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SOUTH DOWNS  
NATIONAL PARK

## South Downs News

# WORK AND PLAY IN YOUR NATIONAL PARK

This month:

- **Cosmic fun** The Dark Skies Festival returns for the half-term break with a bumper line-up of physical and virtual events, including a 'Walk The Planets' trail.
- **Nature flourishes** Find out about a new visitor to Seven Sisters Country Park and how the first green shoots of nature recovery may be starting to show.
- **Our wonderful wetlands** Discover more about these precious ecosystems in the National Park.
- **WIN an annual family ticket!** Wander the stunning gardens of a manor house steeped in history.

As always please send your comments and ideas to us at [newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk)

## Embrace the darkness as festival returns with dazzling line-up!

**A fascinating journey through the solar system, moongazing sessions, planetarium shows, cosmic craft activities and jaw-dropping astrophotography are among the highlights of this year's Dark Skies Festival.**

The South Downs National Park's night-time extravaganza returns for 2022 with a bumper line-up of in-person and virtual events over the February half-term holidays (11 to 27 of February).

The theme of this year's festival is exploring the Dark Skies for yourself and making the most of the 10 Discovery Sites in the National Park – all offering great opportunities to see immense views of the universe.

One of the star attractions will be "Walk The Planets" trails at Seven Sisters Country Park, in East Sussex, and Queen Elizabeth Country Park, in Hampshire. People will be able to enjoy a self-guided trail starting from the sun and meeting each planet in turn at the scale they occur for real in our solar system. Weather permitting, walkers will be rewarded at the end of the trail with the chance to view the stars through large telescopes, guided by astronomy experts.

For those who can't make it on the night, it will be possible to walk the trail at Seven Sisters during the day from 16 February to 27 February, using a guide collected from the information van in the South Car Park. Queen Elizabeth Country Park will be offering fun activity packs



from its visitor centre, themed around nocturnal wildlife and the solar system.

People will also be able to join National Park rangers and astronomers at free stargazing sessions being held at Brighton seafront and Goodwood, near Chichester.

Meanwhile, partners will be holding their own events as part of the festival, including at the Observatory Science Centre at Herstmonceux, Findon Place (with Worthing Astronomers Club), Beachy Head Story (with Eastbourne Astronomical Society) and Clanfield Observatory (with Hampshire Astronomical Group).

Come rain or shine, there will be bookable planetarium shows at the South Downs Planetarium in Chichester, including an exploration of the Northern Lights, as well as events at The Novium and Winchester Science Centre.

People can also enjoy learning about the dark skies from the comfort of their own home, with a selection of short films and Facebook lives during the fortnight. Highlights will include how to build a home for bats, top tips for

astrophotography and a profile of each of the 10 Dark Sky Discovery Sites in the National Park.

The National Park Authority will also be revealing the winners of its popular astrophotography competition.

The festival celebrates the National Park's status as one of 19 International Dark Sky Reserves in the world, recognising it as one of the best places globally to capture immense views of the stars.

Dan Oakley, Lead Ranger and who heads the Dark Skies in the National Park, said: "We're really excited for our festival this year and there's something for everyone.



"Seeing these incredible views of the stars and the Milky Way is such a wonderful spectacle and we're so lucky to have such accessible stargazing opportunities in the South Downs. As well as being beautiful to look at, dark skies are also vital for nature to flourish as so many nocturnal and crepuscular wildlife rely on the natural rhythm of day into night.

"As always, we are very dependent on the weather, so please do check our website and social media channels on the day of attending one of the stargazing sessions or walks. Some of the events also have to be booked in advance, so do check the programme carefully."

And Dan added: "The National Park Authority has provided more than 400 free Dark Skies activity packs to charities and community groups in the local area, helping many children and young people who may never have done any stargazing before. We're proud to be helping to connect more people with the National Park and all its special qualities."

For more details and the full programme visit [www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/dark-skies-festival/](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/dark-skies-festival/)

For more information about the Dark Sky Discovery Sites in the National Park, visit [www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/where-to-stargaze/](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/where-to-stargaze/)



## Consultation launches on protected landscapes

**The Government has asked for input into its consultation on the future of protected landscapes.**

The proposals are set out in the Government's response to Julian Glover's independent Landscapes Review, which was published in 2019.

