

BIRD JARGON BUSTER

High tide roost – a place where birds come together to rest or sleep at high tide

Intertidal – the key feeding area between low and high tide

Mudflat – a stretch of mud uncovered at low tide

Saltmarsh – an area of grassland that is regularly covered by seawater

Pill – a water course flowing into the Severn

Wader – birds that live in coastal environments with long legs that allow them to wade through water

Wildfowl – birds such as ducks, swans and geese

The England Coast Path will be the longest managed and waymarked coastal path in the world. The Severn Estuary section is due to open by 2020. For more information go to nationaltrail.co.uk/england-coast-path

To find out more about waders and wildfowl visit rspb.org.uk or download an app – we like Chirp!

The Severn Estuary makes the perfect pit-stop for migrating birds. They travel thousands of miles from the Arctic regions during the colder months and stay for days, weeks or months to feed on the millions of creatures that live in the mud, sand and saltmarsh.

The Severn is one of the top wetlands in the UK. It is twice-daily by the Severn's tides which are the second highest in the world at 14m. Low tide reveals a rich abundance of food for birds. At high tide the estuary provides safe spots, such as saltmarshes and pills for birds to gather and rest.

BRILLIANT FOR BIRDS

YOU CAN HELP THE BIRDS

The Severn Estuary is a great place for you to see and enjoy birds.

Please avoid disturbing the birds by keeping your distance as they feed, rest and nest. Here's why:

- 1 Birds need to feed up to survive,** thrive and fuel their long-distance flights. If a bird stops eating or raises its head please move away.
- 2 Birds need rest** (known as roosting) during high tide. They use 12 times more energy when they fly, continued disturbance can be fatal for these birds so please leave them in peace.
- 3 Birds can be easily scared by dogs.** If there are birds on the shoreline or saltmarsh, keep your dog on a lead and well away from them.
- 4 Keep your impact on wildlife to a minimum** by staying on well-trodden routes.
- 5 In spring and summer waders and wildfowl nest on the ground** but are very difficult to see. Keep on the paths (and dogs under close control) on coastal fields, saltmarsh and shingle.
- 6 Don't forget to tell your friends and family about the birds of the Severn.** Together we can protect the birds and other wildlife in the estuary.

The Severn Estuary

The Severn Estuary contains and supports a wealth of wildlife so rich it is considered to be of international importance and is protected by international law.

It's mudflats and saltmarsh, augmented by freshwater 'pills', provide rich invertebrate feeding and roost sites to support the vast assemblage of over-wintering wildfowl and waders. These include internationally important numbers of dunlin, redshank, ringed plover, black-tailed godwit, shelduck, teal, pintail and shoveler.

This leaflet was created by A Forgotten Landscape – a project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund which ran from 2015 – 2018. The Coming Home to Roost project, in partnership with the RSPB, recruited and trained volunteers to survey the numerous high tide roosts between Avonmouth and Hill. Thanks to their brilliant efforts we now know much more about these valuable sites including the species that are using them and the threats that they face.

For more information about the birds of the Severn visit: severnsidebirds.co.uk

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MORECAMBE BAY PARTNERSHIP

Thanks to Morecambe Bay Partnership for the original leaflet design.

Illustration of dunlin by Mike Langman (rspb-images.com)



BIRDS OF THE SEVERN

Get to know the birds of the Severn Estuary



Estuary I-Spy

Check off these birds when you see them...



Turnstone

The turnstone does just that – turns stones to find insects to feed on. Turnstone are present all year but many also travel from Arctic Canada to winter on the estuary, where they take advantage of abundant food and look for undisturbed roosts.



Redshank

The redshank is known as the sentinel of the marsh as they loudly repeat their piping call when disturbed, notifying other birds of your presence.



Wigeon

A pretty noisy duck! The male has a clear whistle, listen for a “weee-ooo” sound whereas the female has a low growl.



