall and the exciting Devil's Cauldron whirlpool, the famous Lydford Gorge is home to a wide variety of wildlife. Ancient oak woodland cloaks the valley sides, with a rich ground flora including bluebells, wood anemone, great woodrush and bilberry. The site also boasts varied and abundant communities of ferns and mosses. Among the animal life, ravens, buzzards, kingfishers, dippers and otters are all present.

### Facilities:

- Circular walk of 3 miles. Separate, shorter easy access path for wheelchair users.
- Admission charge applies.
- Tea room (seasonal).
- Shop (seasonal).
- During the winter, access is to the waterfall only.

# Dartmoor and Western Devon

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## Access:

**Cycle:** Lydford Gorge is close to two cycle routes: Devon Coast to Coast and Plym Valley.

**Bus:** a number of busses stop at Lydford Gorge, including from Plymouth. Road: Halfway between Okehampton and Tavistock, 1 mile west off A386 opposite Dartmoor Inn; main entrance at west end of Lydford village; waterfall entrance near Manor Farm.

For details on opening dates and times and admission charges, visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk) or call the National Trust on 01822 820320 or 820441.



## 4. The Templer Way, Dartmoor and South Devon



The Templer Way is an 18 mile walking route running from Dartmoor to and along the Teign Estuary. It follows the route of a disused granite tramway and canal from Haytor on Dartmoor to the tidal River Teign at Newton Abbot. The tramway and canal were built by the Templer family to transport granite and clay to the Teign Estuary.

On route, the Templer Way passes through many sites of historic and wildlife interest, three of which are featured in this booklet: Yarner Wood (part of East Dartmoor Woods & Heaths NNR); Stover Country Park and Jetty Marsh LNR.

From Newton Abbot, the Templer Way then runs along the southern bank of the Teign Estuary to the Templers' New Quay at Teignmouth. This section of the route is only accessible within two hours of low tide, at which time it offers the opportunity to observe wildfowl and waders on the estuary's mudflats.



© Natural England

You should allow 10 hours to complete the entire Templer Way and should check tide tables before setting out. Of course, you do not have to walk it all in one day, and the sites described below can also be visited separately.

Further details of the Templer Way are available on [www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk).

## 4a. East Dartmoor Woods and Heaths, Dartmoor

**Nearest town:** Bovey Tracey  
**OS grid reference:** SX 778788  
 (main site)

**Status:** NNR, SAC

**Management:** Natural England



© Natural England

Trendlebere Down

This National Nature Reserve consists of three adjacent sites: Yarner Wood, Trendlebere Down and the Bovey Valley Woodlands.

The main habitats present are ancient woodland and heathland. The woodland is dominated by oak, though other species are present including alder and willow in the wetter areas. Characteristic flowers of the woodland floor include cow-wheat, bilberry and, where the soils are wetter, royal fern. Lichens and mosses are abundant. Breeding birds are typical of western oakwoods, and include pied flycatcher and

redstart. Dormice breed at the site and there is a rich invertebrate fauna, including the high brown fritillary butterfly. Trendlebere Down provides a glorious expanse of heathland and valley mire habitat, typical of the Dartmoor fringe.

### Facilities:

- Many paths (but can be hilly and stony).
- Information display at Yarner Wood.
- Bird hide at Yarner.
- Please note, some restrictions apply to dogs during the lambing season.

### Access:

**Bus:** the nearest stop is 2 miles away in Bovey Tracey. **Foot:** the Templer Way passes through Yarner Wood. **Road:** for Yarner Wood car park follow the road from Bovey Tracey to Becky Falls and Manaton. There is a bike rack.

For further information, including guided walks and events, please visit [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk) or call 01626 832330.

## 4b. Stover Country Park, South Devon



**Nearest town:** Bovey Tracey  
**OS grid reference:** SX 833751

**Status:** LNR, SSSI

**Management:** Devon County Council



The main feature of this site is Stover Lake and its marsh. This 4 hectare lake supports a wealth of water birds and an excellent assemblage of dragonflies and damselflies; 19 species have been recorded here including rarities such as the hairy dragonfly, the migrant hawkler and the red-eyed damselfly. The Country Park also has areas of woodland (home to dormice), grassland and lowland heath. There is ongoing management work to increase the area of heath, which supports breeding nightjar.



Stover Country Park

## Access:

**Bus:** There are regular bus services linking the park to all major towns and villages including Exeter, Plymouth and beyond. **Foot:** The Templar Way passes through the Country Park. **Road:** The entrance to the Park is off the A382 Bovey Tracey to Newton Abbot road.

For further information on the Country Park please view [www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk) or call 01626 835236.

## 4c. Jetty Marsh, South Devon

**Nearest town:** Newton Abbot

**OS grid reference:** SX 864718

**Status:** LNR

**Management:** Teignbridge District Council



This small site is a mosaic of reedbeds, scrub, grassland, open water and ditches. These habitats support a varied wildlife - over 150 different plant species have been reported along with a variety of animal life. Marbled white butterflies, azure damselflies, six-spot burnet moth and great green bush crickets can all be seen here. The area is also of local importance for breeding birds, notably reed warbler, sedge warbler and the rare and protected Cetti's warbler. Kingfishers are regularly seen and otters are known to visit the site.

## Facilities:

- The path is level and suitable for most wheelchairs.
- Well behaved dogs allowed.

## Access:

**Foot:** Templar Way passes through the reserve.

**Bus:** There is a bus stop immediately next to the main entrance of Jetty Marsh on Kingsteignton Road. **Road:** There is no car park.

For further information on this site, please view [www.teignbridge.gov.uk](http://www.teignbridge.gov.uk) or call 01626 215756.



© Devon Wildlife Trust

Andrew's Wood

## 5. Andrew's Wood, South Devon

**Nearest town:** Loddiswell

**OS grid reference:** SX 714520

**Status:** SSSI

**Management:** Devon Wildlife Trust



Developed on a series of fields once farmed by the villagers of Stanton, Andrew's Wood now has a mix of habitats including broadleaved woodland, herb-rich and marshy grassland and wet heath. It supports a diverse flora, with species such as black knapweed, betony and marsh pennywort. Of particular note is the largest British colony of the rare heath lobelia. The wide range of habitats provides a home for many animals. Among these are breeding tree pipits, dormice and many butterflies including the silver-washed fritillary.

