



Berwickshire & Northumberland
Marine Nature Partnership

Wild Recreation Guide

The Berwickshire,
Northumberland and
North Tyneside Coast



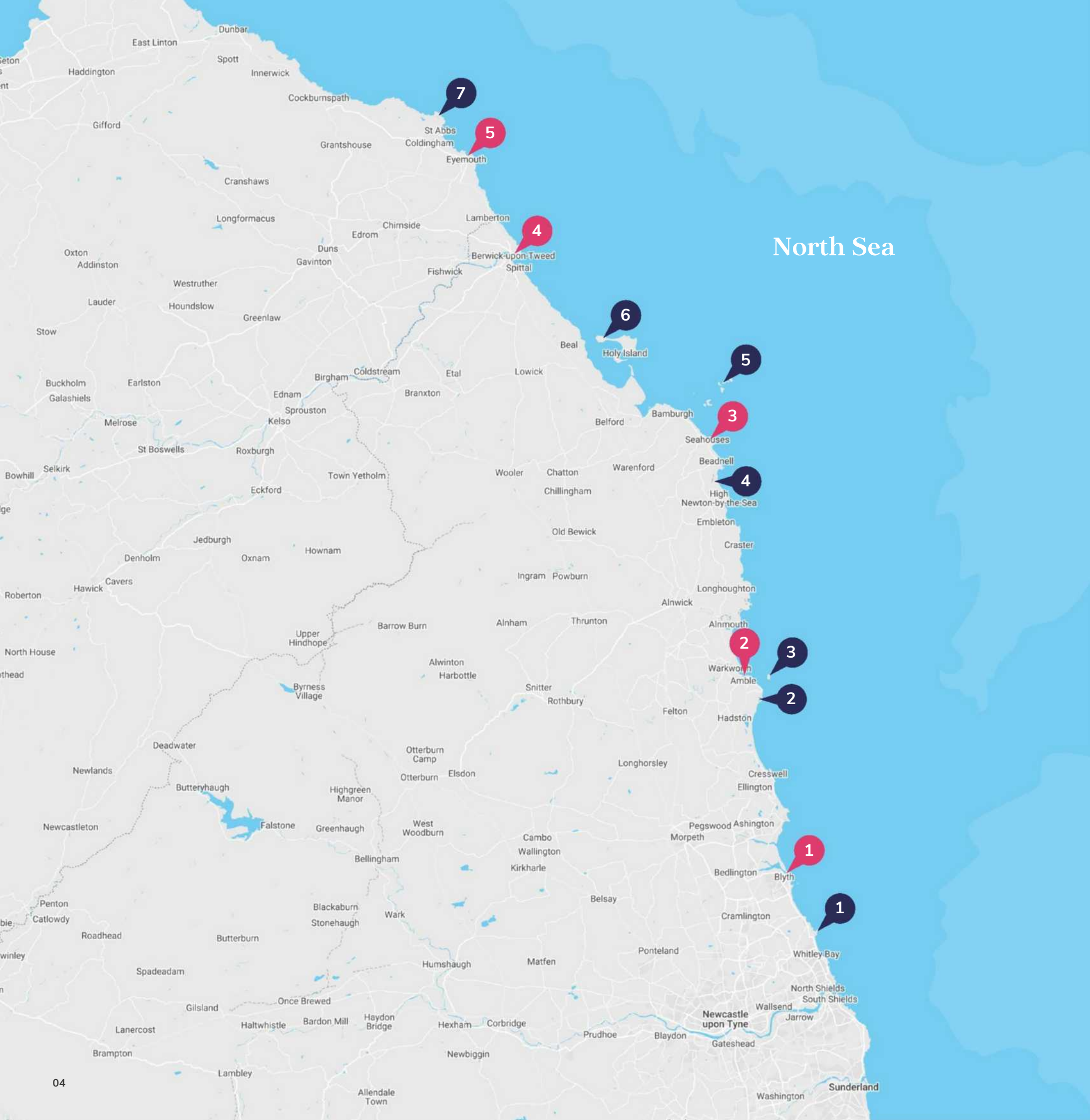
Respect | Protect | Enjoy

Welcome to the Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside Coast

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North Sea

Map of Nature Reserves, Ports and Harbours

Nature Reserves

- 1. St Mary's Island (North Tyneside Council)
- 2. Hauxley (Northumberland Wildlife Trust)
- 3. Coquet Island Bird Sanctuary (RSPB - no public access)
- 4. Long Nanny (National Trust)
- 5. The Farne Islands (National Trust)
- 6. Lindisfarne (Natural England)
- 7. St Abbs Head (National Trust for Scotland)

Harbours/Ports

- 1. Blyth
- 2. Amble
- 3. Seahouses
- 4. Berwick upon Tweed
- 5. Eyemouth



Local Wildlife

Wide sandy bays, rocky reefs, saltmarsh, mudflats, breeding sea birds, wintering waterfowl, grey seals...The Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast is internationally important for its wildlife and habitats. Both are legally protected under environmental laws and provide a source of inspiration and relaxation for residents and visitors alike.



© BNMNP

Local Culture

Closely connected to the marine environment is a rich and historic culture. Many people still make their livelihoods from our coast and sea, whether from commercial fishing, maritime industries, agriculture or tourism.



© Iain Robson



© Gavin Duthie/Northumberland Coast AONB



© Gavin Duthie/Northumberland Coast AONB

The Coastal Code

Help us protect our local nature and culture.



Enjoy your visit and stay safe

- Prepare any relevant maps, guidebooks and other information to take with you.
- Take account of weather conditions and tide times.
- Check for up-to-date advice and restrictions e.g. limits on access in the breeding season.
- Let someone know where you're going and when you expect to return.

Respect people and place

- Read local updates/information and act on any advice given.
- Try to use public transport, walk or cycle.
- If using the car, please drive and park responsibly.
- Keep to paths/routes and leave gates as you find them.
- Use public waste bins or take litter home.
- Try to shop locally and use local services.

Protect the area and its wildlife

- Take care not to disturb wildlife.
- Keep away from fenced or cordoned areas.
- Ensure you don't harm, destroy or remove any wildlife/plants/rocks.
- Only light fires and/or BBQs in designated places.