The South Downs National Park Authority will be producing a detailed response to the report.

Trevor Beattie, Chief Executive, welcomed Defra's response, but said nature recovery and climate change demand greater resource and ambition.

Trevor said: "There is much to welcome in the Government's response to the 2019 Landscape Review, which highlights the vital role that National Parks and AONBs play for nature, people and the green recovery of our nation.

"The SDNPA has been working hard with our partners and communities since 2019 to deliver on the full aspirations of the

Landscape Review. We have launched our ambitious ReNature nature recovery campaign, developed innovative private finance partnerships to tackle climate change, brought the wonder of the South Downs National Park to more people than ever before, connected young people to nature and launched our Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which the Government response has picked out for particular praise."

Trevor added: "But the Government response does not go far or fast enough. Important proposals from the Landscape Review are not addressed, the climate crisis is little more than a footnote and no detail is given about the private finance that Government says is needed as they acknowledge that the 'core grant does not provide the opportunity to increase funding to the scale needed to deliver [their] vision'."

"Now is the time for bold, rapid, and well-resourced action. That was the clear message of COP 26. The SDNPA, its communities, visitors and partners stand ready to help deliver our national response to the defining crises of our time - nature depletion and climate change.

"The SDNPA will study the consultation document and produce a detailed response. In the meantime we encourage all who love our protected landscapes to feed into the consultation and support our collective national effort to build a greener and better future for us all."

The consultation closes on 9 April 2022 and can be found [here](#).



## New visitor to country park puts on aerial display



### A majestic short-eared owl soars over Seven Sisters Country Park on a crisp winter's day.

The country park's newest visitor has delighted birdwatchers and walkers alike, captivated by its aerial acrobatics as it hunts for food.

The bird of prey is an incredible spectacle of nature, but, up until recently, seeing one of these owls would have been an extremely rare sight at the country park.

The resurgence of the owls has been put down to a boom in their favourite food – the vole.

It comes after rangers at Seven Sisters have worked hard over the past six months to manage the vegetation in the chalk grassland landscape.

As part of a new conservation management plan, certain fields on the 280-hectare site have not been grazed by cattle, leading to longer grasses that make the perfect habitat for voles to thrive.

Laura Clapham, Ranger for Seven Sisters Country Park, said: "It's been wonderful having these short-eared owls on the country park this winter – what a beautiful creature they are! To have five of them is quite extraordinary.

"They migrate thousands of miles to Britain to escape the freezing cold winters of Russia and Scandinavia and it certainly seems like they've made themselves at home at Seven Sisters.



"We haven't seen this many short-eared owls on this site for many years, so it's really encouraging. This is nature recovery in action and it's great to see."

After overwintering at Seven Sisters, the owls will fly eastwards towards Scandinavia during the spring.

Anecdotally, rangers have also noticed greater numbers of other birds, including large flocks of Dunlin and roosting

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oystercatchers, as well as sightings of curlew sandpipers, Little Stint, Black-tailed godwit, redshank, ringed plover and whimbrel. A rare invertebrate, the Sea Aster mining bee, has also been spotted.

The South Downs National Park Authority assumed ownership and management of Seven Sisters Country Park last July with a commitment to improving biodiversity at the iconic site.

A small team of rangers are managing the fragile chalk grassland habitat and Sussex breed cattle have been introduced and are being rotated around the site.

Almost like "ecosystem engineers", the conservation grazing by the cows helps to manage the grassland, which can have up to 45 species of plants in a single square metre.



The grazing scheme is being led by a partnership between the National Park Authority and Plumpton College, continuing a long tradition of grazing on the site that is vital for the conservation of the Site of Special Scientific Interest.



Peter Cousin, Commercial Manager for Seven Sisters Country Park, said: "We're committed to improving the habitat at Seven Sisters for a range of plants and animals.

"It's still very early days and will take many years, but it's fantastic to see the first green shoots of nature recovery."

The Authority has a number of plans that are part of a long-term commitment to improve the site for people and nature.

