

MARINE DATA TRAIL

Suggested donation
£1

This trail is all about discovering wildlife, exploring marine habitats, and finding out more about the data **you** can collect to protect them. At each point on the map you'll find out about a new species or habitat, and discover a citizen science project that you can get involved with.

Citizen science is the collection or analysis of scientific data by members of the general public. Opportunities to gather data are available both digitally, from the comfort of your home, or out in the field. There's something for everyone!

GOOD FOR SCIENCE

More people means more data! Involving the public in research overcomes barriers such as limited funding, geographical range, and the number of scientists available to carry out field work. Data collected by citizen scientists allows us to discover more about the environment and what we need to do to protect it.

GOOD FOR PEOPLE

Taking part in an environmental survey is a great way to get outdoors, meet new people, develop new skills, and take meaningful action for nature. Time spent outdoors can benefit mental and physical health, allowing people to learn about wildlife and connect with the natural world.

THE TOP OF WEST BEACH



WALKING ALONG WEST BEACH



HARBOUR POINT



THE SCOTTISH SEABIRD CENTRE



THE ROCKY SHORE, EAST BEACH



THE SANDY SHORE, EAST BEACH





SCAN ME

Each stop on this map links to a short video, where one of our team or brilliant project partners will explain more about a citizen science project that you can get involved with. You can access these videos by scanning this QR code with a smartphone, or by heading to www.seabird.org, selecting our *Projects* page, and clicking on *Marine Data Trail*.

1

SHORESEARCH

The rocky shore is teeming with life, from hermit crabs to brittle stars. Take a few minutes to peak into the rockpools and see what's around. **Shoresearch** is The Wildlife Trust's national citizen science survey of the intertidal shore. It's a great way to explore your local coast, learn more about the wildlife found there and add to our understanding of this important habitat. Volunteers are trained to identify and record the wildlife on shores across the UK. The data collected by this project helps experts to monitor our fragile sea life and better understand the effects of pollution, climate change and invasive alien species. Find out how you can volunteer by visiting wildlifetrusts.org and searching *Shoresearch*.



2

SEAGRASS SPOTTER

Seagrasses are flowering plants that live in shallow sheltered areas along our coast. Seagrass meadows are hugely valuable as fish nurseries and they absorb vast amounts of carbon, helping in the fight against climate change, and help to reduce pollution in coastal waters around the globe. But, despite their recognised importance, seagrass meadows are in a degraded and perilous state across the world, and are being lost at the same rate as rainforests and coral reefs but receive a fraction of the attention. Project Seagrass have developed the **Seagrass Spotter** app, which provides citizen scientists with the tools that they need to contribute essential data about this amazing habitat. Go to seagrassspotter.org to find out more.



3

BTO PROJECTS

As you walk along the beach, have a look at the birds around you. They might be out on the water, along the tideline, or on the rooftops or vegetation to your left. The **British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)** coordinate a number of projects that aim to collect more information about birds in a number of different habitats. From structured weekly or monthly surveys to recording your casual sightings, the BTO host projects appropriate for birdwatchers of all levels of experience. Find a project to suit you at bto.org.



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4

THE GREAT NURDLE HUNT

Head to the very top of the beach, where the sand meets the wall. This is the perfect spot for a nurdle hunt. Nurdles are small plastic pellets about the size of a lentil. Countless billions are used each year to make nearly all of our plastic products, and unfortunately some of these end up washing up on our shores. **The Great Nurdle Hunt** is the charity Fidra's flagship project working to end nurdle pollution. They provide tools and information so that anyone can easily collect data about nurdle pollution. This information helps Fidra to start conversations with industry and governments around the world, working to provide solutions and prevent the pollution at the source. Can you see any nurdles lying on the sand at the top of the beach? Visit nurdlehunt.org for a nurdle ID sheet and to find out more.



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5

WDC SHOREWATCH

You're standing at the North Berwick **Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) Shorewatch** site, where trained volunteers regularly watch out for whales and dolphins and collect information about what they see. More than 20 incredible species of whale, dolphin, and porpoise can be spotted around the Scottish coast, and Shorewatch volunteers are given free training to build the identification skills needed to survey them. Take 5-10 minutes to scan the ocean around you for fins, splashes, or disturbances in the water...You never know what you might see! Find out more about WDC and the Shorewatch project by visiting whales.org/shorewatch.



6

THE ZOONIVERSE

It's not always possible to get outside to carry out surveys along the coastline. The **Zooniverse** enables everyone to take part in real cutting edge research online, from the comfort of your home. It creates opportunities for you to unlock answers and contribute to real discoveries, as well as building your survey skills. Some of our favourite marine projects include *SeabirdWatch*, *Floating Forests*, and *Killer Whale Count*. Head to zooniverse.org to get involved.



These 6 projects are just a taster of the vast range of brilliant citizen science projects working with volunteers to better understand and safeguard nature in the UK. For a longer list of marine projects, head to the *Citizen Science* page on our website: www.seabird.org.