© Gavin Duthie/Northumberland Coast AONB

Be Nature Aware

As a visitor to the Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast you will be sharing our sea and beaches with some of the most important wildlife in the UK. Creatures such as birds, seals, or dolphins can easily become stressed or injured in the presence of people but there are some simple ways in which you can avoid disturbing wildlife. Perhaps the most important is to be aware of the signs that wildlife is reacting to your presence and to change your behaviour accordingly.



© Ian Robson



NatureScot's [A Guide to Best Practice For Watching Marine Wildlife](#) contains more information about disturbance to coastal wildlife and how it can be avoided.

Further advice about boating around wildlife can be found at the [Green Blue website](#)

Birds

The Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast supports internationally significant numbers of birds throughout the year and is used by both wintering and breeding species.

Important numbers of breeding birds can be found on cliffs, on offshore islands, or as ground nesting species on sandy beaches. Wintering birds can be found feeding or resting along all of our coast and estuaries. At high tides they may gather on artificial structures such as piers.

Disturbance to birds interferes with their ability to feed, leave them exposed to predators, and be detrimental to their ability to raise young or survive harsh winter conditions. The cumulative impact of lots of small disturbance events can have a big impact on birds.

One of the most important things you can do to reduce disturbance to birds is to look out for wildlife and be aware of the impact your presence is having. Give space to birds at the coast. Forty to 50 metres is usually enough but be guided by the behaviour of the birds and give more space if you witness signs of disturbance.

If birds act in any of the following ways it is a sign that you are getting too close:

- **Becoming watchful or pausing their feeding activity.**
- **Moving or flying away.**
- **Making repeated alarm calls.**
- **Showing aggressive behaviour (such a dive-bombing), or pretending to be injured as you approach (for example by pretending to have a broken wing to lure you away from eggs or chicks).**

Many of our most important bird sites will have signage for visitors. Please always follow signage and be guided by any requests from site wardens.

For more advice about how to enjoy the coast without disturbing wildlife visit: www.spaceforshorebirds.co.uk/guidance



© Tim Melling

Birds at Sea

Seabirds can form large groups, or rafts, on the sea both in summer and in winter. If you see a raft of birds ahead, reduce speed to less than 6 knots as you approach. Don't drive your boat or watercraft through rafts of birds and navigate around them where practicable and safe to do so. Ideally maintain a distance of at least 50 metres from rafting birds or from cliff nesting seabirds but be watchful for signs of disturbance and modify this if necessary.

Signs of disturbance in rafting birds include birds begin to paddle more rapidly or turn their heads from side to side to keep you in view before taking off or diving.

If cliff-nesting seabirds begin to fly off or to dive in numbers then this is a sign that you are too close.



If you see someone causing a significant disturbance to wildlife then please ring 101 and ask for it to be reported to your local Police Wildlife Liaison Officer



1. www.nature.scot/doc/guide-best-practice-watching-marine-wildlife-smwwc
 2. www.thegreenblue.org.uk/you-your-boat-main-page/you-your-boat/info-advice/wildlife-habitats/boating-around-wildlife/
 3. www.spaceforshorebirds.co.uk/guidance/

Be Nature Aware



Seal breeding season

Common seals: 1st Jun – 31st Aug
Grey seals: 1st Nov – 31st Jan

More information about seals and disturbance is available from the Seal Alliance's [Watching Seals Well leaflet](#)⁴

Seals

There are three signs that seals are becoming disturbed:

- Head up and looking at you - if you notice this behaviour, back off and/or change your method and speed of approach.
- Shifting around and becoming agitated – if this happens you are getting too close and should back off carefully.
- Stampeding into the water – at this point seals are definitely being disturbed.

Avoid displacing or disturbing seals. Seals may be inquisitive, but please do not take advantage. Do not seek out encounters with seals.

Hauling-out

Seals will come onto land ("haul out") to rest, moult, and breed. Finding a seal on a beach is a common sight and the animal is most likely just resting. Please keep your distance and remain quiet, to avoid disturbing seals. Many of our most important haul-out sites receive legal protection against deliberate or reckless disturbance.

Pupping

Whilst remarkable to see, please keep your distance and remain quiet. It's also important not to come between a mother and her pup, as this could lead to abandonment.

Mothers regularly leave their pups alone on the shore while they rest, play and forage for food nearby. Lone pups are a common sight and are quite safe.

Do not approach seals directly, on land or at sea. Pass by at an oblique angle and at a respectful distance. Moving closer for a better look will increase the risk of disturbance - use binoculars for a better view.



Cetaceans (Whales, Dolphins, Porpoises)

On sighting Cetacean a while on the water, first slow down and take time to assess what the animal(s) are doing. Knowing what their original behaviour is can help you determine if you cause a disturbance.

The most obvious sign of disturbance to Cetaceans is that they will move away but other indicator can include behavioural changes such as increased swimming speed, bunching together, repeated head or tail slaps, or changes in diving/surfacing patterns. Cetaceans are particularly sensitive to disturbance when their young are present.

Allow animals to decide for themselves how close they wish to approach and whether or not they choose to interact.

Always approach Cetaceans cautiously at a speed of less than 6 knots.

A distance of 300 metres from marine mammals is often called the "caution zone". When in this zone only approach animals at an oblique angle and keep your distance.

If animals are moving in a consistent direction then maintain a steady parallel course. Do not approach from directly behind or front, and do not cut them off by moving across their path.

