



# The South West: Cornwall and Devon

National Nature Reserves



# Your chance to see nature at its best!

Cornwall and Devon have an outstanding variety of wildlife habitats – everything from spectacular cliffs and wild moorland to ancient oak woodlands. These are places where you can see rare plants and animals, abundant bird life and interesting archaeological remains. The best examples of these habitats are protected as National Nature Reserves – Britain’s finest wildlife sites. As well as offering protection, National Nature Reserves are places for scientific research and good conservation management – they also give the public a chance to experience wildlife at first hand.

## Site facilities key



Partial Easy Access



Visitor Centre



Car Park



Picnic Area



Toilets



Cafe & Refreshments



Public Transports



Hides



Dogs Admitted



Leaflets Available



Wheelchair Access



Information Panels

National Nature Reserve ●  
County/Unitary Authority —  
Town/city ■



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## Visiting National Nature Reserves

This leaflet describes nine superb National Nature Reserves in Cornwall and Devon that you can visit for quiet enjoyment. The map shows a further four reserves in the region.

Each entry in this leaflet has symbols showing the facilities that are available at each reserve. Many of the reserves also offer exciting events and can provide guided walks for organised groups. The reserves are open all year round although the seasonal interest varies.

When you visit, please make sure that you have suitable clothing and footwear and be prepared for changes in the weather. Do not leave any bags or valuables on display in your car.

There are often opportunities for volunteers to get involved in looking after many of the reserves, including habitat management and recording wildlife.

Remember, these places are working reserves, not parks. Wildlife conservation and the peaceful enjoyment of nature are the goals here, so please follow the Countryside Code at all times.

## Axmouth to Lyme Regis Undercliffs



Internationally important as part of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, this reserve is one of the wildest, most unspoilt areas of countryside in southern England.

A 7-mile stretch of the South West Coast Path runs through this reserve. There are woodland walks and dramatic views over Lyme Bay – renowned for its literary connections.

### When to come

- March to mid-June for woodland birds.
- March to late May for spring flowers.

### How to get here

#### By road

The A3052 runs parallel to the reserve and a coastal footpath can be accessed from the A3052 by minor roads and tracks. There are car parks in Lyme Regis and Seaton.

#### By bus

A regular bus service (the X53) runs between Exeter and Weymouth via Seaton, Lyme Regis and Bridport. The X31 and local buses link up to the nearest train station at Axminster. You can enjoy a one-way walk along the Undercliffs then return by the X53.

#### By train

The nearest train station is in Axminster (6 miles to the north-west of Lyme Regis).

### Your safety

Please come prepared – because of the terrain, the walk through the reserve is demanding, and can often be muddy and slippery. We would advise visitors not to attempt the walk in bad weather.

### Contact details

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Email: [devon@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:devon@naturalengland.org.uk)



## Berry Head



Situated on the two headlands that enclose St Mary's Bay, the stunning panoramic coastal views from this reserve will take your breath away!

The largest guillemot colony on the Channel coast nests in the steep sea cliffs. And the reserve's rich history is evident from two well-preserved forts that date from the time of the Napoleonic Wars.

The site is on the South West Coast Path and is also a Country Park. Most paths are suitable for wheelchair access.

### When to come

- All year for panoramic coastal views.
- May to August for wildflowers.
- Spring and summer for breeding guillemots.

## How to get here

### By road

The Berry Head reserve is near the town of Brixham. You can get here via minor roads from the A3022 and A379. There are two car parks near the reserve, one on Berry Head Common and the other at Sharkham Point.

### By train

The nearest train station is in Paignton (4 miles), which is served by Wessex Trains.

### By bus

Bus services from Paignton to Brixham are provided by Stagecoach Devon.

### On foot

The reserve is on the route of the South West Coast Path.

## Contact details

Tel: 01803 882619

Email: [berryhead@countryside-trust.org.uk](mailto:berryhead@countryside-trust.org.uk)  
[www.countryside-trust.org.uk](http://www.countryside-trust.org.uk)



## Dawlish Warren



Not only a coastal tourist resort, Dawlish Warren is also an important wildlife habitat, supporting more than 600 species of plant.

Situated at the lower end of the Exe estuary, the reserve is an impressive bird roost, and very popular with bird watchers who come to see the migrant birds, waders and wildfowl.

A visitor centre is open every day from April to the end of September.

### When to come

- Spring for migrant birds, spring flowers (such as Sand crocus), ferns & rare grasses.
- Summer for terns, flowers (including Southern Marsh Orchid and Marsh Helleborine).
- Autumn for migrant birds, waders and wildfowl.
- Winter for waders and wildfowl.

### How to get here

#### By road

Access to the site is via minor roads from the A379. Pay and display parking is available.

