

About the Biosphere Reserve

The UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) accolade has been awarded on the basis that this is a place that can demonstrate an exceptional diversity and abundance of rare plants and continuous human use from ancient times.

There are 400 other Biosphere Reserves worldwide, including the area around Mount Vesuvius in Italy, the Danube Delta in eastern Europe and Ayers Rock in Australia, but North Devon is the first in the UK!

A Biosphere Reserve aims to achieve the following:

A Conservation Function - to contribute to the conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation.

A Development Function - to foster economic and human development, which is socially, culturally and ecologically sustainable.

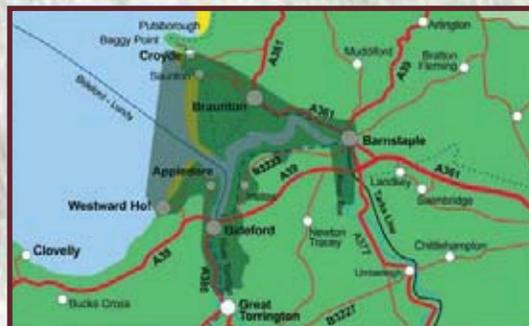
A Logistic Function - to provide support for research, monitoring, education and information exchange related to local, national and global issues of conservation and development.

The Biosphere Reserve has a **core area** centred on Braunton Burrows, stretching out into what are called **buffer zones** and **transitional areas**, to include Braunton Marshes and Great Field, Northam Burrows, Kipling Tors, Croyde Dunes and the Taw and Torridge Estuary.

There is a strong local tradition of respect for the land and sea and a warm welcome to the like minded visitors wanting to look, learn and appreciate.

We hope that you not only enjoy the environment, but also take time to experience local pubs, restaurants, shops and local produce. For further information and details of accommodation, please contact the following Tourist Information Centres - Braunton 01271 816400; Barnstaple 01271 375000; Bideford 01237 477676 or visit www.northdevon.com

How to find North Devon's Biosphere Reserve



The Biosphere Reserve encompasses the area around the Taw and Torridge Estuary including the settlements of Barnstaple, Bideford, Braunton, Instow, Appledore, Croyde and Westward Ho!

By road it is an hour's drive on the A361 from Junction 27 of the M5. If travelling by train the Tarka Line from Exeter St. David's brings you to Barnstaple Station. From here, public transport is available to the coastal and countryside areas.

The Tarka Trail, including sections of the South West Coast Path, threads its way through the Biosphere Reserve, enabling you to enjoy it at close quarters by walking or cycling. Cycle hire is available at Barnstaple, Bideford and Braunton.



This leaflet is funded by the Tarka Country Millennium Awards, which are partially funded with lottery money through the Millennium Commission.



With the support of:

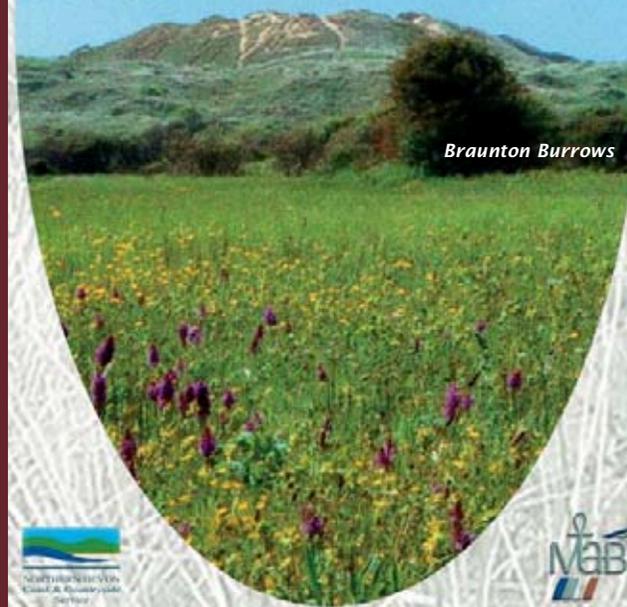


Produced & Designed by Sianita Design Limited, Barnstaple

Your Guide to North Devon's Biosphere Reserve



North Devon has always been one of the finest unspoilt locations in the UK, and is now home to Britain's first new style, world class UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, where conservation and sustainable development go hand-in-hand.



Braunton Burrows



North Devon's Biosphere Reserve

A Bird's Eye View



Braunton Burrows
A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), now recognised as the premier dune system in the UK.

Owned by the Christie/Cleveland family for over 300 years, the Burrows is internationally renowned for the diversity and abundance of its plants. Set in a breathtaking location, this spectacular site has long been the subject of study by ecologists, botanists and other naturalists and boasts nearly 500 different kinds of flowers, including very rare plants such as Sea Stock, Sand Toadflax, Water Germander and 33 species of butterflies. There is still evidence of use by American troops, who practised here for the Normandy landings. Saunton Golf Club occupies a northern section. From Braunton take the B3231 for 1 mile, left at Sandy Lane. Access via Coast Path/Tarka Trail.



Braunton Marsh and Great Field
Braunton Marsh was reclaimed from the sea in the 19th century with the building of massive

banks and a network of ditches ("delphs") to drain the land. An outstanding community of marshland plants, insects and related wildlife can be seen nearby at Swanpool Marsh (Devon Wildlife Trust Reserve). You can access Braunton Marsh on foot from the lane via Great Field. From Braunton, head towards Crow Point via the Toll Road. For Swanpool Marsh, take the B3231 from Braunton, turning left after 500m. From the rights of way footpath network, you can explore the Great Field, which is one of only two remaining examples of medieval open field system farming in the country. The 142 ha of fine arable land was originally farmed communally in unfenced strips, but most strips have now been amalgamated. A visit to Braunton Museum and The Countryside Centre are a must!



Taw and Torridge Estuary
The Taw and Torridge Estuary is a SSSI and of major importance for its over-wintering and migratory

populations of wading birds, as well as rare plants growing along its shores. It includes the RSPB's Isley Marsh reserve. Many rare species of birds are to be found here and seals can often be seen at high tide.

Fremington Quay

Fremington Quay was important in the 19th and early 20th centuries for imports and exports of china clay, coal and other minerals all over the world. On the site of the old railway station, that closed in the 1960s, a replica station has been built. Today, it houses a Visitor Centre, café and restaurant, with a signal box that allows observation of the varied wildlife. The quay is a popular place for fishermen, with stunning views across the estuary. Access is off the Tarka Trail, or from the Barnstaple/Fremington B3233 road.



Northam Burrows Country Park
Protected from the sea by Westward Ho!'s famous Pebble Ridge, the 258 ha land spit has a golf course at its

centre, set amidst low dunes, areas of grassland and rush, and a saltmarsh of international importance for its bird life. Northam Burrows Country Park is common land and a SSSI, and for its size, the area is rich in plants and animals. It also incorporates the Royal North Devon Golf Club, England's oldest links course. There is an on-site Visitor Centre, which is open from May to September and displays interesting information. By road you can access the Northam Burrows Country Park from the villages of Northam and Westward Ho! The South West Coast Path also borders the site.