## Facilities:

- Two circular way-marked walks (some kissing gates to be negotiated).
- The ground is mostly flat but can be very muddy.

## Access:

**Road:** From the A38 take the Ugborough / Yealmpton turn-off. Turn left onto the A3121, and at Kitterford Cross go straight across towards Loddiswell on the B3196. At California Cross take the left hand fork beyond the petrol station, towards Loddiswell. The car park lies on the right



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approximately 250m beyond Coldharbour Cross. From here a track leads down to the reserve.

For further information, please visit [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call 01392 279244.

## 6. Berry Head, South Devon

**Nearest town:** Brixham

**OS grid reference:** SX 941564

**Status:** NNR, SAC

**Management:** Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust



The towering cliffs and rocky headland of Berry Head are the wildlife gem of Torbay. The extensive areas of limestone grassland and scrub are home to many rare plants including white



Berry Head

rock-rose, small retharrow, autumn squill and a range of orchids. In all, around 500 plant species have been recorded. There is also much to interest bird watchers. The sea cliffs support the largest guillemot colony along the south coast of England (reaching over 1000 birds). Kittiwakes and fulmars also regularly breed here and areas of scrub provide shelter for whitethroats. Caves support an important population of rare greater horseshoe bats.

### Facilities:

- Visitor centre.
- Live CCTV pictures of the guillemot colony during the summer.

### Access:

**Foot:** The South West Coast Path runs through the site. **Train and bus:** There is a mainline train station at nearby Paignton and bus services from here to Brixham. **Road:** The park can be accessed from Brixham. There is a car park.

For further information, please view [www.countryside-trust.org.uk](http://www.countryside-trust.org.uk) or call 01803 882619.

## 7. Bovey Heathfield, South Devon

**Nearest town:** Bovey Tracey

**OS grid reference:** SX 823765 & SX 825768

**Status:** SSSI

**Management:** Devon Wildlife Trust



Bovey Heathfield is a remnant of lowland heathland that was once much more common in the area. It has suffered from misuse in the past but is now being managed as a Community Nature Reserve. Divided into two parts, it supports a range of habitats including dry and wet heathland, scrub and wet alder carr. There is a range of plants characteristic of heathland,



Bovey Heathfield

# Southern Devon

including heather, heath milkwort, heath spotted-orchid, bog asphodel and devil's bit scabious. The reserve has a diverse fauna, including heathland rarities such the Dartford warbler.

## Facilities:

- Main area - circular walk (part easy access) that connects to a higher viewpoint.
- Smaller area (to the east) - path that connects with a public bridleway.

## Access:

**Bus:** There are services to Battle Road, Heathfield. **Road:** the main area can be reached via Cavalier Road in the Heathfield Industrial Estate nr. Bovey Tracey. The entrance is marked by a gravel track. The smaller compartment can be accessed from the King Charles 1 Business Park (off Old Newton Road). A footpath leads over a private road to the entrance.

For further information about this reserve, please visit [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call 01392 279244.

## 8. Birds of prey viewpoint, Haldon Forest, South Devon

**Nearest city:** Exeter

**OS grid reference:** SX 876856

**Status:** SSSI

**Management:** Forestry Commission

Haldon Forest is a structurally diverse conifer plantation. No fewer than five species of birds of prey breed in the forest. These include the rare goshawk, as well as hobby, sparrowhawk, buzzard and kestrel. The Forestry Commission maintains a viewpoint offering the chance to see these magnificent birds in the flesh. The Forest is also home to a wide variety of other wildlife, including dormice, Devon's most important population of breeding nightjar, crossbills and a range of butterflies for which several areas are specifically managed. Species present include



View from Haldon

wood white and a significant population of pearl-bordered fritillary.

## Facilities:

- 20 miles of off road access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The Haldon Gateway walking trail takes in the birds of prey viewpoint.
- Play Trail for children.
- Car parking and toilets.

## Access:

**Road:** Just off the A38 at Exeter Racecourse - follow the signs for 'forest walks'.

For further information on Haldon Forest please visit [www.haldonforestpark.org.uk](http://www.haldonforestpark.org.uk) or call 01392 834207.

## 9. Plym Bridge Woods, South Devon

**Nearest city:** Plymouth

**OS grid reference:** SX 524592

**Management:** The National Trust



Springtime in this wooded valley of the River Plym sees the woodland floor carpeted by wild flowers including wood anemone, wild garlic, primroses and bluebells. Several old quarries with interesting industrial archaeological remains now support an abundance of ferns, mosses and lichens. The site is home to many animals, including a herd of fallow deer, and a wide range of birds. Kingfishers and dippers can be seen along the river, and lesser spotted woodpecker and tree pipit are found within the

woods. Peregrine falcons breed on an old quarry face within the woodland. During the breeding season there is usually a viewing station with telescopes for visitors' use. The site supports many damselflies and butterflies, such as the speckled wood.



© Chris King/NTPPL

Plym Bridge Woods

### Facilities:

- Several foot paths.
- Major foot and cycle path along disused rail line.

### Access:

**Cycle:** The former Tavistock Line railway, which runs through the site, is now a part of the Plym Valley Trail (starting at Saltram House next to the Plym Estuary). This trail is part of the long-distance Devon Coast to Coast cycle route. **Road:** parking is available on either side of the Plym Bridge.

For further information, please view [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk).



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© Devon Wildlife Trust

Warleigh Point

## 10. Warleigh Point, South Devon

**Nearest city:** Plymouth

**OS grid reference:** SX 450608

**Status:** SSSI

**Management:** Devon Wildlife Trust



Warleigh Point is a fine example of coastal oak woodland. A variety of management regimes have created a diverse woodland structure, including areas of coppice, open glade and scrub. Though dominated by oak, other trees are also present including the uncommon wild service tree. The rich ground flora includes bluebells, primroses, sweet woodruff and wild garlic. The range of habitats supports a wide diversity of animal life. Speckled wood butterflies are common, and tawny owl and green woodpecker breed here. A number of wildfowl and waders, including little egret, can be seen on the estuary in the winter.

