Exe Estuary SPA

Description:

The Exe Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) is located in Devon on the English south coast. The site extends 10 km south from Exeter to the open sea at Dawlish Warren, protecting 23.5 km². It comprises the waters, foreshore, low-lying land, three saltmarshes and an unusual double spit across the mouth of the estuary, and the sand dunes of Dawlish Warren. The mudflats and sandflats support eelgrass (Zostera spp.) and Enteromorpha spp. beds and contain an abundance of invertebrates, including extensive mussel (Mytilus edulis) beds, which together provide rich feeding habitats for wintering waders and wildfowl. This complex of coastal habitats supports internationally important numbers of wintering and passage waterbirds.

Qualifying Features:

Exe Estuary SPA supports populations of European importance of the following species: overwintering avocet (Recurvirostra avosetta) and slavonian grebe (Podiceps auritus). The area also regularly supports at least 20,000 waterfowl.

Management:

- Codes of conduct, byelaws and guidance covering shore and water based activities, kitesurfing, bait collection, jetskis, canoes and angling.
- Voluntary Exclusion Zones for canoes.
- Exe Estuary Management Partnership.

Stakeholder Concerns:

None raised.
### MPA: Exe Estuary SPA

**No. Stakeholders:** 1 online & 1 workshop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Intensity</th>
<th>Confidence</th>
<th>MPA Extent</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board sports</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geophysical surveys</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor boating</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jetskis</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddle sports</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parascending</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailing (non-motorised)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming / Snorkelling</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towed water sports</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife watching from the sea</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bait collection</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach recreation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>↑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coasteering</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land boarding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorsports (quad bikes, motorbikes)</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle access (cars on foreshore)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife watching from the land</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>➔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drone use</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gliding (unpowered)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft (powered)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>➔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY**

- **Frequency:**
  - 4: Regular/daily
  - 3: Regular/weekends
  - 2: Seasonally
  - 1: Sporadically
  - 0: Does not occur
- **Duration:**
  - 4: >8 hours
  - 3: 4-8 hours
  - 2: 2-4 hours
  - 1: <2 hours
  - 0: Does not occur
- **Participation:**
  - 6: >100
  - 5: 51-100
  - 4: 21-50
  - 3: 11-20
  - 2: 6-10
  - 1: 1-5
  - 0: Does not occur
- **Intensity:**
  - 8: 45-96 high
  - 5: 24-40 Med-high
  - 4: 9-20 Low-med
  - 3: 1-8 Low
  - 0: Does not occur
- **Confidence:**
  - M: High
  - L: Low
  - ?: Data missing
- **MPA Extent:**
  - Whole MPA (solid)
  - Part of MPA (shaded)
  - Does not occur
- **Trend:**
  - ➔: Increase
  - ➔: Stay the same
  - ➔: Decrease
  - ➔: Does not occur
Non-licensable activities which occur in and around the Exe Estuary SPA

**Water based activities**
- Board sports
- Geophysical surveys
- Motor boating
- Jetskis
- Sailing
- Towed water sports
- Wildlife watching from the sea

**Land based activities**
- Bait collection
- Beach recreation
- Land boarding
- Motorsports
- Vehicle access (cars on foreshore)
- Wildlife watching from the land

**Aerial activities**
- Gliding (unpowered)
- Aircraft (powered)

**Supplementary data**
- SCUBA diving sites (Seasearch)
- Bait collection areas 2016-2018 (IFCA)
- General boating areas (RYA)

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**Marine Protected Area Designated Features - SPA Supporting Habitats**

**Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide (H1140) polygons**

**SPA_SFCODE**
- Intertidal coarse sediment (A2.1)
- Intertidal sand and muddy sand (A2.2)
- Intertidal mud (A2.3)
- Intertidal mixed sediments (A2.4)
- Intertidal seagrass beds (A2.61)

**Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time (H1110) polygons**

**SPA_SFCODE**
- Subtidal coarse sediment (A5.1)
- Subtidal sand (A5.2)
- Subtidal mud (A5.3)
- Subtidal mixed sediment (A5.4)
- Subtidal seagrass beds (A5.53)

**Reefs (H1170) points**

**SPA_SFCODE**
- Intertidal rock (A1)
- Intertidal biogenic reefs: *Sabellaria alveolata* (A2.71)
- Intertidal biogenic reefs: mussel beds (SF_SH_5)
- Infralittoral rock (A3)
- Circalittoral rock (A4)
- Subtidal biogenic reefs: *Sabellaria spp.* (A5.61)
- Subtidal biogenic reefs: mussel beds (SF_SH_6)

**Reefs (H1170) polygons**

**SPA_SFCODE**
- Intertidal rock (A1)
- Intertidal biogenic reefs: *Sabellaria alveolata* (A2.71)
- Intertidal biogenic reefs: mussel beds (SF_SH_5)
- Infralittoral rock (A3)
- Circalittoral rock (A4)
- Subtidal biogenic reefs: *Sabellaria spp.* (A5.61)
- Subtidal biogenic reefs: mussel beds (SF_SH_6)

**SPA_SFCODE**
- Saltmarsh (A2.5)