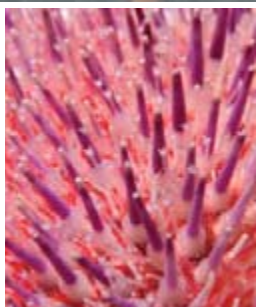


Salcombe - Kingsbridge Estuary



A unique British estuary



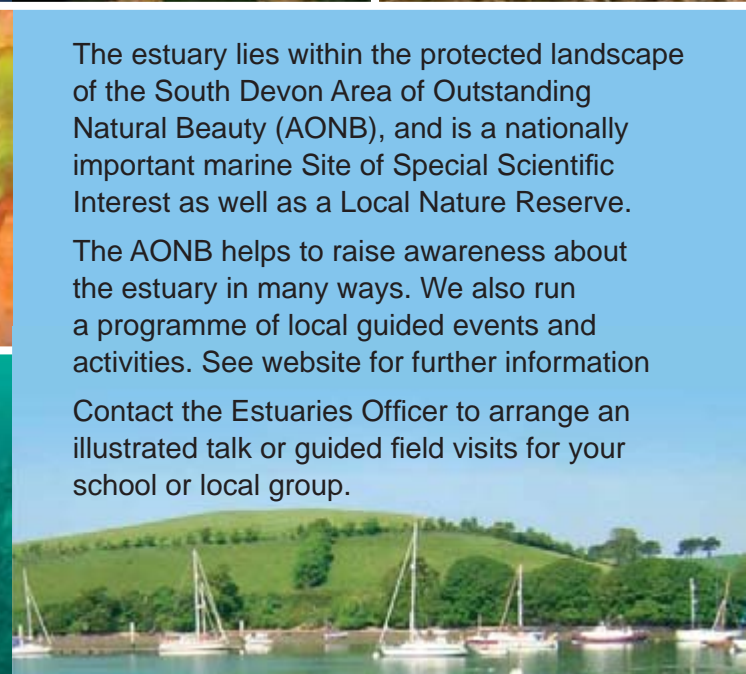
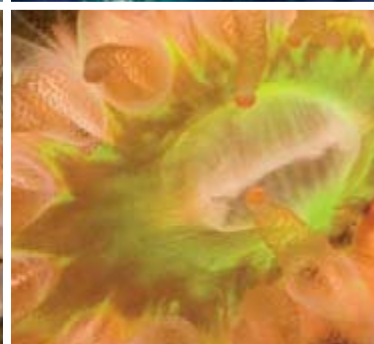
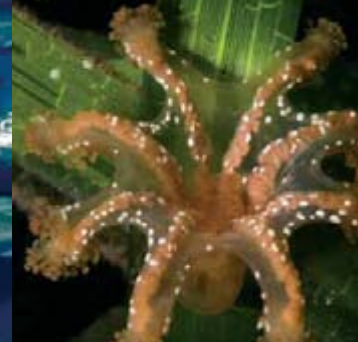
and marine nature reserve

A special place for all

As with most estuaries in the South West, the Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary is a 'ria' – a river cut valley that was formed and then flooded during the last ice age. However, ours has lost its river or rivers and is now more of a sheltered tidal inlet of the sea.

With its unusual geography, the Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary is a wonderfully rich haven for wildlife and people alike; from teeming rockpools to seagrass jungles, seahorses and dolphins to the odd basking shark. But it does need your help to keep it this way. Without a little care and understanding, many seemingly innocent activities can damage sensitive areas. Read on to find out more about this fascinating watery world.





The estuary lies within the protected landscape of the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and is a nationally important marine Site of Special Scientific Interest as well as a Local Nature Reserve.

The AONB helps to raise awareness about the estuary in many ways. We also run a programme of local guided events and activities. See website for further information

Contact the Estuaries Officer to arrange an illustrated talk or guided field visits for your school or local group.

... the Salcombe-Kingsbridge estuary is a wonderfully rich haven for wildlife and people alike; ...

Be a part of your estuarine community ... don't be apart from it!