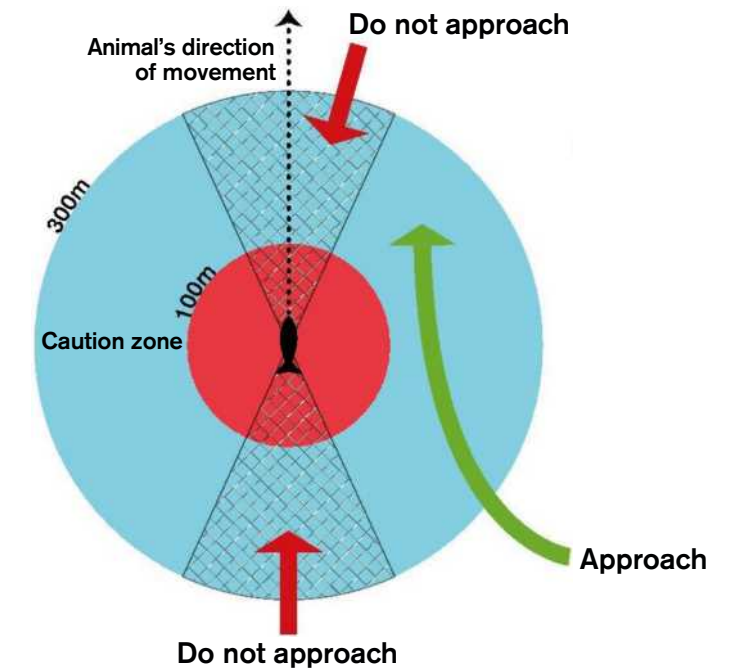


Diagram taken from www.nature.scot/doc/guide-best-practice-watching-marine-wildlife-smwvc

4. www.bdmlr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Seal-Alliance-LEAFLET.pdf



Protect against invasive species

Invasive species are introduced animals or plants that harm their new environment.



© Macleay Grass Man

Aquatic invasive species can also cause damage to your craft and/or equipment, disrupt your boating activity and causing wider environmental and economic damage. They can be transported into new areas on equipment, boat hulls or clothing. A simple way to reduce the risk of spread is to follow Check Clean Dry.

Check:

Check your equipment, boat and clothing after leaving the water for mud, aquatic animals or plant material. Remove everything that you find and leave it at the site.

Clean:

Clean everything thoroughly as soon as you can, paying attention to areas that are damp or hard to access. Use hot water if possible.

Dry:

Dry everything for as long as you can before using elsewhere as some invasive animals and plants can survive for many days in damp conditions.



Pirri-Pirri Bur

Our dunes are however under threat from an invasive plant called pirri-pirri. Their seeds easily attach to clothes, shoelaces and particularly onto dogs. This plant takes over large areas of the dunes, taking away space from our native wildflowers.

There are a few simple measures you can take to help the dunes and to prevent you or your dog getting tangled up with pirri-pirri burs.

- If you stay on the main paths there is less risk of you picking up the seeds and spreading them to new areas.
- Check your clothes after walking through the dunes for pirri-pirri burs. Take care to prise them from your clothing put them into a rubbish bin. Do the same for your dog if you have one with you. If you visit Lindisfarne this is particularly important as pirri-pirri bur has colonised large areas of sand dunes, so please refer to on-site signage when visiting.



© Raine Bryant

Safety



Safety Advice

In an emergency, contact the Coastguard (dial 999 or channel 16 on a marine VHF radio)



On Land

Before heading out:

- Check local weather conditions and tide times.
- Dress appropriately.
- Pack a mobile phone (or a marine VHF radio, if out on the water).
- Let someone know where you're going and when you expect to return.

When out:

- Check signs for any activity zones, byelaws, and local beach safety information.
- Only light fires and/or BBQs in designated places.
- Keep your distance from cliff edges.

At Sea

Before heading out

- Make sure you have the skill and ability to handle your craft.
- To prevent collisions, (re)familiarise yourself with marine navigation regulations.
- Carry a minimum of third-party insurance for your craft (highly recommended).
- Check local weather conditions and tide times.
- Dress appropriately.
- Pack a marine VHF radio (highly recommended) and/or a mobile phone with the RYA SafeTrx app.

N.B. A licence is required to use a marine VHF radio lawfully, effectively, and safely.

- Let someone know where you're going and when you expect to return.

When at sea

- Use the "buddy" system; venture out in pairs or with a group.
- Use a sea-worthy craft, capable of coping with local conditions.
- Keep your craft well maintained.
- Ensure you are carrying the necessary safety equipment.
- Always wear a life jacket/buoyancy aid.

In an emergency, contact the Coastguard (dial 999 or channel 16 on a marine VHF radio).

For more coastal safety advice and/or training courses, visit:

- The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) www.rnli.org/safety
- The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) www.rya.org.uk



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Walking

Respect

- Abide by the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#)¹ (Scotland) or [The Countryside Code](#)² (England). These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside.
- Be aware of any local bylaws and restrictions effecting access. Look out for signage and always follow the guidance displayed or guidance given by site wardens.
- Gates and property should be left as you find them N.B. Sometimes gates are left open to give animals access to food and water.
- Bin your litter or take it home; it spoils the beauty of the place for others and can be dangerous to wildlife.

Protect

- Give space to wildlife. 40-50m is usually enough for birds, or 100m for seals. If birds or animals react to your presence by becoming watchful, moving or fly away or making repeated alarm calls, then you're too close.
- After walking through dunes check your clothes and laces for the seeds of the invasive Pirri-Pirri Bur. Take care to prise them from your clothing and put them into a rubbish bin.
- Keep to Rights of Way and designated paths to avoid trampling sensitive habitats such as dunes and saltmarsh.
- Some areas may be fenced, either permanently or temporarily, to protect habitats or vulnerable species such as ground nesting birds. Please respect such areas and do not enter.
- Do not damage or remove rocks, wood, plants, or trees, as they provide shelter and food for wildlife.

Enjoy

The Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast offer an extensive network of trails that allow you to experience seaside villages, tidal marshes, cliffs, and sandy beaches.

This network of walking routes includes coast three nationally promoted trails:

1. England Coast Path – this is our newest National Trail which will run between the Tyne and the Scottish Border.
2. The Berwickshire Coastal Path – One of Scotland's Great Trails running 45km from Cockburnspath in the north down to Berwick-upon-Tweed, taking in dramatic clifftop scenery and the St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve.
3. St Cuthbert's Way – another of Scotland's Great Trails, this walking route starts in Melrose with the final section incorporating the historic Pilgrims Path crossing to the Island of Lindisfarne.

Walking with a dog? See our Dog Walking section for further information.

1. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot

2. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code



Dog Walking



© Gavin Duthie/Northumberland Coast AONB

Respect

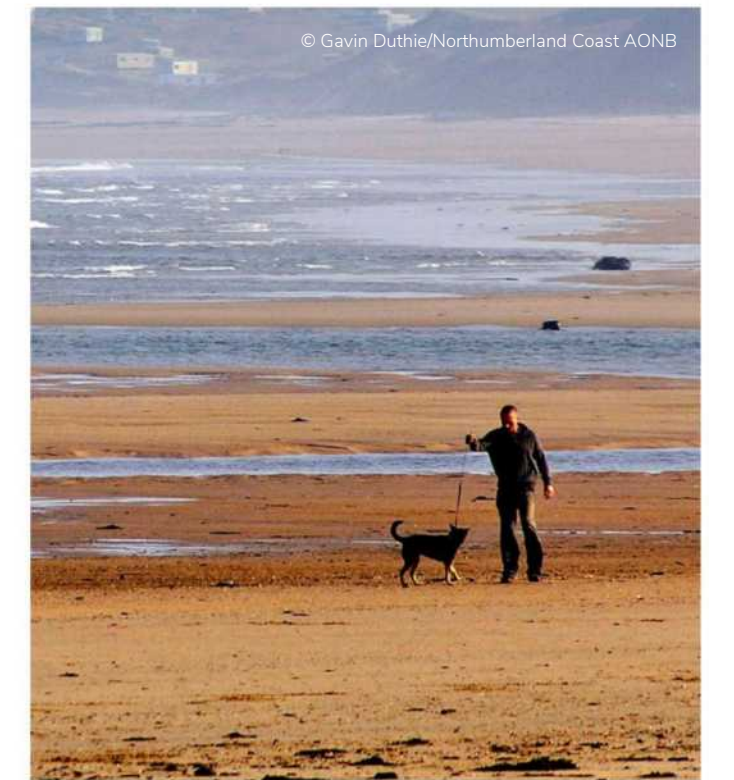
- Remember to follow the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#)¹ (Scotland) or [The Countryside Code](#)² (England) These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside.
- Be aware of any local bylaws and restrictions effecting dog walking on beaches³. Look out for signage and always follow the guidance displayed or guidance given by site wardens.
- Respect wildlife and other beach users by keeping your dog(s) in sight and in control. If this is not possible, please keep your dog(s) on a short lead (around 4 foot or 120 cm).

Protect

- Give space to wildlife. 40-50m is usually enough for birds, or 100m for seals.
- If birds or animals react to you or your dog's presence by becoming watchful, moving or flying away, or making repeated alarm calls, then you're too close.
- Never let your dog chase birds. It gives them less time to feed, wastes valuable energy and can reduce their chances of survival over the winter period or while on migration.
- Carry a short lead (around 4 foot or 120cm) with you and use it when needed e.g. where signage requests it, around livestock, or near cliff edges.
- Some areas may be fenced, either permanently or temporarily, to protect habitats or vulnerable species such as ground nesting birds. Don't allow your dog to enter fenced off areas.
- After walking through dunes check your clothes and your dog for the seeds of the invasive Pirri-Pirri Bur. Take care to prise them from your clothing and put them into a rubbish bin.

Enjoy

Dog walking is a popular activity along the many fine beaches of the Berwickshire, Northumberland, and North Tyneside coast. Advice on safe and happy walks with your dog, and how to avoid causing problems for others, is available from a number of sources including [the Northumberland Coast AONB](#)⁴, [The National Trust](#)⁵, [Space For Shorebirds](#)⁶, and [NatureScot](#)⁷.



© Gavin Duthie/Northumberland Coast AONB



© Gavin Duthie/Northumberland Coast AONB

1. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot
2. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code
3. Seasonal prohibitions on dogs on beaches between 1 May and 30 September are in place on part of the beach at Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Part of the beach at Blyth, [Whitley Bay](#) (South) Beach, [Cullercoats](#) Bay, King Edward's Bay and [Tynemouth](#) Longsands (South). Byelaws in place on the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve require that dogs are kept on a lead or at heel and are prevented from worrying or disturbing any animal or bird
4. www.northumberlandcoastaonb.org/files/Downloads/Dog_Leaflet.pdf
5. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/embleton-and-newton-links/features/visiting-the-northumberland-coast-with-your-dog
6. www.spaceforshorebirds.co.uk/dog-rangers
7. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/practical-guide-all/dog-walking

Birdwatching



© Gavin Duthie/Northumberland Coast AONB

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 Sign-up to **BirdTrack**
 This is a free and convenient way of storing your bird records online, it lets you keep up to date with what others are seeing, view the latest trends, and contribute your data to science.



© Tim Melling

Respect

- Follow the **Bird Watchers Code**¹ to ensure that you respect others and put the interests of birds first.
- Think about the welfare of wildlife and local people before passing on news of a rare bird, especially during the breeding season.
- Be aware of any local access restrictions and always follow guidance on signage or from site wardens.
- Abide by the **Scottish Outdoor Access Code**² (Scotland) or **The Countryside Code**³ (England). These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside.
- Gates and property should be left as you find them **N.B. Sometimes gates are left open to give animals access to food and water.**
- Bin your litter or take it home; it spoils the beauty of the place for others and can be dangerous to wildlife.



© Iain Robson

Protect

- Give space to wildlife. 40-50m is usually enough for birds, 100m for seals. If birds or animals react to your presence by becoming watchful, moving or flying away or making repeated alarm calls, then you're too close.

N.B. High tide is a particularly sensitive time for birds, as they are limited to where they can go.

- Never use sound recordings to attract a bird.
- Keep to designated paths and Rights of Way, to avoid trampling sensitive habitats such as saltmarsh.
- Some areas may be fenced, either permanently or temporarily, to protect habitats or vulnerable species such as ground nesting birds. Please respect such areas and do not enter.

Enjoy

The Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast has bird interest throughout the year. It includes internationally known birding locations such as the Farne Islands, Lindisfarne, and St Abbs Head, as well as a range of more local birding sites.

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Remember
Breeding season:
 1st Mar – 30th Aug
Wintering season:
 1st Nov – 31st Mar



© Gavin Duthie/Northumberland Coast AONB

1. www.bto.org/sites/default/files/u10/downloads/taking-part/health/bwc.pdf
 2. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/
 3. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code

Photography



Wanting to take aerial photography?

