

Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

2018-19 Annual Business Plan - Annual Report: Appendix A – Wildlife refuge leaflet

Why are the wildlife refuges needed?

The local population is growing and we need to balance recreational pursuits with the ecological requirements of this special place for nature. The wildlife must be protected by law.

What difference can I make?

Your actions and those of thousands of people who use the estuary can help preserve this beautiful place for generations to come. See the updated Exe Codes of Conduct at www.exe-estuary.org and www.southeastdevonwildlife.org.uk.

Which activities can affect wildlife on the Exe Estuary?

Dog walking, walking, fishing, bait collecting, kite surfing, windsurfing, canoeing, sailing and personal watercraft on the intertidal, on the water and along the shore. Certain limited activities are continuing by permission and remain under ongoing review. You can find out more by visiting our website.

What happens if my water craft ends up in a wildlife refuge?

The safety of people using the Exe Estuary is a priority. If you have to temporarily enter a wildlife refuge, please make your way out as soon as it's safe.

Will I receive a fine if I accidentally cross into the wildlife refuges?

No because the wildlife refuges are voluntary and not subject to enforcement.

Are wildlife refuges affected by the tides?

No – it is important that high tide roosts are protected as well as access to feeding grounds at various states of the tide. If not disturbed, protected bird species still prefer to wait and rest in and near the eelgrass areas at high tide, too.

How will you know if the wildlife refuges are making a difference?

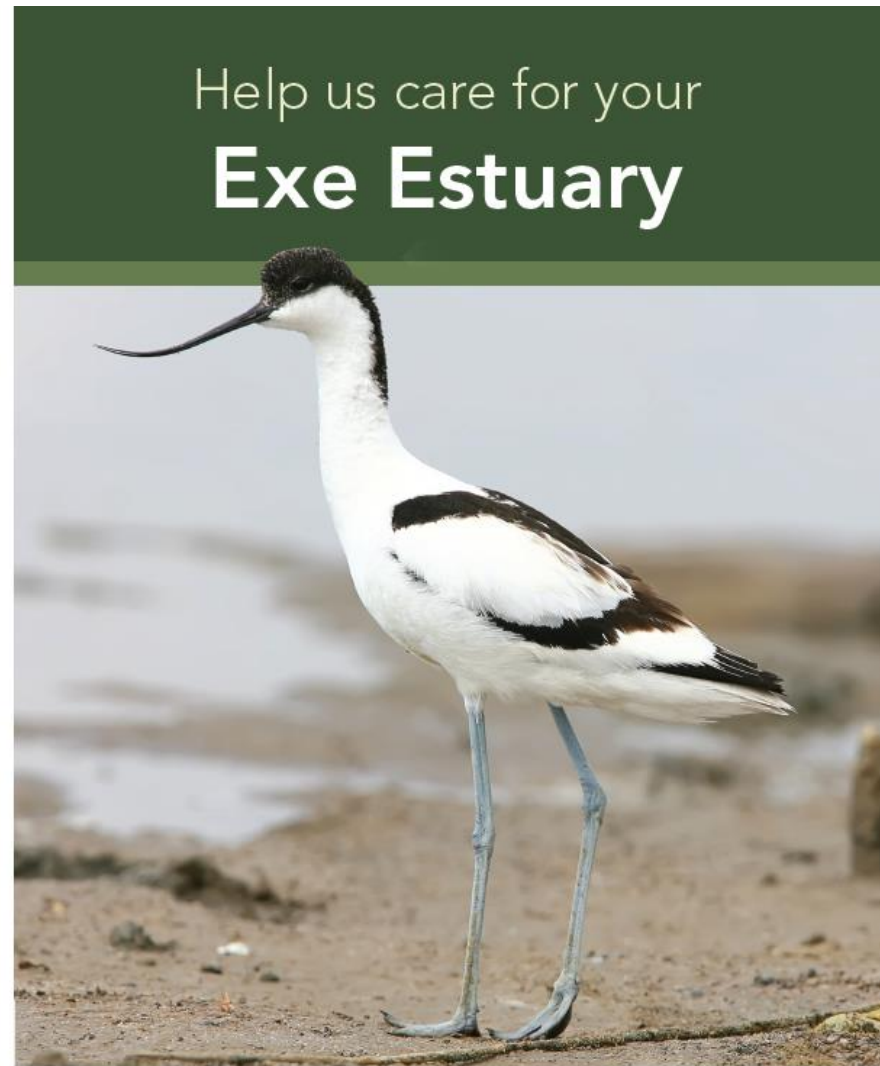
The behaviour of the birds on the Exe estuary is being monitored to understand the effects that people and their activities have on them. The results will show any impact the activities have on wildlife, including recreation, trains, planes, contractor works and birds of prey. Results will be published on www.southeastdevonwildlife.org.uk in summer 2019, 2020 and 2021.

How can I find out more?

You can follow us on twitter @SEDevonWildlife and on [facebook.com/SouthEastDevonWildlife](https://www.facebook.com/SouthEastDevonWildlife) or visit our website www.southeastdevonwildlife.org.uk.



www.southeastdevonwildlife.org.uk



Help us care for your
Exe Estuary

Keep it special for years to come ...



The Exe Estuary is very special for nature and for people.

The Exe has a variety of habitats which together provide one of the most important sites for waterfowl in Europe. The protection of internationally important wildlife is a legal obligation.

The estuary is a popular place for water sports, sailing, bait collecting, birding, fishing and walking. It's important to strike a balance between these many different demands on the estuary, the increasing local population and many visitors, to protect it for future generations.

Two **wildlife refuges** are in place to help everyone continue to use the estuary in harmony. Users are being asked to avoid the wildlife refuges, which are identified with new yellow special mark and marker buoys, with "WR" in black lettering.

Off Exmouth: the refuge protects key feeding areas for a short time during low season, from **15 September until 31 December at all tidal states.**

The Imperial Recreation Ground slipway is still available for users during these winter months and users can access the foreshore this way. Dog walkers are asked to turn left at the end of the slipway, to avoid the refuge.



Dark-bellied Brent Goose & Oystercatcher

Off Dawlish Warren: the refuge protects the estuary's key feeding and resting areas *all year round at all tidal states.*

The safety of people using the Exe Estuary is paramount and people should take all precautions to stay safe. On the water, this may mean that you have to temporarily enter a wildlife refuge, but as soon as it's safe, please make your way out of it.

You may meet our friendly Habitat Mitigation Officers, on foot or on the water. Their job is to help people understand why the wildlife refuges are in place and where they are. There are no plans to enforce the refuges, so you will not be fined if you find yourself inside the areas.

Your involvement is crucial. Please help more people understand the wildlife refuges. The updated Exe Codes of Conduct contain all the information you need and are available at www.exe-estuary.org and www.southeastdevonwildlife.org.uk.