### Facilities:

- There is a circular path around the reserve.
- Easy access section, though the track to the reserve can be muddy.

### Access:

**Road:** The reserve is signposted from the village of Tamerton Foliot to the north of Plymouth. It lies about 2km down a lane running west from the village. Do not leave valuables in your car and make sure your bicycle is secure! The entrance is on the far side of a railway bridge to the north of an old station. **Bus:** There is a service from Plymouth to Tamerton Foliot.

For further information on this site, please view: [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call 01392 279244.

# Southern and Eastern Devon



© Devon Wildlife Trust

## 11. Wembury Voluntary Marine Conservation Area (VMCA), South Devon

**Nearest city:** Plymouth

**OS grid reference:** SX 518484

**Management:** Devon Wildlife Trust



The Wembury VMCA runs for about 4 miles from Yealm Head to Fort Bovisand, extending out to sea to a depth of 10 metres. Created in 1981, it is protected as a result of voluntary agreements to ensure sympathetic use of the area. This stretch of coastline is home to a wide range of habitats. In turn, these support a very diverse fauna and flora, some of which are only found in a few other parts of the country. For example, Wembury is home to the bloody-eyed velvet swimming crab and the tompot blenny. Exposed at low water, the patches of sand, shingle and stranded seaweed provide feeding grounds for resident and migrant waders including curlew and bar-tailed godwit.

### Facilities:

- Wembury Marine Centre (open Easter to October).
- Rockpool rambles and other events.

### Access:

**Foot:** The South West Coast Path, a long-distance walking route, runs the length of Wembury VMCA. **Bus:** There is a service from Plymouth to Wembury (and then a 5 min. walk to the beach).

**Road:** There is a National Trust car park at Wembury beach (charges apply).

For further information on this site, please view: [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call the warden on 01752 862538.

## 12. The Axe Estuary, Eastern Devon

**Nearest town:** Seaton

**OS Grid Reference:** SY 254907



View across the Axe Estuary

**The Axe Estuary is home to grazing marsh, mud flats, saltmarsh and reedbeds. It is a haven for wildlife, especially birds.**

**East Devon District Council manages two Local Nature Reserves (LNRs):**

### Seaton Marshes LNR

This area of grazing marsh, with scrapes, ponds and ditches, supports a range of wetland wildlife. During the winter large numbers of ducks, such as teal and wigeon, feed on the



Seaton Marshes

marshes, whilst curlews, redshank and sandpipers can be seen on the estuary mud. In the summer, butterflies and dragonflies abound, including black-tailed skimmers and rare ruddy darters.

#### Facilities:

- Several paths.
- Bird hide with facilities for wheelchair users. The access path is 500m long with a smooth surface and a maximum gradient of 1:7.

#### Access:

**Foot:** Accessed along a cycle path running from the Tourist Information Centre at the Harbour Road Car Park, Seaton. The South West Coast Path crosses the mouth of the estuary. **Bus:** regular services to Seaton.

## Colyford Common LNR

Just to the north of Seaton Marshes, Colyford Common has a viewing platform offering views across the estuary. In winter, shelduck graze on the reserve, and little egrets can be seen on the estuary. In summer, the reserve supports a wealth of insect life including the uncommon short winged conehead (a type of bush cricket).

#### Facilities:

Boardwalk from the gate to the viewing platform. Not suitable for wheelchair users.

#### Access:

**Road:** Heading from Exeter to Lyme Regis along the A3052, enter the village of Colyford and turn right at the Post Office along Seaton Road. The entrance to the reserve lies to the left, opposite Pops Lane.

For further information, please view [www.eastdevon.gov.uk](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk) or call 01395 517557.

The Seaton Tramway, which runs through both LNRs, offers good views of the estuary. A number of guided bird watching trips are laid on. Limited winter service. For details of fares and timetables, please call 01297 20375 or visit [www.tram.co.uk](http://www.tram.co.uk).

## 13. Axmouth to Lyme Regis Undercliffs, Eastern Devon

**Nearest towns:** Seaton & Lyme Regis

**OS grid reference:** SY 256896 to SY 323913

**Status:** NNR; SAC; World Heritage Site

**Management:** Natural England



Axmouth to Lyme Regis Undercliffs

This magnificent reserve comprises 304 hectares of coastal landslides and cliffs - one of the largest such areas in Britain. Where past landslides have stabilised, the site has developed an excellent example of ash woodland that is virtually untouched by man. The ash is joined by field maple, with a thick understory of species such as hazel and spindle where movement has been more recent. Where movement is very recent or still occurring, annual plants such as Nottingham catchfly can be found. This creates a varied ground flora mosaic. The site supports a variety of animal life, including a range of breeding birds and the uncommon wood white butterfly.

# Eastern Devon

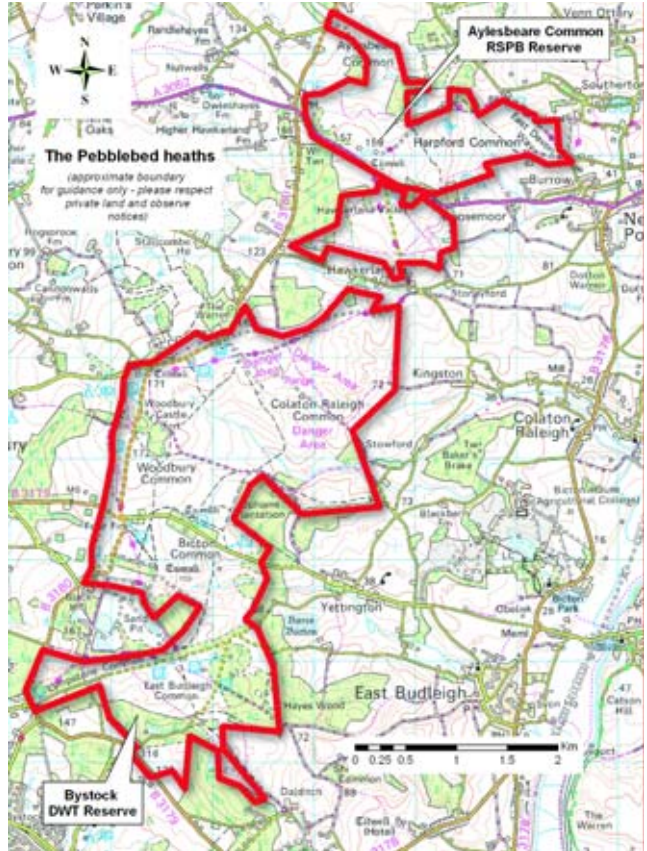
## Facilities:

- The South West Coast Path runs for about 7 miles through the reserve and is the only access route. For your safety, please stick to this path! There is no public access to the beach or road. The path has many steps which can be slippery when wet.
- NNR leaflets are available at Seaton and Lyme Regis Tourist Information Centres.

## Access:

**Bus:** There are bus connections from the train stations at Axminster and Weymouth to Seaton and Lyme Regis. **Road:** there are public car parks at both Seaton and Lyme Regis.

For further information, including guided walks and events, please view [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk) or call 0300 060 1110 (note that the path is managed by East Devon District Council Countryside Service). For more information on the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site visit [www.jurassiccoast.com](http://www.jurassiccoast.com).



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## 14. East Devon Pebblebed Heaths, Eastern Devon

**Nearest towns:** Exmouth & Sidmouth  
**OS grid reference:** SY 045875  
**Status:** SSSI, SAC & SPA

The magnificent East Devon Pebblebed Heaths complex is the largest block of lowland heath in Devon.



© Chris Gomersall/RSPB

Dartford warbler

The site's large area and its varied soils and structure result in it being very rich in wildlife. Both wet and dry areas of heath occur, together with small springs and flushes. As well as heather (ling) and its relatives, plants such as heath dog violet and heath spotted orchid can be found. Bog asphodel and the insectivorous sundew grow in the wetter areas. Of note among the bird life are strong populations of the Dartford warbler and, in summer, the nightjar. The Heaths are also important for their dragonflies - including the rare southern damselfly - and butterflies, such as the silver-studded blue.

The majority of the site is owned and managed by Clinton Devon Estates (CDE) and is open to the public. For further information on the Heaths, visit the Estate's web site: [www.clintondevon.com](http://www.clintondevon.com).



The heathland complex includes two smaller nature reserves managed by the RSPB (leased from CDE) and the Devon Wildlife Trust.

## Aylesbeare Common

(SY 055904)

Management: RSPB



Aylesbeare Common is a large area of lowland heathland that supports similar features to the complex as a whole, including nightjar and Dartford warbler. Interestingly, it has the largest butterfly list of any RSPB reserve, with over 30 different species being regularly recorded.

### Facilities:

- Two nature trails and many paths.
- Farm track crossing the heath suitable for wheelchairs.
- Dogs on leads allowed.
- School groups and guided walks catered for (advance booking).

### Access:

**Bus:** Exeter to Sidmouth service (request stop at Joneys Cross). **Foot:** The long-distance East Devon Way walking route passes through the reserve. **Road:** From Exeter, half a mile past the Halfway Inn, turn right (to Hawkerland); car park immediately on the left. **Cycle:** the reserve is close to the Buzzard Cycle Route, part of the National Cycle Network.

For further information on Aylesbeare Common, please view [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk) or call 01395 233655.



© Devon Wildlife Trust

Bystock

## Bystock

(SY 030849 & SY 034843)

Management: Devon Wildlife Trust



Bystock adds an open water element to the Pebblebeds and includes a small reservoir and pools along with heath, woodland and scrub. Among the diverse flora can be found marsh violet and bog pondweed. The pools support important populations of dragonflies, with the distinctive golden-ringed dragonflies being a frequent sight. Many species of butterfly can be seen, such as the holly blue and the speckled wood, and numerous birds are present at the site, including typical heathland species such as the stonechat.

### Facilities:

A number of small paths run around the site (these can be uneven and slippery).

### Access:

**Cycle:** The site is a relatively short ride from Exmouth (which has a train station) or Budleigh Salterton, though this is on-road and the going can be hilly. **Foot:** Bystock lies about 1km to the south of the East Devon Way, a long-distance walking route running from Exmouth to Lyme Regis (a footpath runs south from this to near the reserve).

For further information on the reserve, including how to reach the site by car, please visit [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call 01392 279244.

# Eastern Devon



© Andy Hay/RSPB

Avocet

## 15. The Exe Estuary, Eastern Devon

**Nearest city:** Exeter

**OS grid reference:** SX 980830

**Status:** SSSI, SPA



The Exe Estuary is of international importance for wintering waders and wildfowl. The RSPB manages two nature reserves on the estuary:

### Exminster Marshes

(SX 957874)

An area of wet grassland drained by dykes and ditches, the Marshes are an important breeding ground for lapwings and redshanks. Ducks, including shovelers and teals, also breed here. In winter, the marshes provide roosting and feeding areas for waders such as curlews and black-tailed godwits, and brent geese graze the drier areas. The ditches have a good dragonfly fauna, including the rare hairy dragonfly.

#### Facilities:

Public paths and roads; best views from the Exeter Ship Canal towpath.

#### Access:

**Bus:** Service from Exeter to Teignmouth/Newton Abbot (ask for Swans Nest stop). **Foot:** The South West Coast Path runs along the edge of the reserve, and joins the Exe Valley Way leading to Exeter Quay. **Cycle:** Route 2 of the National Cycle Network. **Road:** Accessible from the A379 Daulish road.

## Bowling Green Marsh

(SX 973876)

Adjacent to the town of Topsham, this is the main high tide roost for the north of the estuary. Large numbers of waders and wildfowl gather here as the tide rises and covers the mudflats, especially in the winter. High numbers of black-tailed godwits can be seen and many widgeon graze on the Marsh. Though rarely seen, otters use the site.