#### By train

The nearest train station is at Dawlish Warren, which is less than 1/3 mile from the reserve.

#### By bike

The reserve is near Route 2 of the Sustrans National Cycle Network.

### Facilities

- Visitor Centre. **Summer** – open most days April – September 10.30am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm (no toilets). **Winter** – school holidays as above, otherwise weekend opening only.
- Bird Hide – open every day but best 2 to 3 hours either side of high tide.
- Education Service – groups/ schools/ universities by arrangement.

### Contact details

Tel: 01626 863980

Email: [greenspaces@teignbridge.gov.uk](mailto:greenspaces@teignbridge.gov.uk)



## East Dartmoor



Here there are three beautiful adjoining and interesting sites: Yarner Wood, Trendlebere Down and Bovey Valley Woods. Together they encompass a range of rare wildlife and habitats that make this a very special place.

Yarner Wood is renowned for its towering stands of ancient oak woodland, drenched with lichens, mosses and ferns. It is the best place to see woodland birds of all kinds.

Trendlebere Down is a gateway to the open moorland and the iconic Haytor Rocks beyond. Experience the more dramatic side of Dartmoor by following the footpaths of the Bovey Valley Woodlands.



### When to come

- All year for Dartford warbler, Raven and Dartmoor ponies.
- April, May and June for Pied flycatcher, Wood warbler, Lesser spotted Woodpecker, Redstart and Pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly.
- Mid-summer for Nightjar (dusk), and Silver-washed and Dark green fritillary butterflies.
- Autumn for countless fungi.

### How to get here

#### By road

From Bovey Tracey take the B3387 to Manaton. After about 1.5 miles you will see the Yarner Wood car park signs on the left. Follow the driveway for 300 metres to the car park and the reserve office. There are also car parks at Trendlebere Down.

#### By bus

Carmel Coaches operates a service from Okehampton to Newton Abbot (Service 671), which runs on Wednesdays only.

#### By train

The nearest station is Newton Abbot, which is 6 miles away.

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## Golitha Falls



The River Fowey, flowing through the woodlands in this reserve, forms a series of spectacular cascades called Golitha Falls. The steep-sided valley gorge is wooded with oak and ash. In these woodlands you may see one of the 30 species of birds – such as buzzard, nuthatch and treecreeper – that breed here.

Popular with walkers, a number of paths run through the site. There is also a 2/3 mile wheelchair-accessible circular trail.

### When to come

- All year to enjoy the river and waterfalls.
- April to July for wildflowers.

### How to get here

#### By road

The reserve is 1.5 miles west of the village of St Cleer. There is a car park 500 metres north-east of the reserve, near Draynes Bridge.

#### By train

The nearest train station is in Liskeard, which is 3 miles away.

#### By bus

Western Greyhound runs bus services from Liskeard to St Cleer.

#### On foot

The reserve is near the route of the Two Valleys Walk, a circular trail that starts in the village of St Neots (2.5 miles to the west).



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## Goss Moor



Goss Moor is the largest surviving remnant of the Mid-Cornwall moors. Its name may derive from the Celtic word 'cors' meaning a boggy or marshy place. Mining operations in the past have left a rich industrial heritage.

While the reserve is one of England's main breeding sites for the marsh fritillary butterfly, many other plants, birds and animals live here.

A 7-mile circular trail provides a chance to explore the reserve. The trail has been surfaced so that it is suitable for walking, cycling and horse-riding, and for wheelchair, mobility scooters and buggies.



## When to come

- All year for countryside and heritage.
- May to August for dragonflies, flowers and heathland.

## How to get here

### By road

The reserve is mid-way between the towns of St Columb Road and Roche. Access to the reserve is via minor roads from the A30, A391, B3274 and B3279. There is a car park near the junction between A30 and the B3274.

### By train

The nearest train stations are in St Columb Road and Roche, both of which are served by Wessex Trains.

### By bus

A network of local buses serve the area including Western Greyhound services 521 and 597.

## Contact details

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## Slapton Ley



Slapton Ley's key attraction, created some 3,000 years ago, is its large freshwater lake and barrier beach.