See also our section on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

Respect

- Follow the [Nature Photographer's Code of Practice](#)¹.
- Photograph in a way that does not put the subject at risk² and be aware of the legal protection against disturbance that some species of animals and birds receive³.
- Abide by the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#)⁴ (Scotland) or [The Countryside Code](#)⁵ (England). These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside.
- Be aware of any local bylaws and restrictions effecting access. Look out for signage and always follow the guidance displayed or guidance given by site wardens.

Protect

- Give space to wildlife. A distance of 40-50m is usually enough for birds, or 100m for seals. If birds or animals react to your presence by becoming watchful, moving or flying away or making repeated alarm calls, then you're too close.
- If planning to photograph [Schedule 1 birds](#)⁶ on the nest, or any other legally protected species at close quarters, make sure you have obtained the appropriate licences⁷.
- Keep to Rights of Way and designated paths to avoid trampling sensitive habitats such as dunes and saltmarsh.
- Some areas may be fenced, either permanently or temporarily, to protect habitats or vulnerable species such as ground nesting birds. Please respect such areas and do not enter.
- Do not damage or remove rocks, wood, plants, or trees, as they provide shelter and food for wildlife.
- After walking through dunes check your clothes for the seeds of the invasive Pirri-Pirri Bur. Take care to prise them from your clothing and put them into a rubbish bin.



Enjoy

The Berwickshire, Northumberland, and North Tyneside coast contains nationally important landscapes, breath-taking scenery, and a rich wildlife, offering opportunities to photographers of all types and experience.

1. www.rps.org/media/1xcnsuga/the-nature-photographers-code-of-practice.pdf
2. Risk to the subject can include risk of disturbance, physical damage, causing anxiety, increasing predation risk by your presence, and lessened reproductive success.
3. Some species of animals and breeding birds receive legal protection from deliberate or reckless disturbance. Further information on this is given in the Nature Photographers Code of Practice (see footnote 1)
4. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot/
5. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code
6. www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/1
7. For Scotland see www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/licensing
For England see www.gov.uk/guidance/wildlife-licences



Boating

Dinghies, Yachts, Personal Watercraft ("Jet-Skis") and Motor Boats

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There are several important seabird breeding colonies along the coast, including St Abbs Head (NTS), the Farne Islands (National Trust) and Coquet Island (RSPB). Please be aware of any additional measures to protect wildlife in these areas (e.g. restrictions or permissions needed prior to landing).



Respect

- Abide by the Scottish **Outdoor Access Code**¹ (Scotland) or **The Countryside Code**² (England) when visiting the coast. These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside.
- Launch from designated ramps and, after doing so, move your vehicle from the launch area.
- Abide by speed restrictions and other local rules and restrictions set by harbour or port authorities.
- Always give way and stay clear of larger, less manoeuvrable, craft.
- Be aware of legislation or other local measures in place to protect birds, seals or cetaceans. Remember that marine mammals and many birds are protected by law from reckless disturbance or harassment. Further advice on boating near wildlife is available from **The Green Blue**³.

Protect

- Give space to birds and marine mammals when on water and let them decide how close they want to be. A distance of at least 50m from rafting birds or from cliff nesting seabirds, and 300m from mammal is usually sufficient but be watchful for signs of disturbance and modify this if necessary.
- If you see seals and/or rafts of birds, reduce to a no-wake speed.
- Don't travel through rafting birds or groups of marine mammals.
- Keep a consistent course when you spot wildlife in or on the water to avoid collisions.
- Never approach wildlife from directly behind or in front as this is interpreted as predatory or aggressive, causing stress to wildlife.
- Be careful not to stir up the seabed when anchoring.
- Be aware of your wash and keep it to a minimum near the shoreline, to prevent erosion of banks and disturbance to wildlife.
- Follow the **Check Clean Dry**⁴ approach to reduce the possible spread of damaging invasive species.
- If you are taking part in organised boating activity, such as wildlife watching trips, through a local company then look for businesses which are accredited with **the WiSE Scheme**⁵, the UK's national training scheme for minimising disturbance to marine wildlife.

Enjoy

Boating is a great way to explore the Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast. Whether you're a novice or an expert, there are a variety of boating activities on offer, to help you enjoy the water. There are also boat trips available should you wish to relax and enjoy the local sights and sounds.

1. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot
2. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code
3. www.thegreenblue.org.uk/you-your-boat/info-advice/wildlife-habitats/boating-around-wildlife
4. www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry/index.cfm
5. www.wisescheme.org/



Due to the diversity of water sports available, the National Water Safety Forum recommends you seek advice specific to the activity you'll be undertaking, and that you take into consideration the conditions and location in which you will be doing it. There are several sailing clubs and schools in the area that cater for all levels. These can offer training and/or advice.



Sea Angling



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Sea anglers can help collect data on the economic and social importance of their hobby through the Sea Angling Diary app: www.seaangling.org

Respect

- Make sure you know what species you are allowed to take and the local minimum sizes and catch limits¹. Always return undersized or unwanted fish with care.
- Consider the safety of those around you, by allowing plenty of room when casting (at least 20 metres).
- Take all of waste and old tackle home. Recycle fishing line using the **Anglers Line Recycling Scheme (ALRS)**² and consider supporting the **Angling Trust's Anglers Against Litter campaign**³.
- Abide by the **Scottish Outdoor Access Code**⁴ (Scotland) or **The Countryside Code**⁵ (England). These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside.

Protect

- Give space to wildlife. 40-50m is usually enough for birds, or 100m for seals. If birds or animals react to your presence by becoming watchful, moving or flying away or making repeated alarm calls, then you're too close.
- Avoid casting your line towards groups of feeding or rafting eider and other sea ducks.
- Consider using a biodegradable fishing line, to reduce the environmental impact of any accidental loss.
- Use fishing line of appropriate breaking strain, to avoid losing tackle.
- Consider using a single hook with a small barb (instead of a treble hook); this makes it much easier to release fish and causes minimal damage.
- Keep to footpaths, pathways or tracks when travelling to your mark, to avoid damaging sensitive habitats such as saltmarsh.

