



# Surveying Somerset's Brilliant Coast

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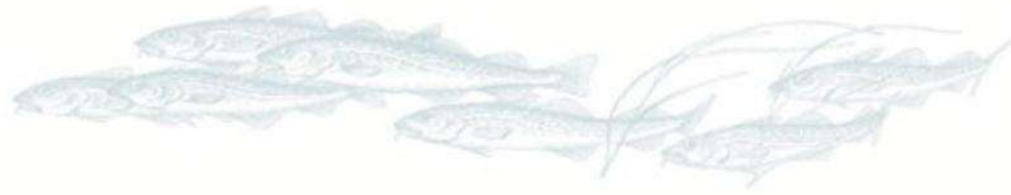






FIRE EXIT













# Somerset's Brilliant Coast

## Blue Anchor Bay



The England Coast Path is a new National Trail opening in sections around the entire English coast. When complete it will be the longest coastal walking route in the world at over 2,600 miles in length. But even so it is much more than just a path. It gives access to beaches, cliff-tops, and amazing habitats around our coast.



Blue Anchor sits at a landscape junction. To the east of the seafront are dramatic cliffs stretching back to Watchet and to the west is the low sand and shingle bank that runs all the way along to Dunster Beach and then on to Minehead.

The cliffs are formed from grey Jurassic rock dating from between 144 and 208 million years ago and red Triassic rocks which came into being between 208 and 245 million years ago. The Triassic rocks, being the older of the two, should be lying below the Jurassic rocks but folding and shifting of the Earth's crust have allowed them to sit side by side at this particular spot.

The red Triassic cliffs do not contain fossils but the Jurassic ones do. Ammonites are a feature of the Jurassic rocks but at Blue Anchor the remains of fossilised fish, their teeth, small bone fragments and vertebrae are particularly abundant.

This beach is something of a seaweed hotspot with a good number of the 120 or so species recorded in Somerset found here including the brown seaweeds Channelled Wrack, Bladder Wrack, Toothed Wrack and Egg Wrack, the red seaweeds Common Coral Weed and Pink Paint Weed and the green seaweeds Sea Lettuce and Gut Weed.



Seaweeds are not plants they are Macro Algae. Unlike plants seaweeds have no roots, they do have a holdfast which literally does what the word suggests it just holds the seaweed fast onto the rock.



If you spend a little time searching unders seaweeds as the tide drops you will find Common Shore Crabs and also young Edible Crabs. Also amongst the seaweed are Common Periwinkles, Flat Periwinkles, which are often orange, and Common and Flat Topshells. In rockpools you will find small fish called Sand Gobies, Common Prawns and Hermit Crabs.

At low tide it is possible to see the structures built by the Reef Building Worm *Sabellaria alveolata*. These worms build a honeycomb like structure from grains of sand. These reefs may cover several square meters and provide hiding places for very young fish and crabs and many other small marine creatures.



- Cliffs
- Sand
- Shingle
- Salt marsh
- Coast path
- Coast path winter route
- Heathland
- Woodland

### How can you help

Please allow the birds to feed and roost without being disturbed so they are strong enough to migrate back to their summer home lands by not walking too close to them and not allowing your dog to chase them.

### Did you know?

Scientists are on hand to help you find out more about the wildlife in your area.



Channelled Wrack on a rock



### Did you know?

The red sand, blonde sand, and the red sand are all found around Minehead.







# Coastal conference October 2016

A poster for the 'Somerset Coastal Conference' held on Saturday 22 October. The poster is titled 'DO YOU LIKE TO BE BESIDE THE SEA?' and includes the Wildlife Trusts Somerset logo. It describes the conference as an all-day event to celebrate coastal wildlife, featuring talks by Stephen Moss and Nigel Phillips. The poster also includes contact information for Nigel Phillips and a list of sponsors at the bottom, including WWF, England, IFCA, Somerset Wildlife Trust, and Sea Watch Foundation.

