

The Adur Estuary- a special place for birds



Code of Conduct for Bird Watchers & Photographers

- Stick to footpaths. No matter how tempting to get a better look or photograph, do not enter the salt marsh and trample the mudflats which causes damage and disturbance.
- Avoid disturbing birds even when on a footpath. Sometimes pointing a lens or telescope at a bird is enough to make it become alarmed. Look for signs of birds stopping feeding or other signs of distress such as increased alarm calling, moving away or freezing. If in doubt back-off.
- Consider recording your bird sightings on Birdtrack or eBird so that the different species and their trends can be monitored.
- Recognise that others have legitimate rights to use the Adur Estuary within the laws of its Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation and the Wildlife and Countryside Act.

The Adur Estuary, Site of Special Scientific Interest

The Adur Estuary is a special place, designated as a SSSI, the highest national level of protection for a site.

The SSSI extends from the Ferry Bridge (footbridge) in central Shoreham to just north of Cuckoo Corner.



With Rye Harbour, it is the only significant area of salt marsh between Sandwich Bay and Chichester Harbour.

It is a site of special Interest for:

- Estuarine salt-marsh plants
- Rich intertidal mudflats
- Importance for its wading birds

Birds regularly living on the Adur Estuary SSSI include: Teal, Ringed Plover, Dunlin, Redshank, Greenshank, Turnstone, Lapwing, Snipe, Curlew, Oystercatcher and Grey Plover. At times, locally scarce wading birds occur such as Whimbrel, Avocet, Common Sandpiper and Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits. At high tide the Adur Estuary provides safe resting places amongst the salt marsh plants. At low tide, when the mudflats are exposed, rich feeding is available on invertebrates and molluscs on or just below the surface of the mud. Many of the birds on the Adur Estuary are migratory. They spend part of their year here to rest and refuel, building up energy reserves for migration to and from their more northerly breeding areas which may be as far away as northern Scandinavia and Russia. If they are not well rested and fed they may not have the energy to breed successfully, leading to population decline.

The Adur Estuary receives a lot of human visitors and sadly some human activities can disturb the birds from their natural behaviour. When disturbed, birds stop feeding or resting and may even fly away. Over time, with repeated disturbance, energy is lost which can affect their fitness and ultimately their survival.

Therefore it is important that bird watchers and photographers lead by example and follow the Code of Conduct.

Birds regularly seen on the Adur Estuary SSSI

Redshank



Dunlin



Ringed Plover



Lapwing



Founded in 1953

Produced by Shoreham District Ornithological Society (SDOS)

<https://www.sdos.org/>