Enjoy

The waters of the Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast are home to a rich and diverse marine life, including a wide variety of commercial and recreational fish species. Recreational sea angling is a hobby enjoyed by many.



© Gavin Duthie/Northumberland Coast AONB

1. For Northumberland/North Tyneside these are available at www.nifca.gov.uk/byelaws and for Scotland at www.gov.scot/publications/unlicensed-hobby-fishermen
2. www.anglers-nlrs.co.uk
3. anglingtrust.net/get-involved/anglers-against-litter
4. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot
5. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code



Diving and Snorkelling



Respect

- Please follow the [BSAC Diver's Code of Conduct](#)¹ and any local Codes of Conduct such as those for the [Northumberland Coast AONB](#)² and the [Berwickshire Marine Reserve](#)³. These will help you to enjoy your dive in a way that doesn't impact on the local environment.
- Be aware of local fishing activity and don't interfere with buoys, pots, and pot markers.
- Select a safe launch site and adhere to any local byelaws and rules.
- Mark your boats, fly the diving flag while diving, never leave boats unattended. Whenever possible use a surface marker buoy.
- Be aware of local fisheries byelaws and catch limits.
- Respect marine archaeology - don't dive on a designated wreck site without a license, disturb military wrecks, or remove items (including from the debris field).
- Be aware of legislation, or other local measures, in place to protect birds, seals or cetaceans. Remember that marine mammals and many birds are protected by law from reckless disturbance or harassment.

Protect

- Take photographs and notes - not specimens.
- Ascertain and comply with seasonal access restrictions established to protect seabirds and seals from disturbance.
- During the seabird breeding season (1st March-1st August) reduce noise and boat speed near seabird breeding sites and stay at least 50m away from cliffs with nesting birds, increasing this if you see behaviour that suggests the birds are reacting to your presence.
- Do not seek out encounters with marine mammals and keep your distance from any that you come across in the water. A distance of at least 300m from mammal is usually sufficient. If animals react to your presence by becoming watchful or moving away, then you're too close.
- Do not approach seal breeding or haul-out sites and never land on a beach where there are seals or in protected wildlife sanctuary areas such as Coquet Island or the Farne Islands.
- Anchor in the right place and avoid sensitive habitats such as rocky reefs.
- Never use a speargun.
- Take rubbish away with you and, if safe, please remove discarded fishing gear.



Enjoy

The Berwickshire and Northumberland coast offers some of the best diving and snorkelling in the country with an array of marine life to be seen at famous dive sites such as the Farne Islands and St Abbs.

The waters may be chilly, but this underwater world won't disappoint!

For general diving information, including underwater safety, visit: www.bsac.com

To join a global force of conservation divers, visit: www.projectaware.org

1. www.bsac.com/safety/safe-diving-guide/the-divers-code-of-conduct/
2. www.northumberlandcoastaonb.org/diving/
3. www.berwickshiremarinereserve.uk
4. For Northumberland/North Tyneside these are available at www.nifca.gov.uk/byelaws/ And for Scotland at www.gov.scot/publications/unlicensed-hobby-fishermen/

Open Water Swimming



Safety Advice

- Check local tide times and be aware of local hazards and conditions
- Make yourself as visible as possible
 - Wear a brightly coloured swimming hat
- Swim with a bright flotation buoy
- Carry an emergency whistle

Respect

- Follow the **Scottish Outdoor Access Code**¹ (Scotland) or **The Countryside Code**² (England). These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside. Addition advice for swimmers is given in the **Outdoor Swimmers Code**³ produced by the Outdoor Swimming Society.
- Abide by any local rules and restrictions set by harbour or port authorities.
- Be aware of any local bylaws and restrictions effecting access, or protecting birds, seals or cetaceans. Look out for signage and always follow the guidance displayed or guidance given by site wardens. Remember that marine mammals and many birds are protected by law from reckless disturbance or harassment.
- Be aware of local fishing activity and don't interfere with buoys, pots, and pot markers.

For more information, visit: www.swimming.org (search "open water")

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Protect

- Give space to wildlife and do not seek out encounters with marine mammals. A distance of at least 50m from rafting birds or from cliff nesting seabirds, and 300m from marine mammal is usually sufficient but be watchful for signs of disturbance and modify this if necessary.
- Never land on a beach where there are seals or in protected wildlife sanctuary areas such as Coquet Island or the Farne Islands.
- Follow the **Check Clean Dry**⁴ approach to reduce the possible spread of damaging invasive species: check swim gear for organisms after swimming, clean it in fresh water, and dry gear before using again.

Enjoy

Wild swimming is an increasingly popular hobby and is a liberating way for competent swimmers to experience fantastic coastline of Berwickshire, Northumberland, and North Tyneside. Favourite local swimming spots include Tynemouth, Druridge Bay and Beadnell.

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1. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot
2. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code
3. www.outdoorswimmingsociety.com/outdoor-swimmers-code
4. www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry/index.cfm

Board and Paddle Sports



There are several important seabird breeding colonies along the coast, including St Abbs Head (NTS), the Farne Islands (National Trust) and Coquet Island (RSPB). Please be aware of any additional measures to protect wildlife in these areas (e.g. restrictions or permissions needed prior to landing).



Respect

- Abide by the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#)¹ (Scotland) or [The Countryside Code](#)² (England) when visiting the coast. These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside.
- Launch from designated ramps and, after doing so, move your vehicle from the launch area.
- Abide by local rules and restrictions set by harbour or port authorities.
- Always give way and stay clear of larger, less manoeuvrable, craft.
- Don't leave your kit unattended.
- Be aware of legislation or other local measures in place to protect birds, seals or cetaceans. Remember that marine mammals and many birds are protected by law from reckless disturbance or harassment. Further advice on boating near wildlife is available from [British Canoeing](#)³.