**DO YOU LIKE TO BE BESIDE THE SEA?**  
Whether you just enjoy a good walk by the sea, photographing wildlife or are interested in coastal and marine conservation, then sign up to our first ever...

**Somerset Coastal Conference**  
Saturday 22 October, 10.00am-4.00pm  
St Marys Church Centre, 27 St Marys Street, Nether Stowey TAS 1LJ

An all day conference to celebrate the wonderful wildlife to be found along our coast

Opening address by acclaimed Naturalist, Author and BAFTA-winning TV producer **STEPHEN MOSS**

**Topics include:**  
Coastal Birds, Marine Mammals, Intertidal and Rockpool wildlife, Fish on our coastal waters, Coastal Plants, an overview of Steart Marshes - the UK's largest new wetland reserve, a look at the importance of our Marine Conservation Zones - and more on how to get involved with wildlife recording projects and sea-watch events.

All enquiries and to book a place please contact  
Nigel Phillips Somerset Wildlife Trust Living Coast Ambassador [nigelphillips@thesomersetcoast.co.uk](mailto:nigelphillips@thesomersetcoast.co.uk)  
Tel 01278 732266 or write to 37 Castle Street Nether Stowey TAS 1LN  
Cost is £5 for the day. All cheques made out to Nigel Phillips.  
All profits from the conference will go to Somerset Wildlife Trust

**Sponsors:** WWF, ENGLAND, IFCA, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Sea Watch Foundation





## All of these species can be found on Somerset's Brilliant Coast...



**European Eels**  
migrate in their millions, thousands of miles across the Atlantic, enter rivers and end up in the Somerset Levels.



### Waterfowl and Waders

The Severn Estuary is an overwintering feeding ground for up to 100,000 waterfowl and waders.

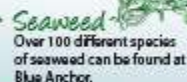


Over 110 fish species have been recorded in the estuary among the highest of any estuary in the UK.

**Grey Seals, Common Dolphins and Harbour Porpoises** can be seen from Hurlstone Point.

### Submerged Forests

4,000 year old submerged forests can be found at a number of locations, which stood as woodlands before sea levels rose.



**Seaweed**  
Over 100 different species of seaweed can be found at Blue Anchor.

### Honeycomb Reef

These reef structures, up to 30 centimetres high, built by industrious Honeycomb Worms, may cover hundreds of square metres and can be seen at very low tide.

### Orchids

The wonderful Bee Orchid as well as Common Spotted and Pyramidal Orchids can be seen in profusion if you know where to look.

