

Bird Watching in Hope Cove

The Cottage Hotel, Hope Cove

Ordinance Survey Maps Landranger 191/192 and 202

Suggested Itinerary

DAY 1 (on your journey to the hotel)

Dawlish Nature Reserve at the Visitors Centre building on the west side of the Exe estuary (SX 985793) on the A379 to Cockwood. Continue on the minor road for one mile, turn left under the railway, car park probably 1.00. This is a mile long sandy spit with Information centre and one hide, allow 2 hours to walk around.

To the hotel (about 40 miles)

B3199 to Teignmouth: A381 Totnes and Kingsbridge towards Salcombe take second turning (sharp right) to Malborough, continue towards Hope Cove, turn left for Inner Hope and hotel is on the right.

Evening walk or drive to car park at Bolt Tail for headland stroll.

DAY 2 (Dartmoor area)

- Yarner Wood (NNR) and Headland Warren (including Soussons Down)

Yarner Wood - car park SX786789. From A38 (7) take A382 (Bovey Tracey) left on to B3344 then right towards Manaton for 2 miles. The road dips through the valley then climbs sharp right on to the moor, turn left immediately on the bend on a tarmac lane into the wood. Car park beyond the warden's cottages, 1 ½ mile trail. Return to Widecombe B3387 road for toilets at Haytor (2 ½ miles).

- Continue to Five Bridges (B3357) turn right on B3212 (Postbridge). Park just beyond the Warren House Inn in Bennets Cross car park for Headland Warren. Return via Postbridge, take left sign posted Bellever and park in 1 mile for short walk.

DAY 3 (Prawle Point and Slapton Ley)

Am, Prawle Point - National Trust car park at SX 775355 (24 MILES). A379 from Kingsbridge, turn off at Chillington for East Prawle village (minor road sometimes narrow). From the village keep right down 'no through road' to car park at bottom of hill.

Pm, Slapton Ley - return to A379 for Torcross and ahead to free car park at SX 226445 (toilets at Torcross).

The nature reserve, 211 hectares, consists of a shingle ridge, freshwater lake, reed marsh and swamp, wet meadows and woodland.

Evening walk on the coastal path, about a mile each way, to Thurlestone or from car park SX 676414, (National Trust fee possibly 1.50 back towards Hope).

DAY 4

- Great Haldon Bird of Prey viewpoint (40 miles from Hope) SX 881853 on the Dunchideock road from A38 (7) take Dunchideock road (see map).
- Steps Bridge, SX 802884 (car park and toilets) for Meadhaydown Wood and Dunsford Wood nature reserve 3 miles, 10-15 minutes from Great Haldon (or continue to Fingle Bridge, car park, toilets on Drewsteignton Road).
- Butterfly walk at Bullers Hill (see map)

Other Bird Watching Areas

- River Avon to Aveton Gifford SX 692473. 7 ½ miles from Hope by road to free car park. Walk on east side of estuary on tidal road and then footpath around a side inlet and via a ford back to the road and car park: in all about 2 miles, Essential at Low Tide.
- Exminster Marshes from A379 to Exminster village turn down lane towards Swan's Nest Inn, continue over the humpback bridge across the railway. Cross the first major dyke and stop at a small bumpy gravel area. A small path to the left leads to the marsh edge. From here walk down the canal towpath to turf.

Species you may see

Dawlish Warren

Declared a bird sanctuary in 1934 Terns, waders, warblers, (20 species breed), possible Kentish plover.

Bolt Tail to Bolt Head

Breeding area for curlew and little owl.

Dartmoor Area

Yarner Wood - pied flycatcher, increase following introduction of nest boxes; redstart, wood warbler, lesser spotted woodpecker, spotted flycatcher, blackcap, buzzard.

Headland Warren & Soussins

Wheatear, whinchat, ring ouzel, stonechat, tree pitpit, curlew, cuckoo, redpoll, lapwing, snipe, possible hobby, raven.

Bellever

Siskin & Cross Bill, Coal Tits Goldcrest.

Prawle Point

Coastal farmland, rocky outcrops, warblers, flycatchers, yellow hammers, curlew, possible hobby and little owl, grasshopper warbler. As the region's top migration point anything might turn

up - passage seabirds, manx shearwater, fulmar, red breasted merganser, whimbrel, godwits, skuls, turtle dove.

Slapton Ley

Cetti's warbler, reed and sedge warblers, kingfisher, herundines, migrant gulls, possible garganey and purple heron, sometimes southern exotics.

Great Haldon Bird of Prey Viewpoint

Hoping for thermals and honey buzzard, ravens, crossbills, cuckoos. Any rapter possible.

Steps Bridge - Dipper country.

River Avon - Dippers breed near Loddiswell.

South Milton Ley

Within walking distance from the hotel. It is the 2nd largest reed bed in Devon. An important wetland for reed and sedge warblers, it offers shelter and food to migrating birds.