Work costing just under £2m is well under way at Exceat, including a refurbished visitor centre, new and accessible toilet facilities, a locally-sourced and sustainable takeaway food service, and better signage.

There will also be renovated accommodation and facilities at Foxholes, allowing more people to spend a night enjoying the dark night skies reserve.

The renovated visitor centre and grab-and-go food offering are due to be opened to the public by early summer.

There will also be a range of activities and events for visitors to enjoy, including guided wildlife walks around the country park.

For more information about Seven Sisters Country Park visit [www.sevensisters.org.uk](http://www.sevensisters.org.uk)

Owl pictures kindly provided by Peter Brooks.

## Key planning milestone is reached for National Park



**The final piece in the housing strategy for the National Park has been completed after a community voted overwhelmingly for its neighbourhood plan.**

The referendum at Twyford, in Hampshire, marked the final step in the process of completing the housing allocations set out in the South Downs Local Plan.

The award-winning Local Plan was formally adopted in 2019, but several Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) still needed to be completed and voted on by the community. NDPs give local communities the power to shape development in their area through the Localism Act 2011 and address how growth can be managed over a 15 to 20 year period.

The referendum on the Twyford Neighbourhood Development Plan saw 349 Yes votes and 70 No votes (83% to 17%).

Once Twyford is formally adopted, it will mean 40 NDPs are now incorporated into the Local Plan for the National Park. Some communities are still developing their NDP, but they do not include housing allocations.

The process started in 2014 when Arundel was the first community to green light its NDP.

Over the past eight years, there have been thousands of hours of consultation, engagement and meetings with local communities to work up the NDPs.

Lucy Howard, Planning Policy Manager for the National Park, said: "This is a key milestone for the local communities of the National Park and I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every person who has contributed and given their time to this really important process in planning.

"Local communities sit at the heart of our landscape-led Local Plan and this is a great achievement for them and everyone who has worked so hard on these Neighbourhood Development Plans.

"These adopted plans are a powerful way of local people helping to shape where and what development happens in their communities."

The Local Plan is landscape-led and includes a housing provision across the towns and villages of the National Park, rather than just allowing growth around the largest settlements such as Lewes and Petersfield.

## Funding boost helps children enjoy a school trip



**More than 1,400 disadvantaged young people will be able to enjoy an outdoor learning adventure this year, thanks to a new funding boost.**

Schools from across the South East will be able to apply for grant support to help deliver fun educational experiences, such as hands-on conservation work, wildlife surveying, practical geography and geology, or learning ways to tackle climate change.

It comes after a new round of funding from the South Downs National Park Trust, which is the official independent charity of the National Park. The boost has been supported by American Express and the Sussex Community Foundation.

The initiative builds on the success of the grants scheme last year as thousands of children enjoyed school trips to beautiful sites in the National Park or took part in fun nature-based activities in their school grounds.

Julie Fawcett, Chair of the South Downs National Park Trust, said: "We're really excited to be able to provide funding once again for these vital school grants. School trips and outdoor learning are such an important part of growing up and learning more about the world.

"Yet research shows that travel costs are a significant barrier for planning school trips. We think every child deserves the opportunity to get out into the great outdoors and learn more about the natural world. Nature gives us everything – water, clean air, food – and it's so important that young people are inspired by it as they are the future custodians of our amazing, but fragile, planet."

Children from Bartons Primary School, in Bognor Regis, enjoyed a trip to Marwell Zoo. School Secretary Debbie Camp said: "The grant made a huge difference to our families, especially during Covid times. Thank you for your support, it made such a difference to our families and it was so easy to apply for the grant."

Nicola Wells, Headteacher at Barton Farm Primary Academy, Winchester, said: "Following the lockdown we were desperate to be able to give our children the opportunity to take their learning off site. Our children had a wonderful experience at Marwell Zoo and it was a brilliant way to kickstart their learning again."

For more information and apply for a grant see [here](#).

## Winners of youth photo competition are announced



**A delightful photograph of a girl running in the great outdoors is the winner of this year's youth photo competition.**

Lila Chesters, of Upper Swanmore, Hampshire, captured this glorious action image of her sister while a storm was brewing over the South Downs.