Protect

- Give space to wildlife and do not seek out encounters with marine mammals. A distance of at least 50m from rafting birds or from cliff nesting seabirds, and 300m from mammal is usually sufficient but be watchful for signs of disturbance and modify this if necessary.
- Avoid travelling through rafting birds or groups of marine mammals.
- Never approach wildlife from directly behind or in front as this is interpreted as predatory or aggressive, causing stress to wildlife.
- Never land on a beach where there are seals or in protected wildlife sanctuary areas such as Coquet Island or the Farne Islands.
- Follow relevant codes of Conduct such as British Canoeing's [You, Your Canoe, and the Marine Environment](#)⁴.
- Follow the [Check Clean Dry](#)⁵ approach to reduce the possible spread of damaging invasive species.
- If you are taking part in organised paddle or boarding sports through a local company then look for businesses which are accredited with the WiSE Scheme, the UK's national training scheme for minimising disturbance to marine wildlife.

Enjoy

The sea provides us with a big playground to enjoy a variety of sports, from kitesurfing to kayaking, and the Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast offers some of the best conditions in the country for these popular sports.

Due to the diversity of water sports available, the National Water Safety Forum recommends you seek advice specific to the activity you'll be undertaking, and that you take into consideration the conditions and location in which you will be doing it. Notably, there are several sailing clubs and schools in the area that cater for all levels. These can offer training and/or advice.



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1. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot

2. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code

3. www.britishcanoeing.org.uk

4. www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/You-Your-Canoe-and-the-Marine-Environment.pdf

5. www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry/index.cfm

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

(UAVs – aka Drones and Model Aircraft)



i

If you own and/or fly a UAV you must register with the Civil Aviation Authority before you fly. See the CAA website for more details:

www.register-drones.caa.co.uk/drone-code/getting-what-you-need-to-fly

Respect

- Always follow the **Drone Code**¹ to make sure that you fly safely and legally.
- Always keep your UAV in direct sight and make sure you have a full view of the surrounding airspace.
- Keep your distance from other people and property:
 - Never fly closer than 50m to people, properties, buildings or vehicles.
 - Never fly closer than 150m to a crowd (of 1000+ people) or built-up area.
- Be aware of any **local restrictions or Byelaws that may restrict the use of UAVs**².



Protect

- Before flying your UAV, be aware of **local nature conservation designations**³ and seek any necessary consents or permissions. Avoid flying over National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves, SPAs or National Trust land.
- Give space to wildlife. Be guided by the Drone Code and do not fly where you'll disturb or endanger animals and wildlife. Look out for signage about wildlife and follow the advice displayed or given by site wardens.
- Retreat to a safe distance if birds or animals show signs of reacting to or being disturbed by UAV activity. Remember that many seal haul-out sites and breeding birds have legal protection against deliberate or reckless disturbance and harassment.

1. www.register-drones.caa.co.uk/drone-code
2. For example, flight is prohibited on National Trust property www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/follow-the-history-of-our-places-with-land-map
3. www.magic.defra.gov.uk

Enjoy

The Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast make a stunning setting for aerial photography for responsible UAV users.

For more information on drone safety and laws, visit:
www.dronesafe.uk

To register your drone, visit:
www.register-drones.caa.co.uk

Bait Collection and Hand Gathering

Respect

- For your safety, check local tide times and be aware of local hazards and conditions.
- Observe local byelaws and regulations about where and when bait can be collected, and the types and sizes of animals that can be gathered by hand.
- Areas with restrictions include Boulmer Haven and the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve.
- Details of the size and number of crustaceans such as crab and lobster that you can take are available from [Northumberland IFCA](#)¹ (for North Tyneside and Northumberland) and from [Marine Scotland](#)².
- Seek permission from landowners before deploying crab tiles, tyres, or other fisheries aggregation devices. Materials such as stones and tiles are better for the environment than artificial objects such as tyres which may degrade leach chemicals over time.
- When bait digging, backfill holes for the safety of others and to maintain intertidal habitats.
- To help protect fixed structures don't dig round slipways, moorings and seawalls.

Protect

- Do not take more animals than you need for your own use or consumption.
- To help ensure viable populations of bait into the future:
- Do not dig-out an area – leave adult organisms to repopulate the area.
- Return any live, unused bait to the habitat from which you collected it.
- Don't take green spawning ragworm or king ragworm less than 100mm.
- When hand-gathering put rocks back in the same place and the same way up as you found them.
- Tread carefully so as not to damage delicate plants and animals.
- Give space to wildlife. 40-50m is usually enough for birds, or 100m for seals. If birds or animals react to your presence by becoming watchful, moving or flying away or making repeated alarm calls, then you're too close.
- Be guided by local Codes of Conduct such as the [NIFCA Periwinkle Gathering Code of Conduct](#)³ and the [Blyth Estuary Bait Collection Code of Conduct](#)⁴.

Enjoy

Sea angling is a popular hobby along our coast and species such as lugworm are collected to bait angling lines attract fish. Hand gathering of shellfish such as periwinkles and crabs for personal consumption is also a popular pastime along the coast.

1. www.nifca.gov.uk/byelaws
2. www.gov.scot/publications/landing-controls-for-crab-and-lobster
3. www.nifca.gov.uk/codes-of-conduct/periwinkle
4. www.nifca.gov.uk/recreational-sea-angling/blyth-estuary-code-of-conduct

Recreational Potting



Sea anglers can help collect data on the economic and social importance of their hobby through the Sea Angling Diary app: www.seaangling.org

Respect

- Abide by the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#)¹ (Scotland) or [The Countryside Code](#)² (England). These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside.
- Make sure you know what species you are allowed to take the local minimum sizes, catch limits³ and other restrictions⁴.
- If you are catching lobster or crab using a pot or creel between the Tyne and the Scottish border be aware of the requirement for a [NIFCA permit](#)⁵ and associated restrictions on pot numbers and daily catch limits.



Protect

- Give space to wildlife. 40-50m is usually enough for birds, or 100m for seals. If birds or animals react to your presence by becoming watchful, moving or flying away or making repeated alarm calls, then you're too close.
- Always return undersized or unwanted shellfish with care.
- Keep to footpaths, pathways or tracks when travelling to your mark, to avoid damaging sensitive habitats such as saltmarsh.

Enjoy

The waters of the Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast are home to a rich and diverse marine life, including a wide variety of commercial and recreational crustacea species. Recreational fishing with creels and pots is a hobby enjoyed by many.

1. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot
2. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code
3. For Northumberland/North Tyneside these are available at www.nifca.gov.uk/byelaws and for Scotland at www.gov.scot/publications/unlicensed-hobby-fishermen
4. Addition restrictions including prohibitions on the landing of v-notched lobster, mutilated, berried or soft-bodied crabs and lobster see [The Lobsters and Crawfish \(Prohibition of Fishing and Landing\) Order 2000](#) and the [2017 Amendment](#) and [The Lobsters and Crawfish \(Prohibition of Fishing and Landing\) \(Scotland\) Order 1999](#)
5. www.nifca.gov.uk/about/faqs

Rockpooling



New to rockpooling?
See this online video guide from the Natural History Museum www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/how-to-go-rockpooling.html
Look out for useful Codes of Conduct for Rockpooling such as the one for the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve

Respect

- For your safety, check local tide times and be aware of local hazards and conditions.
- Abide by the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#)¹ (Scotland) or [The Countryside Code](#)² (England). These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside.
- Be aware of any local byelaws and other restrictions effecting access. Look out for signage and always follow the guidance displayed or guidance given by site wardens.
- Bin your litter or take it home; it spoils the beauty of the place for others and can be dangerous to wildlife.

Protect

- Tread carefully so as not to damage delicate plants and animals.
- Leave animals and seaweeds where you find them and replace overturned rocks.
- Use care when lifting up rocks or seaweed to look underneath and immediately replace them carefully. Do not pull creatures out of crevices or remove those stuck to rocks.
- Only put one creature at a time into your bucket or tray. Putting lots in at once can be very stressful for them. Try not to keep them in there for longer than is necessary and return them at the earliest opportunity.
- Remember that many creatures have a home territory. When you have finished please return them all to where they came from.
- Take photos instead of removing nature as souvenirs.
- Give space to wildlife. 40-50m is usually enough for birds, or 100m for seals. If birds or animals react to your presence by becoming watchful, moving or flying away or making repeated alarm calls, then you're too close.

Enjoy

Berwickshire and Northumberland coast has some of the most diverse rocky shore in the UK and is a fantastic place for families to explore the variety of marine life found there.

Wanting to take crab or lobster home for consumption? See our Recreational Potting section for details of local restrictions and permit requirements.



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1. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot

2. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code

Useful Contacts

Emergency services
For marine mammal strandings
To report a wildlife crime

999
(office hours) 01825 765546
111

Marine & Coastal Partnerships

Berwickshire and Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership www.xbordercurrents.co.uk

Local Councils

Scottish Borders Council www.scotborders.gov.uk 01835 824000
Northumberland County Council www.northumberland.gov.uk 0345 600 6400
North Tyneside Council www.northtyneside.gov.uk 0345 2000 101

Statutory Conservation Bodies - Scotland

NatureScot www.nature.scot 01463 725000
SEPA www.sepa.org.uk 03000 996699
Marine Scotland www.marine.gov.scot 0300 244 4000

Statutory Conservation Bodies - England

Natural England www.gov.uk 0300 060 3900
–search Natural England
Environment Agency www.gov.uk 0370 8506 506
–search Environment Agency
Marine Management Organisation www.gov.uk 0300 123 1032
–search MMO
Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority www.nifca.gov.uk 01670 797676
Northumberland Coast AONB www.northumberlandcoastaonb.org 07774 715744

Wildlife Charities - Scotland

National Trust for Scotland www.nts.org.uk 01890 771443
RSPB www.rspb.org.uk 01767 680551
Scottish Wildlife Trust www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk 0131 312 7765

Wildlife Charities - England

The National Trust www.nationaltrust.org.uk 01289 389244
Northumberland Wildlife Trust www.nwt.org.uk 0191 284 6884
RSPB www.rspb.org.uk 01767 680551

Nature Reserves

St Abbs Head National Nature Reserve www.nts.org.uk 01890 771443
Berwickshire Marine Reserve www.berwickshiremarinereserve.org.uk 01890752509
Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve www.gov.uk 01289 381470
The Farne Islands National Nature Reserve www.nationaltrust.org.uk 01289 389244
Coquet Island Bird Reserve www.rspb.org.uk
Hauxley Nature Reserve www.nwt.org.uk 01665 568324
St Mary's Island Local Nature Reserve www.northtyneside.gov.uk 0191 643 4777

Ports and Harbours

Eyemouth Harbour www.eyemouth-harbour.co.uk 01890 752494
Berwick Harbour www.portofberwick.co.uk 01289 307404
North Sunderland (Seahouses) Harbour www.nsh.org.uk 01665 720033
Warkworth Harbour Commission (Amble Harbour) www.warkworthharbour.co.uk 01665 710306
Port of Blyth www.portofblyth.co.uk 01670 352066
Port of Tyne www.portoftyne.co.uk 0191 455 2671

Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI) www.rnli.org 0300 300 9990
– RNLI Eyemouth
– RNLI Berwick upon Tweed
– RNLI Seahouses
– RNLI Craster
– RNLI Amble
– RNLI Newbiggin
– RNLI Blyth
– RNLI Cullercoats
– RNLI Tynemouth

Recreation Groups

The Kennel Club British Horse Society www.thekennelclub.org.uk 01296 318540
Cycling UK www.bhs.org.uk 0247 6840500
Angling Trust www.cyclinguk.org 01483 238301
Royal Yachting Association www.anglingtrust.net 0343 5077006
Green Blue www.rya.org.uk 02380 604100
British Canoeing www.thegreenblue.org.uk 02380 604227
GB non-native species secretariat www.britishcanoeing.org.uk 0300 0119 500
PADI Project Aware www.nonnativespecies.org
British Sub Aqua Club www.projectaware.org 0117 3007313
British Swimming www.bsac.com 01223 350675
Civil Aviation Authority www.britishswimming.org
Drone Safe www.caa.co.uk 0330 0221500
www.dronesafe.uk 0330 0221500

Tourist Information

Berwickshire www.visitberwickshirecoast.co.uk
Northumberland www.visitnorthumberland.com
North Tyneside www.visitnorthtyneside.com

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Berwickshire & Northumberland
Marine Nature Partnership

NORTHUMBRIAN
WATER *living water*