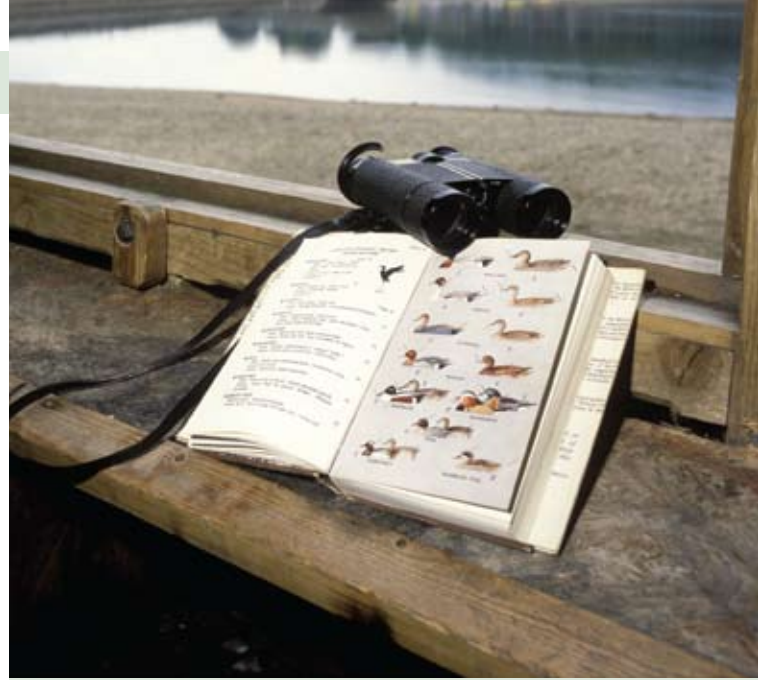
Bird watchers are drawn here by migrating birds during spring and autumn. Otters and dormouse breed at the reserve, and this is the last remaining site in the country where you can see the critically endangered Strapwort plant.

The reserve offers a 1.5 mile nature trail and is on the South West Coast Path.

The Field Studies Council runs a varied programme of events, guided walks and educational courses throughout the year.

### When to come

- All year for passage migrant and resident bird species.
- Spring for flora on the shingle ridge and extensive bluebell woods.
- Spring, summer and autumn for butterflies, dragonflies and moths.
- Late summer for Swallow roost in reedbed (up to 40,000 birds).
- Autumn for Starling roost in reedbed.
- Winter for water fowl on Lower Ley.



### How to get here

#### By road

Take the A379 from Dartmouth to Kingsbridge. There are car parks at Slapton Sands and Torcross.

#### By bus

The 93 bus offers a regular service between Plymouth, Kingsbridge, Slapton and Dartmouth.

#### By train

The nearest train station is at Totnes.

#### By bike

The reserve is near to Route 28 of the Sustrans National Cycle Network.

### Contact details

Tel: 01548 580685

Email: [reserve.sl@field-studies-council.org](mailto:reserve.sl@field-studies-council.org)  
[www.slnnr.org.uk](http://www.slnnr.org.uk)

## The Lizard



Britain's most southerly peninsula, The Lizard is a unique landscape made up of spectacular sea cliffs and glorious heathlands.

Flowers on The Lizard are at their best in spring and summer, although the mild climate ensures that some flowers are in bloom all year. This is the best place in Britain to see the Cornish heath, a pink-flowering shrub.

You can walk to many of the coastal sites along The Lizard via the South West Coast Path – the views are both pretty and breathtaking!



### When to come

- March to July for coastal grassland flowers – Mullion and Predannack Cliffs, Caerthillian valley, Kynance Cove, Kennack Sands.
- May to September for heathland flowers – Goonhilly Downs, Main Dale, Crousa Downs.

### How to get here

#### By road

You can get to The Lizard peninsula via the A3083 (from the A394) and the B3293. Car park at Goonhilly Downs.

#### By train

The nearest train station is at Falmouth.

#### By bus

There are bus services from Helston to Lizard village and St Keverne.

#### On foot

Much of the coastline of The Lizard peninsula can be accessed on foot via the South West Coast Path.

### Facilities

National Trust car park and toilets at Kynance Cove and nearby Lizard village.

### Your safety

The heathlands can be very wet and boggy for long periods of the year so please wear suitable footwear.

### Contact details

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## Wistman's Wood

This reserve has been a scene of human habitation for thousands of years. There are numerous Scheduled Ancient Monuments including pillow mounds, hut circles and a prehistoric settlement and field system.

Festooned with mosses and lichens some of the stunted oak trees in this ancient wood are more than 300 years old.

Popular with walkers and photographers, the reserve is also an ideal place for more adventurous visitors because of its high moorland position on Dartmoor.

### When to come

- All year for lichens, mosses, Stonechat, Merlin, Raven and archaeology.
- Spring and summer for Wheatear, Whinchat and Redstart.

### How to get here

#### By road

Head to Two Bridges near Princetown on either the B3212 or the B3357. Park at the old quarry, opposite the Two Bridges Hotel. Follow the public footpath north to Wistman's Wood, which is a 1.25-mile walk from the car park.

#### By bus

There are regular services to Two Bridges.

### Your safety

Please dress appropriately for walking on this high moorland reserve.

### Contact details

Tel: 0300 060 6000

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