"Running Free" won the 11 to 17 category in this year's contest, which had the theme "Nature Makes Me Happy".

Lila, who attends Portsmouth High School, said: "I was very surprised when I won the competition but very happy because it gave me the confidence to do more photography."

"To me, the South Downs is where I have grown up, gone to school and I have lots of fond memories of early morning walks. The photo happened when I was walking the dog after school and a storm had been forecast. We managed to get back to the house dry with some pictures of the amazing sky. I was also lucky enough to live here during the lockdowns allowing me the time to experience the beauty of the South Downs."

Lila and her family have won a trip to Go Ape for a Forest Segway experience.

Enzo Tizzard, of Tangmere, West Sussex, won the 10 and under category with his image "Mr Nature Himself", a lovely image showing two stags at Petworth Park.

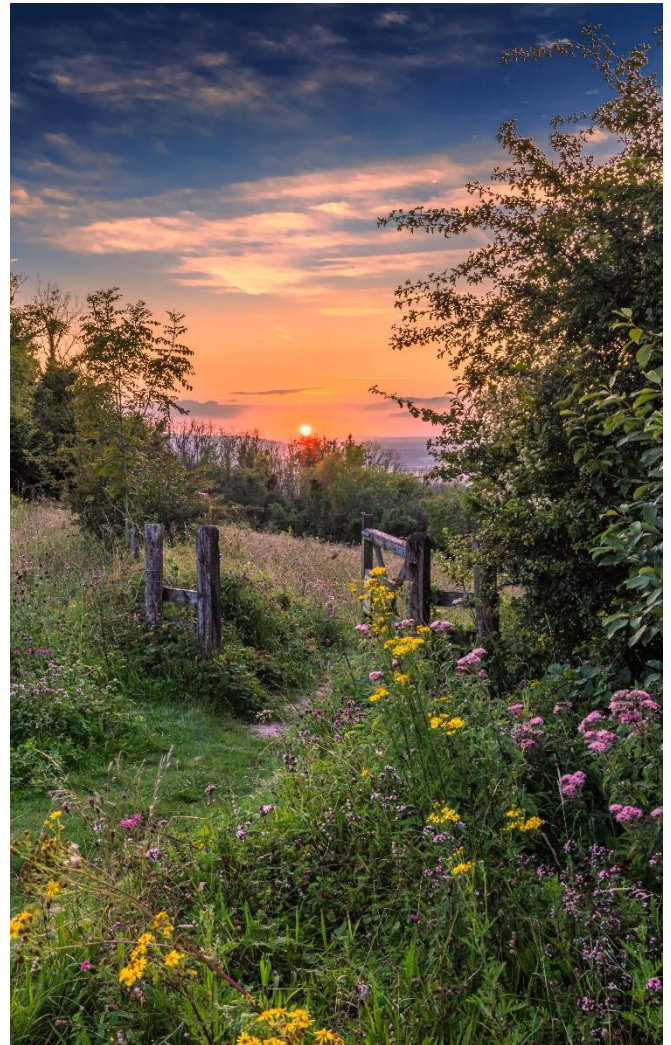


Enzo and his family have won a trip to Marwell Zoo.

Enzo, who attends Arundel C of E Primary School, said: "I love learning about nature and going places with my family where I get to see and take photos of cool animals and things. There are so many places we love going in the South Downs."

"This photo was taken at Petworth Park at their rutting time of year. That's really awesome to watch. They are really noisy too!"

## Kate captures magic of South Downs in photo



**Many people who visit the South Downs have a magic place – that happy spot you return to again and again just to enjoy the beauty in front of your eyes.**

Kithurst Hill, near Storrington, West Sussex, is that special place for Katarzyna Kedziora, who has won the People's Choice of the National Park's Photography Competition 2021/2022.

Her captivating picture, "Magic Gate", took the top spot in the public poll, which saw more than 1,700 votes.

Katarzyna, who wins £100, said: "I love the South Downs because the Storrington part of it is just around the corner from where I live."

"It's a great place to pause for a second when I'm outside, forget about everything, look around and find something I haven't noticed before, something interesting in ordinary local places."

"That's how I discovered 'The Magic Gate'."