Key estuarine communities

Seagrass

Seagrasses are flowering plants that live in the sea, quite different from seaweeds. Their meadows support exciting and amazingly rich underwater jungles of sealife. Look carefully and you could spot a stalked jellyfish, a colourful cuttlefish or even a seahorse! For further information and guidance, including how to report sightings – see our dedicated seagrass leaflet or the Salcombe Harbour Guide.

Seagrass meadows are very easily damaged by boat propellers and moorings. If you find yourself within seagrass (see map) we do ask you to stop, lift your engine and use your oars or paddles until well clear. Avoid anchoring over the beds or allowing your boat to ground or drag on them.

Seagrass meadows are magical for snorkelling but for your own safety do stay in the shallows. NB - This is a very busy harbour and you must ensure that boats can clearly see you.

The Saltstone

This is an unusually sheltered rocky island at the heart of this marine inlet. It is home to some tiny and fragile sealife including rare red seaweeds and unusual marine worms. It's a fascinating habitat but the interesting features are hidden from casual view so we do ask that you avoid the Saltstone except in emergency.

Dolphins, seals and even basking sharks

You might well see larger marine animals within the estuary. If you are lucky, please give them space and respect. Please be aware that the harassment of some of these animals is a criminal offence - see Salcombe Harbour Guide for guidance.

If they do come to your boat, navigate with extreme care - slow down further and carry out all manoeuvres in a smooth and gentle manner. The estuary is relatively narrow and shallow to these animals and they need plenty of space. Here, these animals are best observed from elevated parts of the shore.