#### Facilities:

- Hide and viewing platform.
- Roadside viewing, suitable for wheelchair users.

#### Access:

**Bus:** Service from Exeter & Exmouth to Topsham (ask for Elm Grove School stop). **Train:** Avocet line runs from Exeter and Exmouth to Topsham. **Cycle:** Route 2 of the National Cycle Network. **Road:** Reserve signposted from the Holman Way car park in Topsham.

#### The Avocet Cruise:

During the winter, the RSPB run special cruises from Topsham, Starcross and Exmouth which provide an excellent opportunity to view the 20,000 birds to be found on the Exe Estuary, including hundreds of avocets. RSPB guides provide expert commentary. Booking is essential as cruises book up fast - please call 01392 432691 for details.

Year round Stuart Line cruises also provide estuary boat trips providing perfect bird watching opportunities from the water.

## 16. Grand Western Canal Country Park, Eastern Devon

**Nearest town:** Tiverton

**OS grid reference:**  
SS 963124 to ST 074196

**Status:** Country Park, LNR

**Management:** Devon County Council



© Peter Greatrex

Offering wonderful views of the surrounding countryside, the Grand Western Canal runs for 11 miles between Tiverton and Holcombe Rogus, near the Somerset border. A wealth of wildlife has colonised the canal as it has matured since its opening in 1814. In the spring and summer, the water's edge is alive with wildflowers such as yellow loosestrife and meadowsweet, with the impressive white water-lily gracing the main channel. Many birds use the site. Moorhens and mute swans are frequent, and kingfishers are a regular sight. Sedge and reed warblers may be seen in the section between Halberton and Sampford Peverell. In addition, many butterflies and dragonflies can be seen along the canal, including red-eyed damselflies (near Halberton) and the scarce chaser (near Westleigh). Otters are active within the park.

### Facilities:

- Towpath – walking and cycling (please dismount at bridges). Wheelchair friendly throughout most of the length.
- The Tiverton Canal Company runs boat trips along the canal. Please call 01884 253345 for details.
- Cycle hire is available at Halberton (call 01884 820728 for details).
- Refreshments and toilets are available in Tiverton.

- There are several villages along the route of the canal providing pubs, shops and accommodation.

### Access:

**Foot:** the towpath links with a number of circular walking routes and is part of the Two Counties Way. **Cycle:** the National Cycle Network Route 3 runs along part of the canal. **Rail:** Tiverton Parkway Station is a short walk or cycle from Boehill Bridge, Sampford Peverell. **Bus:** a service runs between Tiverton and the train station, and through several neighbouring villages. Road: the main car park is at Tiverton Basin – follow barge signs from the A361 North Devon Link Road. A secondary car park is located on the road between Tiverton and Halberton at Tiverton Road Bridge.

For further details, please see the notice boards along the towpath, visit [www.devon.gov.uk/grand\\_western\\_canal](http://www.devon.gov.uk/grand_western_canal) or call 01884 254072.

## 17. The Otter Estuary, Eastern Devon

**Nearest town:** Budleigh Salterton

**OS grid reference:** SY 075824

**Status:** SSSI

**Management:** Clinton  
Devon Estates



This compact and accessible estuary supports a particularly well developed saltmarsh flora that includes such characteristic plants as glasswort, sea purslane, and sea lavender. There is a classic saltmarsh zonation from the sea to the head of the estuary, where the influence of freshwater is greater and common reed and hemlock water dropwort grow. On the west of the estuary there



© Clinton Devon Estates

Otter Estuary

# Eastern and Northern Devon

is a small area of freshwater reedbed, pools and grazing marsh. The Otter Estuary supports a significant population of wintering wildfowl and waders, including redshank, common sandpiper, curlew and red-breasted merganser. Reed warbler, sedge warbler and reed bunting breed on the site.

## Facilities:

- Footpaths on either side of the estuary; the western path is accessible by wheelchairs.
- Two viewing platforms to the west.
- Bird hide to the east.

## Access:

**Foot:** South West Coast Path runs around the estuary. This path can be easily accessed from nearby Budleigh Salterton - just head east along the town's seafront. **Cycle:** There is an Exmouth to Budleigh Salterton cycle route described in the sister booklet, Discover Devon Cycling. **Bus:** Budleigh Salterton is easily accessed by bus. **Road:** Budleigh Salterton's Lime Kiln car park is right at the entrance to the reserve.

For further information on this site, please view: [www.clintondevon.com](http://www.clintondevon.com) or call 01395 443881.

## 18. Trinity Hill, Eastern Devon

**Nearest town:** Axminster

**OS Grid Reference:** SY 305955

**Status:** LNR

**Management:** East Devon District Council

Trinity Hill is an area of lowland heathland that is rich in wildlife. Heathers that form a wash of colour in late summer dominate the flora. These heathers are the daytime home of a huge number of moths, such as the lovers knot and the drinker. Bare, sandy areas that quickly warm in the sun support animals that require warmth, such as the common lizard. There is also a rich bird life, including breeding nightjar. Linnets, whose numbers are declining nationally, can be seen singing from tall bushes on the reserve, where this bird is doing well.



Trinity Hill

© East Devon District Council

## Facilities:

A path runs around the perimeter of the site (can be muddy in wet weather). Not suitable for wheelchair users.

## Access:

**Cycle:** Two miles from Axminster (main line train station). Please take care crossing the busy A35. **Foot:** A footpath and minor roads link to the East Devon Way, approximately 2km to the south. **Road:** From Axminster, take the A35 towards Lyme Regis. Just before Raymond's Hill turn right along Trinity Hill Road. The car park for the reserve is on the left after about 1 kilometre.