"With my love of photography, the South Downs is a great place to get inspired and to take a great shot without going anywhere far away."

"It is the perfect place to see the beauty of the area around us and appreciate the place we live."

## New map takes pride of place at railway station



**Exploring the National Park after stepping off the train has just been made easier, thanks to a new integrated travel map.**

The colourful map has been installed at Bishopstone station in East Sussex to encourage visitors to explore the wider area.

The map shows visitors a range of nearby leisure pursuits from walking, cycling and horse-riding to swimming, sailing and sunbathing. It highlights rail and bus connections to and from the station on the Seaford to Brighton line in East Sussex.

The map is a joint project between the South Downs National Park Authority, Community Rail Network, Southeast Communities Rail Partnership and the Friends of Bishopstone Station.



Speaking at the launch of the map, Robert McGowan, project manager, said: "This project was a lot of fun to work on.

"I think the illustrated map gives an impression of what the landscape actually feels like – how the station is connected to the beach, the old village and the Downs."

Allison Thorpe, who leads access and recreation for the National Park, said: "Stations like Bishopstone are gateways to the South Downs National Park.

"That is why we were so pleased to work with the Friends of Bishopstone Station and the Community Rail Partnership to give people ideas for walks to the countryside and historic villages in the Downs and to show people how easy it is to explore the National Park by rail."

Barbara Mine, chair of the Friends of Bishopstone Station, added: "We are so pleased to have received this integrated travel map. It puts people in the picture as to where they are and where they want to go to."

## Global wildlife challenge comes to South Downs!

**One of the world's biggest wildlife spotting events is coming to the South Downs this spring.**

People are being encouraged to make their walks a little wilder and spot the amazing animals and plants on their doorstep for the 5th International City Nature Challenge.

The challenge has grown from humble beginnings six years ago when it was a wildlife-spotting competition between San Francisco and Los Angeles in California.

Now a truly global event and no longer a formal competition, Brighton & Hove, together with the surrounding downland from Littlehampton to Beachy Head, will be one of 14 UK "lead cities" making a special effort to get people out and surveying wildlife.

The challenge takes place between April 29 and 2 May and taking part is easy:

1. Download the iNaturalist app.
2. Find wildlife and photograph what you find.
3. Upload your observations.

The Sussex initiative is being supported by the University of Brighton, University of Sussex, The Living Coast, and the National Park Authority.

Although the Brighton region is one of the lead cities, people from across the National Park and from surrounding towns and cities such as Portsmouth, Southampton, Winchester, Guildford and Eastbourne are also invited to take part over the four days and upload their observations on the app.



Wildlife surveying could include looking for insects, weeds or wildflowers, pond dipping, rock pooling, or listing any birds you can see. It could be on a walk in your town or on the Downs, or in your local park, seafront or school grounds.



Daniel Greenwood, Volunteer Development Officer, said: "This is a really fun opportunity to get involved in a worldwide community science initiative, whether you're new to wildlife spotting or a seasoned pro!

"We all know that nature in the UK is facing unprecedented challenges and we need to understand more about where different species are to help look after them.

"So by spotting wildlife in your neighbourhood, you can help tackle the ecological emergency that is threatening nature on our doorsteps."

Visit [www.citynaturechallenge.org.uk](http://www.citynaturechallenge.org.uk) to find out more and take part

# Meet Alex the apprentice

**For National Apprenticeship Week this February, we caught up with one of the National Park's apprentices, Alex Jarvis.**

**Can you tell us more about your apprentice role at the National Park?**



As an apprentice, I'm being trained in the role while in the job, in my case, that of a park ranger. This means that I carry out tasks with the park ranger at Seven Sisters, and they instruct me how and why these things are done. This can be anything from scrub clearance, to boundary repair, maintenance of signs and benches or a bird survey. I also attend college for the theoretical aspect of the course, and have to complete a portfolio summarising my work and study.