**Oystercatcher and Ringed Plover** can be found at Wall Common.

Key	
	Cliffs
	Sand
	Shingle
	Salt Marsh
	Heathland
	Woodland
	Coastal Signage

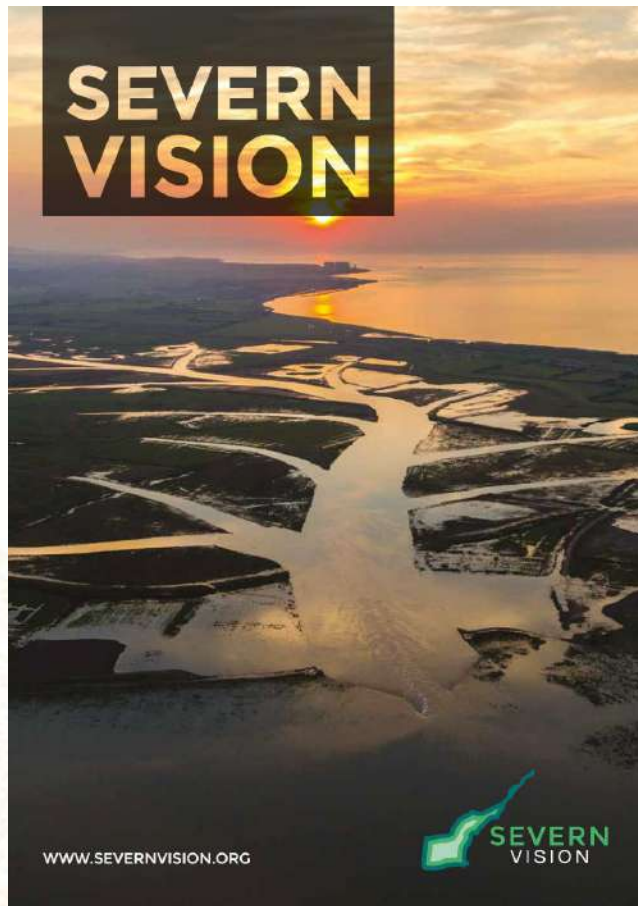
### Intertidal Species

A host of intertidal species such as Edible Crab, Squat Lobster, Sun Star, Painted Topshells and Strawberry Anemones can be found in Porlock Weir as well as Watchet, Minehead and Hurlstone Point.



The Peter De Haan Charitable Trust





## OUR VISION...

Is for a Severn Estuary that:

- is restored as a healthy functioning ecosystem, valued for its internationally important wildlife, habitats and landscapes;
- provides more benefits for people, local communities, places, and economies, including greater resilience to climate change; and
- becomes a natural powerhouse, where development is planned and managed in a way that sustains and enhances the estuary's resources.



<http://severnvision.org/>





# OUR SEVEN STEP VISION

## TO DELIVERING A MAGNIFICENT ESTUARY



The Severn, one of the UK's natural wonders, deserves much better. A magnificent future, where the collective impact of all those who use, care about, and value the estuary is positive for nature and people. An environment where leadership is strong but inclusive and where the urgent need to close the gap between vision and reality is used to inspire new and better approaches. We offer these 'seven steps' to help catalyse a dialogue with all those who can help make the changes necessary to restore this magnificent estuary.

1

### AVOID FURTHER LOSS OF NATURE

The most practical and (cost) effective way of sustaining existing nature and landscapes is to prevent habitat destruction and degradation. Beyond this where damage is genuinely unavoidable, no net loss should occur within the estuary's bounds of its wildlife, habitats, significant landscapes or the benefits they deliver.

2

### RESTORE NATURE

The restoration of the estuary is fundamental to ensuring that it can act as a healthy, fully functioning natural system that both supports nature and continues to provide a wide range of benefits to people. We need a bold new approach to restoration at this scale, and our ambition is to see 6,000 ha<sup>1</sup> of intertidal and associated habitat created by 2040, with half of this by 2025.

3

### USE COASTAL HABITATS TO REDUCE CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

Intertidal habitats can provide efficient and cost effective solutions to help protect people and property from coastal erosion, storms and flooding. The estuary's role in building more resilience to climate change should be championed as a good investment for a safer and more productive future.

4

### USE THE ESTUARY TO HELP REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS

Intertidal and associated habitats are large reservoirs of so-called 'blue carbon'<sup>2</sup>. Conserving them will retain this and, in the long-term, new habitat creation can lock up additional carbon. New initiatives are needed that blend conserving and restoring habitats as complementary and additive strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, with appropriate financing.

5

### GROW KNOWLEDGE TO ENABLE BETTER DECISION MAKING

There remain many gaps in our understanding of the estuary and how it functions. A wide range of stakeholders can provide support for building our collective knowledge of the estuary. Our Map Journal ([severnvision.org](http://severnvision.org)) focuses on the estuary's biodiversity, natural assets and services, but there are knowledge gaps waiting to be filled in these and other areas, and these are key to better decision making.

6

### DEVELOP - IN HARMONY WITH NATURE - TIDAL RENEWABLE ENERGY

A renewable energy revolution is at the heart of fighting dangerous climate change which is itself arguably the biggest threat to nature. Tidal energy from the Severn has a seductive place in this, but it should not itself become another driver of biodiversity loss and wider environmental damage. Tidal energy should be developed in harmony with nature and not reduce the stock of 'natural capital'.

