





# Points of Interest

## A Seaton Jurassic

At Seaton Jurassic take a journey like no other – back in time!



## B Seaton Seafront - Waves Sculpture Discovery Point

Views from Seaton's seafront are of the spectacular Lyme Bay, part of a

**Special Area for Conservation (SAC)** designated for its reefs and sea caves. The reefs are home to many fragile and rare species including the Pink Sea Fan and Devon Cup Coral. Lyme Bay is a precious wildlife haven for Dolphins, Sea Horses, Seals and Sea Squirts.

## C Seaton Labyrinth and Geological Timeline



The Labyrinth is a spiral of seven different types of stone from quarries all along the adjacent **World Heritage Coast**. The symbolic purpose of this project is to relate the twists and turns of the pathway to life's own meandering journey - with all its changes of direction, ups and downs, sadness and joy.

### Geological timeline

The timeline tells Earth's history and evolution of living things from its formation 4.6 billion years ago to present day.

## D Cliffs

Seaton is the only place on the **Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site**

where visitors can easily see rocks from three geological eras - the **Triassic**, **Jurassic** and **Cretaceous** spanning 185 million years of the earth's history, from 250 million years ago to 65 million years ago.

The grey Jurassic Cliffs lie to the far east and the white Cretaceous chalk and greensand cliffs of **Beer** to the far west were both formed at the bottom of ancient seas. The red sandstone Triassic Cliffs lining the seafront formed at the heart of an ancient desert.



## E Seaton Hole's Fault

At the western end of Seaton beach, **Seaton Hole** and its White Cliffs mark an important and geologically intriguing unconformity – where Cretaceous rocks appear to grow out of the Triassic (the Jurassic, apparently missing). Uplifting and sinking of strata cause this, creating a spectacular series of white cliffs that run from here westward to Branscombe.



At the base of these cliffs, amazing rocky shore formations provide a rock pooling experience to rival any in the south of England. The marine habitats exposed here offer a glimpse into the riches of Lyme Bay. Find Cushion Starfish, Velvet Swimming Crabs, Snakelocks, Sea Anemones and Dog Whelks.

The formidable hunter the Peregrine Falcon may also be sighted. Once a Peregrine spots its prey it can drop into a steep, swift dive that can top 200 miles an hour. In the damp areas, the living fossil Horsetails can be found. For more than one hundred million years Horsetail relatives dominated the understorey of late Paleozoic forests. Some were larger than trees reaching to 30 meters tall.

## F Seaton Down Hill Bats

With the variety of habitats close to Seaton, this is a haven for bats supporting many rare species. Greater Horseshoe bats commute across **Seaton Down Hill** closely following hedgerows and woodland edges to get to good foraging areas on the marshes where they join Grey Long Eared Bats to feed on flying insects.



Woodland species such as Bechsteins and Barbastelle also follow high bushy hedges to get to their preferred feeding areas. The undeveloped strip between Seaton and Colyford is also important in the autumn months as a dark corridor for Bats visiting **Beer Quarry Caves** from across the region to find a mate and hibernate.

## G Honey Ditches

Since prehistoric times people have lived on the site at Honey Ditches. There is evidence of **Neolithic** and **Bronze Age** pottery and **Iron Age** roundhouses. In 150AD-300AD the **Romans** built and used an underfloor heated bath house complete with steam rooms and plunge pool on the site. Today, there are a few grassy mounds to be seen of this important **Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)**.

Found nearby was the **Seaton Down Hoard** which consists of 22,888 Roman coins and three iron ingots. It was buried in around 350AD. The coins can be viewed at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM) in Exeter.

## H Seaton Wetlands

Enjoy a range of habitats from beautiful marshlands, a large intertidal lagoon and reed beds alongside the **River Axe**. The rich bird life of the **Wetlands** includes a range of Wildfowl and Waders, including a resident Barn Owl,

Kestrels, Oystercatchers, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Ringed Plover, and glimpses of the blue-flash of a Kingfisher.



White bodied and yellow footed Little Egrets are often seen feeding on the marshes. Little Egrets were absent from the UK for many centuries, but with the warming effect of climate change, they have returned to breed in the **Axe Estuary**.

A wide range of mammals, including the Water Vole, were under threat of local extinction in the 1990's. However, numbers have now improved. You may be lucky enough to hear the comical plop of one entering a ditch waterway.



## I Salt making

The area adjacent to **Borrow Pit** was used for making salt until the 1900's. Salt water was evaporated in 'Pans' – shallow scrapes lined with clay – and when sufficiently reduced, removed by buckets and boiled. It took approximately 50lbs of brine to produce 1lb of salt. This industry is remembered in the naming of Salt Pan Lane.

## Seaton's History

From **Roman** settlement and harbour through **Saxon** then **Norman** conquests to modern day tourist resort, Seaton has had an interesting history.

### Early History

Seaton is mentioned in the Domesday book in 1086 as part of Fleet, the Saxon word for creek. By 1146 Seaton was the established name. The name 'Seaton' was derived from Old English meaning a settlement (ton) by the sea.

## J St. Gregory's Church

A medieval settlement was found close to the church of St Gregory stretching along the riverbank to the sea. St Gregory's Church is one of the oldest buildings in Seaton.



The river was originally nearly half a mile wide at its mouth, the whole of the valley was tidal. Large ships could sail all the way to Colyford. Over time longshore drift has moved sediments to block the river. The river was completely blocked at one point and even today, it is a constant battle to keep the harbour open. The *spit* forming across the river mouth enabled the beautiful marshes to form.

### Victorian Times

The railway branch line from **Seaton Junction** to Seaton built in 1868, turned Seaton into a seaside resort. Part of this railway line is now used by **Seaton Tramway** following its closure after the Beeching report in 1966. Prior to the railway a passenger boat ran a weekly service up and down the coast to London.

### In the War

Seaton was one of the first places to have had a holiday camp. The camps were built by Warner and Butlins who went on to create many more. During the war the camp was used for prisoners of war.