**Why did you choose an apprenticeship at the South Downs National Park?**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, one of the most important things for me was spending time outside in nature. Informed by the experience, I decided that I wanted to try something different that meant I could spend more time in nature, but also allow me to gain new skills and gain experience in a new field. Growing up, we spent a lot of time going for walks at some of the most beautiful spots in the South Downs National Park, particularly the eastern end, the Long Man of Wilmington, Mount Caburn, and the Seven Sisters. So, when the opportunity came up to be able to not only work in this landscape, but also learn how it's managed and protected for the benefit of both people and nature, I jumped at the chance!

**What do you think are the benefits of apprenticeships?**

I think the great thing about studying through an apprenticeship is that it gives you the opportunity to see all aspects of a field; we learn both about the theoretical side of our work (ecology, conservation, common agricultural practices) and the practical applications (conservation grazing, vegetation management, species surveys, the importance and value of heritage crafts like hedgelaying). This combination allows you to get a very complete understanding of the job you are carrying out, while giving you a variety of skills and experience that will help in the wider world of work. I also think apprenticeships can be really helpful for those wishing to get in to a competitive industry, where it can seem difficult where to begin.

**What have been the challenges so far?**

Probably the most challenging aspect so far has been learning to use power tools. Learning to fell trees was incredibly interesting but also quite nerve-racking. Luckily our instructor was very helpful, and we all overcame this challenge and passed the course.

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**What's been the highlight of your time in the National Park as an apprentice so far?**

There are many! Since I spend most of my working days at Seven Sisters Country Park. Much of the practical work we do focuses on the large areas of chalk grassland found there. I have found learning about this habitat fascinating. Not only is the incredible diversity of plants and insects that can thrive there staggering, but learning how this a man-made landscape that needs careful management and grazing has been really interesting. I also enjoyed learning the craft of hedge laying.

**What are your future aspirations for your apprenticeship?**

During the rest of my apprenticeship, I hope I can continue gaining experience working in conservation and land management, and contributing to the great work the rest of the team are doing at Seven Sisters. I also hope to continue taking courses on other areas that I'm interested in, such as woodland management and bird ringing.

## WIN annual family ticket!



**An Elizabethan manor house set in stunningly beautiful countryside, Chawton House is a must-visit for anyone exploring the western side of the National Park.**

Referred to as the "Great House" in Jane Austen's letters, the house has been sensitively restored and is well-known for its tranquil gardens and a unique collection of women's writing.

The historic venue re-opens this month with special Snowdrop Sundays being held throughout February, before the vivid yellow of golden daffodils appear amongst the greenery.

The National Park has teamed up with Chawton House to offer two Family Annual Tickets (admitting two adults and up to three children).

These family tickets will allow the winners to return to Chawton House throughout the year to enjoy its seasonal displays in the garden, as well as the opportunity to visit the House itself as well.

People signing up to the newsletter during February will be automatically entered into the draw.

Those who are already signed up can email "snowdrop" to [newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk) before midnight on 28 February. Sign up to the newsletter [here](#) and see competition T&Cs [here](#)

## Our wonderful wetlands



**Wetlands are some of the most interesting and valuable ecosystems on the planet.**

And, as we mark World Wetlands Day this February, we're lucky to have so many on our doorstep.

The South Downs National Park, dissected by seven major rivers, a network of streams and an iconic coastal border around the Seven Sisters cliffs and Cuckmere Haven, is a sanctuary for wetland wildlife.

A wetland is simply a place where the land is covered by water, either salt, fresh, or somewhere in between.

The National Park has a huge variety of wetland areas, including rivers, chalk streams, floodplains, marshes, bogs, lakes, reedbeds, ponds, canals, wet woodland and wet grassland.

As well as being oases for flora and fauna, their carbon-capturing abilities pack a big punch. Wetlands can store 50 times more carbon than rainforests, helping to keep the heat-trapping gas that contributes to climate change out of the atmosphere.

Sadly, 87% of the world's wetlands have been lost over the past 300 years, so it's vital that we all help protect the fragile habitats that remain.

These watery lands are truly a theatre of nature, not least for birds and the hundreds of twitchers who come out every year to catch a glimpse of them wading, flying, diving or showing off their flamboyant courtship displays.

RSPB Pulborough Brooks, Arundel Wetland Centre, Cuckmere Haven and the Meon Valley, in particular, all provide wonderful birdwatching opportunities.