For further information, please contact East Devon Council's Countryside Service on 01395 517557 or view [www.eastdevon.gov.uk](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk)

## 19. Braunton Burrows, Northern Devon

**Nearest towns:** Braunton & Barnstaple

**OS grid reference:** SS 450352



Braunton Burrows

© Andy Bell

**Status:** SSSI, SAC, Bioshere Reserve

**Management:** Christie Estates and Ministry of Defence

Lying at the entrance to the Taw-Torridge Estuary, Braunton Burrows is one of the most important sand dune systems in Britain and forms the core of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. This extensive site extends 5km from north to south and is up to 1½ km wide. It supports a wide variety of habitats including flooded dune slacks, flower-rich grassland and scrub. In turn, these are home to a huge number of plants and animals. For example, the Burrows supports over 400 flowering plants (including rarities such as sea stock and water germander), and 33 species of butterflies have been recorded. The site is also of interest for its birds, including wintering waterfowl and an assemblage of breeding birds that includes wheatear, skylark and meadow pipit.

### Facilities:

Generally open to the public, but areas are subject to closure for military training and management operations.

### Access:

**Foot:** The South West Coast Path runs just inland of the dunes and links with the Tarka Trail (and then to Braunton and Barnstaple). **Bus and train:** There are bus links to Barnstaple and nearby Braunton. Barnstaple has a train station. **Cycle:** The Tarka Trail provides a good cycle route from Barnstaple to Braunton along the Taw-Torridge Estuary. **Road:** A number of small roads lead to the Burrows from nearby Braunton. Car parking is available off Sandy Lane.

The nearby Northam Burrows Country Park (across the estuary at SS445308) also hosts a range of coastal habitats including saltmarsh, a cobble ridge and a system of dunes rich in plants.

For further information on this site, which is managed by Torridge District Council, please view [www.torridge.gov.uk](http://www.torridge.gov.uk)

For further information on the Biosphere Reserve, please visit [www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk) or call the Northern Devon Coast & Countryside Service on 01237 423655.



© J. Chubb/DWMT

Dunsdon

## 20. Dunsdon, Northern Devon

**Nearest town:** Holsworthy

**OS grid reference:** SS 295078 & SS 307083

**Status:** NNR, SAC

**Management:** Devon Wildlife Trust



This reserve is an excellent example of a marshy, heathy type of vegetation known locally as Culm Grassland. There are also areas of wet woodland and scrub. Dunsdon is extremely diverse and supports 189 species of plants, including meadow thistle, devil's-bit scabious, southern marsh orchid and lesser butterfly orchid. As one might expect, the site is also rich in fauna, including the attractive banded demoiselle damselfly and many butterflies. There is a large population of the rare marsh fritillary butterfly. Many birds can be seen, depending on the season, such as breeding sparrowhawk and spotted flycatcher, and wintering snipe.

### Facilities:

- Viewing platform can be accessed by wheelchair from the car park.
- A route provides a tour of the best fields; if you leave this route please cause no disturbance and be careful of the terrain.

### Access:

**Road:** From Holsworthy, take the A3072 west towards Bude, after 2.5 miles take a right turn to Pancrasweek. Continue north past Pancrasweek church for about a mile, turn right at the T-junction, through Lana, following the lane round a sharp left bend. The entrance to the Nature Reserve is on the left, just before Gains Cross (Grid reference SS 302080).

For further information on this site, please view [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call 01392 279244.

## 21. Halsdon, Northern Devon

**Nearest town:** Great Torrington

**OS grid reference:** SS 554131 &  
SS 560117

**Status:** SSSI

**Management:** Devon Wildlife Trust



Halsdon consists of a mixture of ancient woodland, floodplain meadows and a magnificent length of the River Torridge immortalised by the tale of Tarka the Otter. The woodland is predominantly of oak but other species are present including the uncommon Devon whitebeam and wild service tree. The woodland has a rich ground flora including primroses, wild garlic and broad-leaved helleborine. Marshy fields alongside the river support such plants as devil's bit scabious and marsh cinquefoil. Kingfishers and dippers can be seen, and all three species of woodpecker breed in the reserve. Halsdon is a favoured haunt for otters and the river is famous for its run of salmon.



© Devon Wildlife Trust

Halsdon

### Facilities:

- A number of tracks and way-marked trails (including 900m of easy access path from the Quarry car park).
- Access to the valley bottom fields and river is by permit only in the summer months and in the winter it is requested that no more than two people walk together (no dogs in the riverside areas).

### Access:

**Road:** From Great Torrington take the B3220 south-east to Beaford. From here, take the minor road towards Dolton and then the next right turn. Follow this road for about 1.5 miles until you reach a track on the right with a Devon Wildlife Trust sign at the entrance (SS 557133). Follow this to the Ashwell car park or continue on the minor road to the Quarry car park.

For further information on this site, please view: [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call 01392 279244.

## 22. Lundy, Bristol Channel

**Nearest towns:** Ilfracombe & Bideford

**OS grid reference:** SS 135460

**Status:** SSSI, MNR, SAC

**Management:** The Landmark Trust  
(owned by the National Trust)



18 km from the mainland, Lundy's wildlife extends from land to sea. The central plateau supports dry heath that is rich in lichens, including the rare golden hair lichen. There are also areas of herb-rich acidic grassland. An important staging post for migrating birds, large numbers also nest on the cliffs, including razorbills and guillemots. Where cliff grassland has developed, puffins (Lundy is Norse for 'Puffin Island') and Manx shearwaters nest in burrows. There is also a breeding colony of grey seals. Of particular interest near the landing beach is the Lundy cabbage, a plant found only on this island. The seas around Lundy have been designated England's first Marine Nature Reserve and there are opportunities for diving.



### Facilities:

- Open all year. The ferry operates from late March to late October.
- A helicopter service operates through the winter months for staying visitors.
- A Landrover can be provided at the jetty for disabled visitors.
- Accommodation (book in advance).
- Pub and shop.

### Access:

**Ferry:** From Bideford or Ilfracombe. **Train and bus:** Frequent services from Barnstaple train station to Bideford or Ilfracombe.

For further details, please view [www.lundyisland.co.uk](http://www.lundyisland.co.uk) or [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk) or call 01271 863636.