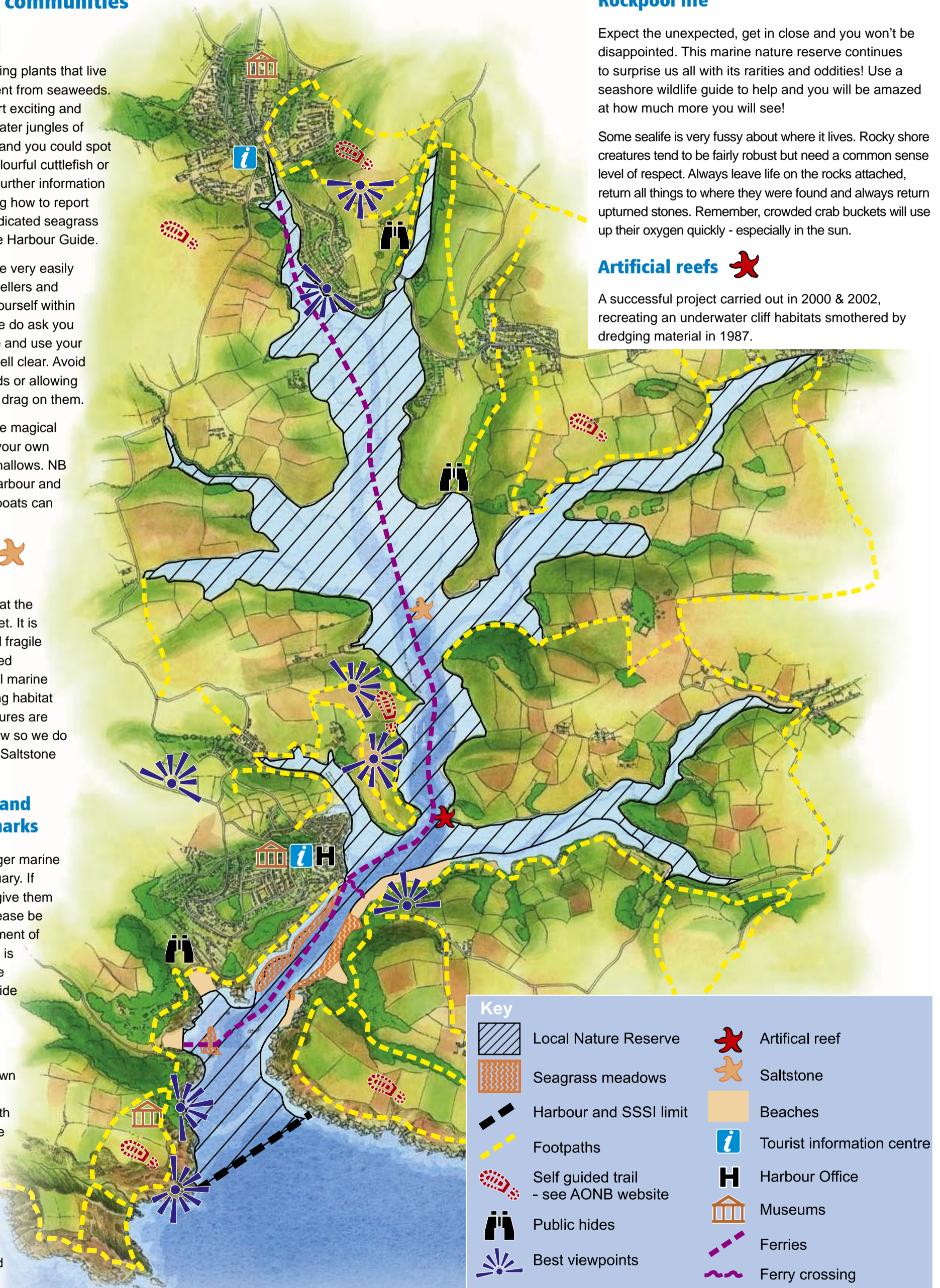
Rockpool life

Expect the unexpected, get in close and you won't be disappointed. This marine nature reserve continues to surprise us all with its rarities and oddities! Use a seashore wildlife guide to help and you will be amazed at how much more you will see!

Some sealife is very fussy about where it lives. Rocky shore creatures tend to be fairly robust but need a common sense level of respect. Always leave life on the rocks attached, return all things to where they were found and always return upturned stones. Remember, crowded crab buckets will use up their oxygen quickly - especially in the sun.

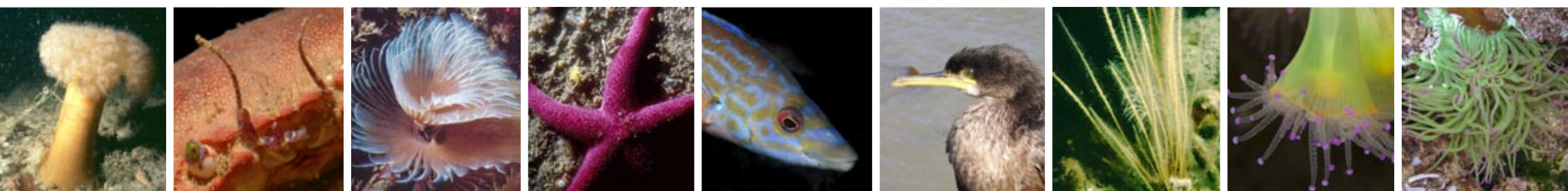
Artificial reefs

A successful project carried out in 2000 & 2002, recreating an underwater cliff habitats smothered by dredging material in 1987.



Key

	Local Nature Reserve		Artificial reef
	Seagrass meadows		Saltstone
	Harbour and SSSI limit		Beaches
	Footpaths		Tourist information centre
	Self guided trail - see AONB website		Harbour Office
	Public hides		Museums
	Best viewpoints		Ferries
			Ferry crossing



Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Management

An extensive environmental management plan is produced by the South Devon AONB Estuaries Partnership, together with the local community, businesses and interest groups. This wider Estuaries Partnership encourages the sustainable use, enjoyment and understanding of the estuary, alongside a level of care that aims to conserve our estuaries heritage for all generations.

The Estuary Environmental Management Plan is reviewed every 5 years by the Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum. Copies of the current plan is available on the AONB website.



Local Nature Reserve Byelaws

This estuary is protected by a safety net of LNR byelaws. These aim to balance the needs of people with the protection and conservation of estuary habitats and wildlife. Some potentially damaging activities are controlled. The byelaws control open fires, the use of vehicles on the foreshore and the commercial collection of bait. They also require dogs to be under close control.

Copies of these byelaws are available in the Harbour Office, local libraries or on the AONB website. If you are at all unsure, please check.

Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum

This Estuary Forum is open to the local community and users of the estuary. At Forum meetings environmental concerns may be raised, differences aired and common policies and actions are agreed. Please come along if you'd like to take a more active role. The Forum is coordinated by the AONB Estuaries Officer.



For further information

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Estuaries Partnership
Encouraging sustainable use and enjoyment