7

### ESTABLISH STRONGER GOVERNANCE FOR A SUSTAINABLE SEVERN

The estuary system is a great source of natural, economic and cultural wealth for the west of Britain and an integrated management approach that includes all interests is needed. Existing approaches need to be urgently examined and adapted to ensure stronger, inclusive 'whole estuary' governance that is fit for delivering a restored and sustainable estuary.



<http://severnvision.org/>

































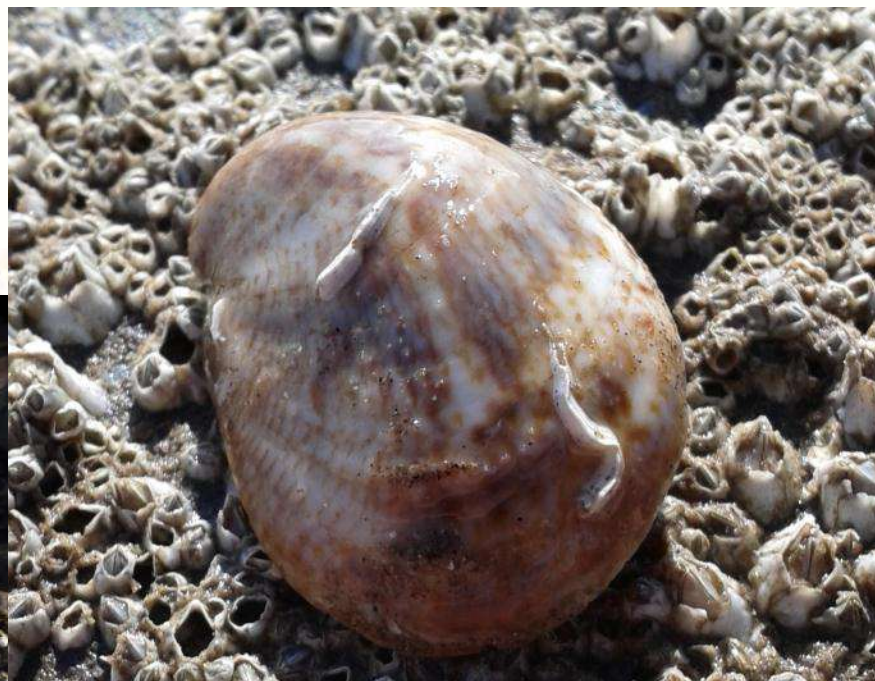
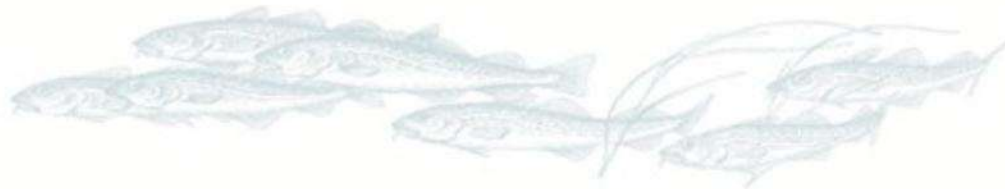