## 23. North Devon Voluntary Marine Conservation Area (VMCA)

**Nearest town:** Ilfracombe

**OS grid reference:** SS 584483 to SS 430385.

**Management:** Devon Wildlife Trust



North Devon VMCA

The North Devon VMCA runs for about 21 miles along the coast from Hangman Point in the east to Down End in Croyde in the west. It extends from the cliff base out into coastal waters to a depth of 20 metres. It was created in 1994 to help raise awareness of this beautiful stretch of coast and its wildlife.

This stretch of coastline has a wide range of shores and beaches, which are home to a wonderful diversity of coastal wildlife. For example, the area supports the rare and beautiful scarlet and gold star coral and the shy leopard spotted goby. In summer, sunfish and basking sharks may be spotted off the coast.

### Facilities:

- The Devon Wildlife Trust organises guided rockpool adventures and organised events.
- There are mini-marine centres at Ilfracombe Museum, Mortehoe Heritage Centre, and Braunton Countryside Centre.

### Access:

**Foot:** The South West Coast Path, a long-distance walking route, runs the entire length of the North Devon VMCA. **Road:** There are many villages and beaches within the VMCA.

For further information on this site, please view: [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call the Devon Wildlife Trust on 01392 279244.

## 24. Rackenford and Knowstone Moors, Northern Devon

**Nearest towns:** South Molton

**OS grid reference:** SS 858211

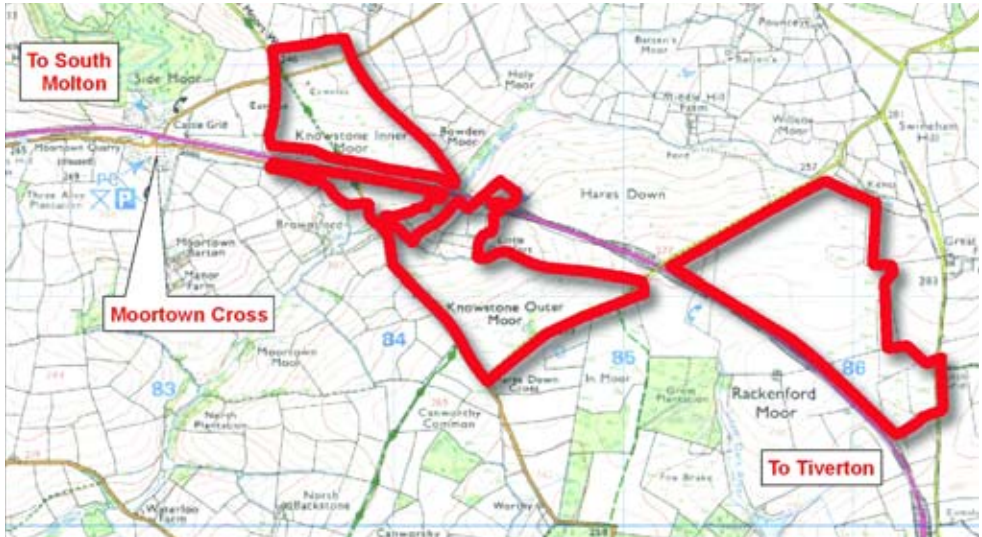
**Status:** SSSI, SAC

**Management:** Devon Wildlife Trust



# Northern Devon

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This wonderful, but wild and windswept, site is one of the largest remaining areas of Culm grassland. This rare habitat once dominated the landscape of northern Devon. It consists of a mixture of wet grassland, heath, bog and scrub and supports a wide diversity of wildlife. The reserve has a rich flora, including such species as heath spotted orchid, marsh violet, devil's-bit scabious, bog asphodel and bogbean. The animal life is also abundant. The reserve supports 28 species of butterflies, including the rare marsh fritillary, and a variety of birds including curlew, stonechat and willow warbler and, in winter, woodcock and snipe. Red deer are a common site.

## Facilities:

- Free access over the entire reserve but few trails or paths. The ground can be both rough and very wet.
- The Two Moors Way, a long distance walking route, passes through Knowstone Moor.

## Access:

**Road:** Approach the reserve from the A361 North Devon Link Road. The reserve can be seen either

side of the road approximately 14km from Tiverton and can be accessed from Moortown Cross. There are several suitable parking points scattered around the site.

For further information on this site, please view: [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org) or call 01392 279244.

## 25. The Taw-Torridge Estuary, Northern Devon

**Nearest towns:** Barnstaple & Bideford

**OS grid reference:** SS 470310

**Status:** SSSI, Biosphere Reserve

This extensive estuary has a typical range of saltmarsh communities, with plants such as glasswort, sea aster and sea rush all present. However, it is the large areas of mudflats and sandbanks that are revealed at low tide that form the major interest. Together with the saltmarsh, these provide a rich source of food for overwintering and migratory waders. These include important numbers of curlew, golden plover and lapwing, with other species including



© Northern Devon Coast & Countryside Service

### Taw-Torrige Estuary

redshank and oystercatcher also abundant. The total number of waders present at any one time can reach over 20,000.

The estuary is flanked by the Tarka Trail, from which a wide variety of habitats can be seen including sand dunes, saltmarsh, woodland, grazing marsh and meadows.

### Facilities:

- Footpaths and cycle paths on both sides.
- Hide on the east bank.
- The Tarka Trail is wheelchair friendly along the estuary.

### Access:

**Foot and bike:** The South West Coast Path and the Tarka Trail run on either side of the estuary (at this point, the Tarka Trail is the route of the long distance Devon Coast to Coast cycle route). **Train:** Barnstaple, at the head of the estuary, has a train station. **Bus:** There are good bus links to Barnstaple and Bideford.

For further information on the Tarka Trail please visit [www.devon.gov.uk/tarkatrail](http://www.devon.gov.uk/tarkatrail) or call the Northern Devon Coast & Countryside Service on 01237 423655.