Ranger Tim Squire, a keen photographer, shares some of his favourite wetland birds in the National Park...

### Dunlin

The dunlin is a small sandpiper, and enjoys the comparatively warmer climes of the south coast during the winter. It particularly likes estuaries and river basins, where it seeks out insects, worms and molluscs to eat. In summer, the dunlin breeds in the uplands of the UK. The Dunlin is unmistakable in its summer plumage: adults are brick-red above, with a black belly patch.



### Wigeon

The wigeon is a colourful duck that can often be spotted wheeling round our winter skies in large flocks. A dabbling duck, it surface-feeds on plants and seeds in shallow waters.



Unlike most ducks whose quacks tend to be rather tuneless male wigeons have a far carrying, two-syllable whistle that sounds a bit like "wee-ooo". The wigeon name partly imitates this tuneful call. Females have a harsher growl sounding voice.

### Avocet



Once extinct from our shores, the Avocet colonised Britain when coastal marshes in East Anglia were flooded to provide a defence against possible invasion by the Germans. This Schedule 1 species is the emblem

of the RSPB and symbolises the bird protection movement in the UK more than any other species.

### Oystercatcher

The oystercatcher is a large, stocky, black and white wading bird. Because it eats cockles, the population is vulnerable if cockle beds are overexploited. Although predominantly a coastal bird, during the last 50 years, more birds have started breeding inland.



### Curlew



The curlew is the largest European wading bird, instantly recognisable by its long, downcurved bill, brown upperparts, long legs and evocative call. It loves to feed on worms, shellfish and shrimp.

### How can you help?

Give birds space – When birds are disturbed, they stop feeding or resting and may even fly away. If the birds cannot feed and rest undisturbed, they may not have enough energy to survive.

Keep dogs under close control and on leads in areas where birds are nesting or feeding. During ground-nesting birds season, it's best to stick to paths as you could unwittingly disturb a nest.

For more information on helping to protect coastal birds see <https://birdaware.org/solent/the-coastal-code/>



# Things to do in the South Downs this February

Please follow the links as booking may be necessary. Find these and more events across the National Park and submit your own events at [southdowns.gov.uk/events/](https://southdowns.gov.uk/events/)



- Enjoy a new photographic exhibition at [The Beachy Head Story](#) at Eastbourne. 'Through the Aperture: The View from Here' gives visitors the opportunity to explore spectacular Downland landscapes and experience the effect of light and dark on this unique environment, while imagining the stories these scenes might hold. The exhibition ends 31 March. The centre is also hosting The Spring Rise Festival from 14 to 20 February with a range of activities from wildlife walks, craft workshops and puppetry.
- Visit the South Downs Centre in Midhurst to see our colourful displays about the National Park and pick up leaflets to start your adventure in the South Downs.
- Enjoy some family fun at [Butser Ancient Farm](#), near Waterloo, during the half term, 19 to 27 February, as activities are put on every day from 10am to 4pm.
- Head to the [Weald and Downland Living Museum](#) for fantastic indoor and outdoor fun this half term, 19 to 27 February, with a theme focused on wool. Enjoy weaving with coloured wool and have a go at the lost sheep trail.
- Browse some of our best local food producers at Petworth Farmers' Market in Market Square on 26 February from 9am til 1pm.

## YOU SAY:

Do you have a story you want to tell about the National Park? A burning issue that you think needs to be addressed? Or would you like to pen your own article about why you love the South Downs? Please let us know!



To submit a comment for our newsletter please email [newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:newsletter@southdowns.gov.uk). For a fast and direct response to your questions please email [info@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:info@southdowns.gov.uk)

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Sign up to receive this newsletter by email every month!

[www.southdowns.gov.uk/join-the-newsletter/](https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/join-the-newsletter/)

Sign up to the National Park's Planning Newsletter, issued three times a year, by visiting

[www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-newsletter/](https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-newsletter/)

### Pic credits

P1 Neil Jones; P2 left Anne Purkiss; P3 right Alex Bamford; P4 Peter Brooks; P7 and P9 (snowdrops) Claire Lewis Photography; P8 (Cuckmere Valley) Sam Moore; P8 (birds) Tim Squire.