

Hayling Island – a bird haven

Whether nesting or overwintering, Hayling Island's coastline is home to a range of birds all year round.

Part of an internationally important shoreline, nesting birds make use of the unspoilt natural coastline during the spring and summer. In the autumn, many species of bird fly thousands of miles to Hayling Island to spend their winter feeding on the plants and animals provided by the mud at low tide. As you explore this coastline, see if you can spot the following...

Resident and summer birds

Rock Pipit

Anthus petrosus



Laying their nest tucked away under coastal vegetation or in rock crevices, the rock pipit feasts on shellfish, small fish, insects and seeds. Although resident in the UK, overwintering visitors from Norway may join them.

Sandwich tern

Sterna sandvicensis



Britain's largest breeding tern. A small group can be seen locally all year; they are joined in spring by birds who have travelled from Africa. Watch out for a slim white bird with a black cap diving

Black-headed gull

Chroicocephalus ridibundus



Sociable birds, these gulls only have their distinctive hoods over the summer. With a varied diet of worms, fish, insects and carrion, they tend to form small daytime flocks and larger roosting flocks.

Ringed Plover

Charadrius hiaticula



A resident bird joined in winter by those migrating from Greenland, Iceland and Scandinavia, they breed along our beaches. Eating insects, crustaceans and worms, they are fast movers, agitating sand with their feet to find prey.

Winter Birds

Brent goose

Smyrnum olusatrum



After breeding in Siberia, 10% of the global population migrate over 3,000 miles to reach the Solent – where mudflats provide a rich source of food. Brent geese are vegetarian and particularly enjoy eelgrass – an underwater flowering plant.

Oystercatcher

Haematopus ostralegus



A distinctive, stocky bird with a large reddish-orange bill, the Oystercatcher enjoys mussels, cockles and worms on the shoreline. A noisy bird with a high-pitched call, you may hear it before you see it!

Dunlin

Calidris alpina



One of the smallest waders on the coast; Dunlins from Iceland, Russia and Scandinavia overwinter in the Solent. Living off insects, snails and worms along the coast, they can be seen resting in large groups at high tide.

Sanderling

Calidris alba



Having flown in from Greenland or Scandinavia, Sanderling forage along the Solent coast for worms, fish and jellyfish. They dart amongst the waves to capture their prey. They can often be found on long, sandy beaches.



Make sure you follow the Coastal Code to protect our birds
Visit www.birdaware.org to find out more

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