## 26. Upper & Lower Tamar Lakes, Northern Devon

**Nearest towns:** Holsworthy & Bude

**OS grid reference:** SS 285123 & SS 295110

**Management:** South West Lakes Trust



Straddling the Devon and Cornwall border, these two man-made lakes offer many opportunities for bird watchers. Flocks of ducks, such as teal and pochard, can be seen in the winter, and waders use the lakes on spring and autumn migration. The surrounding habitats, which include fringing reed, grassland, ponds and woodland, help to support a range of other birds, with species such as long-tailed tit, kingfishers, treecreepers and reed bunting being common throughout the year. In all, over 200 bird species have been recorded here. The range of habitats supports many other species, too, including otters, dragonflies and butterflies.

### Facilities:

- Several waymarked walks, some suitable for wheelchairs.
- Visitor and interpretation centres at both lakes (restaurant at Upper Lake).
- Bird hide at Lower Tamar Lake.



© South West Lakes Trust

Tamar Lakes

# Northern Devon

## Access:

**Road:** The lakes straddle the road between Bradworthy (Devon) and Kilkhampton (Cornwall), near the village of Alfardisworthy. Both lakes have car parking.

For further information, please view [www.swlakestrust.org.uk](http://www.swlakestrust.org.uk) or call 01566 771930.

Leading south from the Lower Tamar Lake is the Bude Canal aqueduct. Until it closed in 1891, the canal was used to transport calcium-rich sea sand inland for use as a fertiliser. Part of the tow path now forms an excellent walking route of about 5km to the Devon Wildlife Trust's reserve at Dunsdon (see separate entry).

## 27. Watersmeet, Exmoor

**Nearest town:** Lynmouth

**OS grid reference:** SS 744486

**Status:** SSSI, SAC

**Management:** National Trust



Watersmeet is one of the largest remaining ancient woodlands in the south-west. Oak dominates the canopy but other species are present including a number of rare whitebeams. There is a rich ground flora including bilberry, sweet woodruff and dog's mercury, and there are diverse communities of lichens and mosses. The East Lyn River cascades through the woodland, meeting Farley Water and giving the site its name. Watersmeet also supports some important areas of heathland. The site has a very diverse breeding bird community, including ravens, redstarts, pied flycatchers and all three woodpeckers. The nearby



Watersmeet

Foreland Point, also managed by the National Trust, provides an excellent example of coastal heathland making this a very rich wildlife area.

### Facilities:

- Many footpaths.
- Watersmeet House (NT) has a range of facilities (seasonal opening).

### Access:

**Bus:** Services to Lynmouth. **Foot:** Accessible from Lynmouth. The Two Moors Way passes through the site, linking with the South West Coast Path in Lynmouth.

**Cycle:** Cycle parking in Lynmouth town council car park.

**Road:** Accessible from the A39. Free parking at Combepark, Hillsford Bridge and Countisbury.

For further information on Watersmeet, please visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk) or call 01271 850887.



# Great Places to Stay

## Making your selection couldn't be easier. . .

There is a wide range of accommodation in Devon. Delightful hotels on the coast or in the country, cosy country pubs, idyllic guesthouses and farms, ideal for family holidays. You will discover some wonderful and luxurious self-catering accommodation as well as relaxing holiday parks, camping and caravanning ...all ideal for that perfect walking break, all year round.

Need more  
information  
or want to make  
a booking?

You can e-mail us on:  
[tourism@devon.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@devon.gov.uk)  
or visit the website  
[www.visitdevon.co.uk](http://www.visitdevon.co.uk)



Sunrise at Brent Tor, Dartmoor

# Be a responsible visitor!

## Explore a greener Devon. . .

### Devon has the most fantastic natural environment and we all want it to stay that way.

Why not leave the car behind and explore Devon by foot, by bike or even by canoe?! Much of Devon's coast and countryside is accessible by public transport and it can be great fun! Why not discover Devon differently and see the Jurassic Coast, England's first natural World Heritage Site, from the top of a double-decker or enjoy the spectacular birdlife on the Exe Estuary from a ride on the Avocet Line?

Visit environmentally responsible attractions and indulge in some of the finest local food and drink on offer. Some suggested itineraries are available from [www.visitdevon.co.uk](http://www.visitdevon.co.uk) to help you make the most of your visit and help you to keep Devon special!

For information on planning your journey by bus, coach or train, visit [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) or call the Traveline number 0871 200 22 33 (calls from landlines cost 10p per minute).

### Come and explore!

More and more people are realising that taking the bus or train is an easy, convenient, fun alternative to worrying about driving along narrow, unfamiliar country roads and finding somewhere suitable to leave the car.

Devon is blessed with a very mild climate. Spring arrives early with wild daffodils and bluebells filling the undergrowth of the valleys and woodlands and delicate yellow primroses, the County flower, carpeting the banks of the lanes.

The summer lingers for longer in Devon. It can be well into September before misty mornings herald the start of autumn, a season which also lends itself to discovering the countryside on foot. Rich autumnal colours give a golden glow to the landscape and the upper moorland areas become clothed in flowering heathers.

Winter can be an appealing season to explore Devon's countryside too. Walkers can wrap up warm and take leisurely lunch stops relaxing in front of a warming log fire!

### View the Visit Devon Website

You will find more information about wildlife in Devon by visiting [www.visitdevon.co.uk](http://www.visitdevon.co.uk)

By clicking on the 'Naturally Devon' section of the website you will be able to search a database that contains lots of ideas and information on places at which you can experience Devon's wildlife, geology and landscape. The website also contains information on cycling, watersports, walking, food and drink, gardens and many other activities and places which Devon has to offer.



## Be a Green Visitor

1. Do not disturb any livestock, keep your dog under close control and leave all gates as you find them.
2. Take your litter home with you and recycle it if possible.
3. Do not disturb wild animals, birds or flowers.
4. Whether you are walking, cycling or driving, take special care on country roads.
5. If possible, leave your car at home and take the bus or train.
6. Buy locally produced goods, including food and souvenirs.
7. Support local shops, garages and other local services.

# If you enjoy Devon's coast and countryside...

## Why not try one of our other booklets



There are many walks promoted on Devon County Council's web site, including easily accessible paths. For details visit

[www.devon.gov.uk/prow](http://www.devon.gov.uk/prow)

For visitor information including accommodation availability visit

[www.visitdevon.co.uk](http://www.visitdevon.co.uk)



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