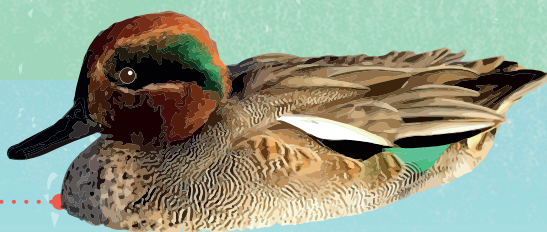
When to see the birds of the Severn

The birds you see will depend on the tide, the time of day and time of year.

You can often see birds:

- Resting on inland roost sites during high tide
- Feeding where the water ebbs and flows, for two hours before and after high tide

We all enjoy the estuary. Please take care not to disturb the birds when you're having fun, exercising or relaxing.

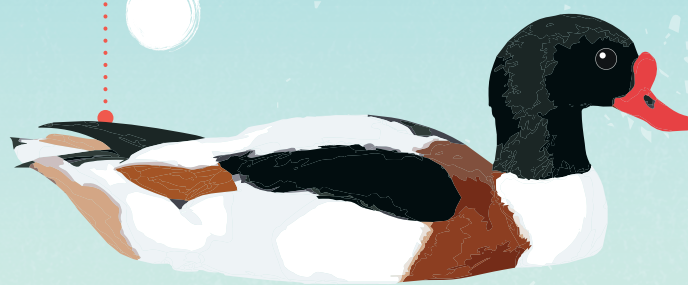


Teal

Teal are small and dainty ducks. They are only one third the weight of a mallard. Males have chestnut coloured heads with broad green eye-patches and horizontal white stripe where their folded wing meets their body.

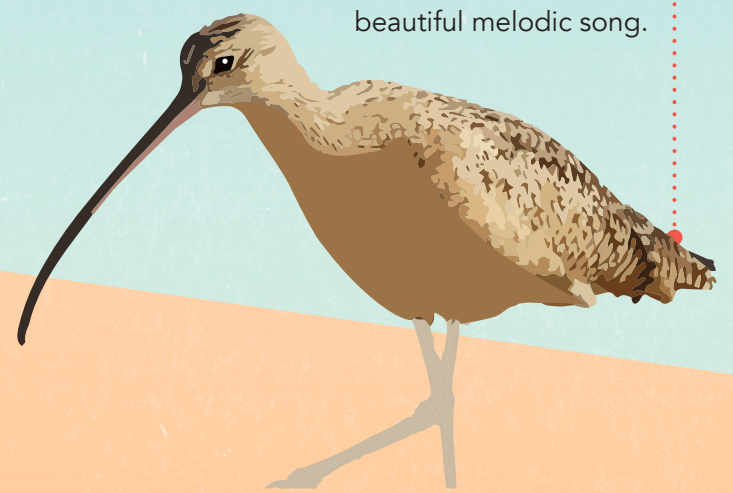
Shelduck

Unlike other ducks, both male and female shelduck have the same colouring – a dark green head and neck, a chestnut belly stripe and a red bill. They like to nest in old rabbit burrows.



Curlew

The curlew has a long downwards-curving bill. In spring and summer listen out for its beautiful melodic song.



Lapwing

The lapwing has a slightly rubbery squeal and performs amazing aerial acrobatics in spring.

Ringed plover

Ringed plover nests are mere scrapes in the shingle or sand so can be hard to see. They'll get very angry if you disturb them on their nest, so keep your eyes peeled, your ears open and keep your distance.



Oystercatcher

Despite its name an oystercatcher's diet consists mainly of cockles and mussels. The oldest recorded oystercatcher was 46 years old. Their bills grow continuously throughout their long lives to make good the wear and tear of chiselling into cockles and mussels.



Winter

Summer

Dunlin

Dunlin are the most common small wader. In winter you can sometimes see them in flocks of thousands.

Be sure to check out the tide times at: tidetimes.org.uk

TOP TIPS

Look high and low!

You may see birds flying or scuttling across the mud flats.

Hello, can you help me?

If you see a bird-watcher talk to them! They will share their sightings and knowledge.

Zoom in!

You can see birds with the naked eye but you can get up close and personal with a pair of binoculars.

Listen!

Each bird has its own sound or call. You can often hear the difference between them.