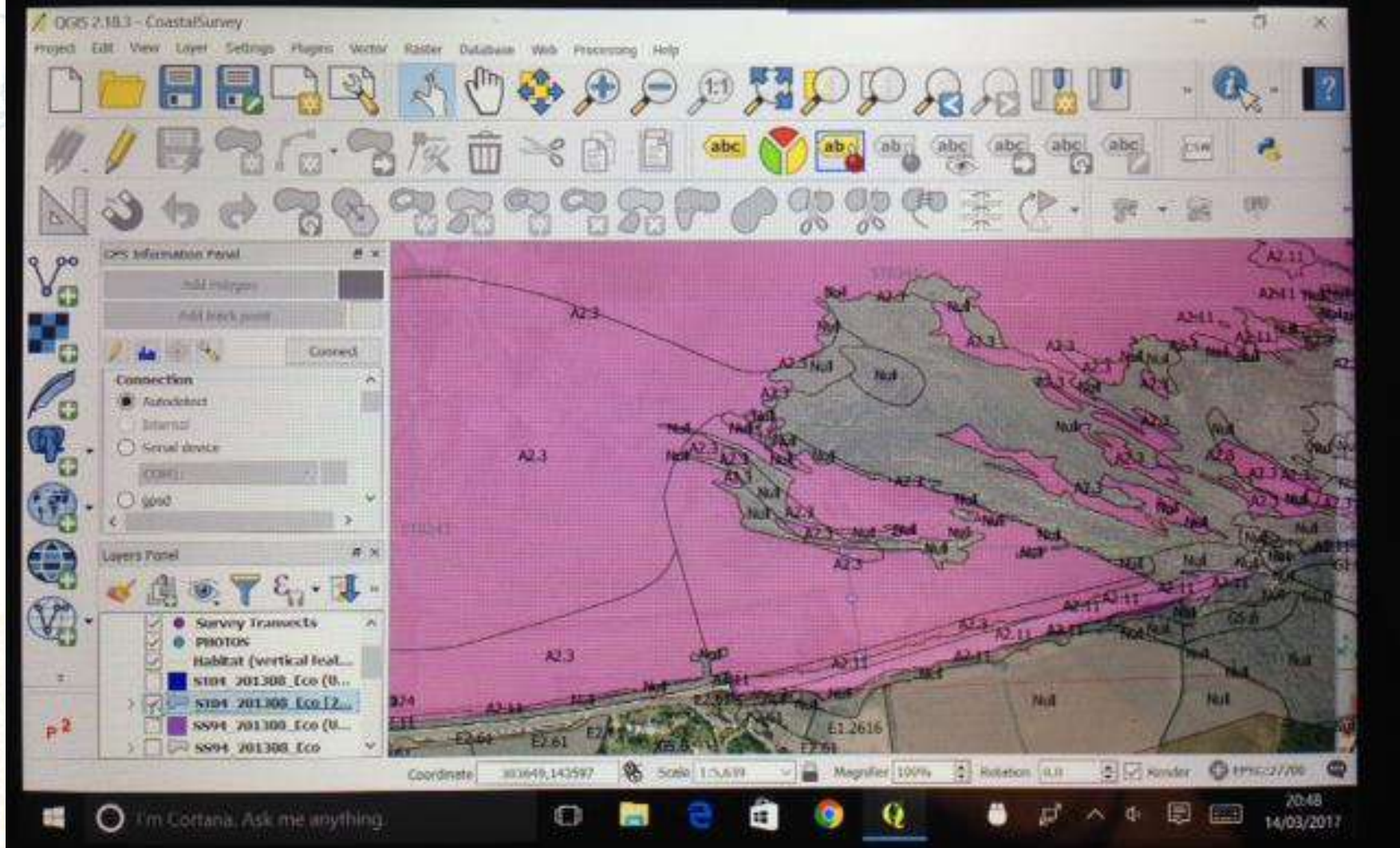


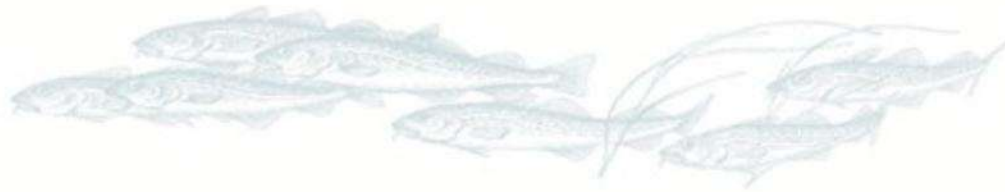












Would you like to get involved?

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