

How you can help:



Stick to the main channels

Small creeks are the perfect hiding spots for birds and are sensitive to disturbance. Try to avoid them.



Islands, marshes and mud are vital habitats

Human presence will prevent birds from using them. Avoid landing in these areas and keep your distance.



Go slow and quiet near the shore

Sudden movement or noise can cause whole flocks to take flight, wasting vital energy.



Look out for birds

Always give birds plenty of space. Move further away if they become aware of your presence.



Take care while launching and landing

Always carry your equipment in and out. Dragging it can cause damage to habitats (and your kit!).



Keep paws on paths

Please use the established footpaths and always keep dogs under close control, especially near wildlife.



Watch your wake

Boat wash can erode fragile riverbanks and disturb feeding and nesting birds. Slow down in narrow or shallow areas and around wildlife.

Protecting the Special Wildlife — on the River Deben —

SOME OF THE SPECIES YOU MIGHT SPOT:



Avocet



Black-Tailed Godwit



Lapwing



Dark-Bellied Brent Goose



Oystercatcher



Lesser Black-Backed Gull



Redshank



Ringed Plover



How to tell if birds are being disturbed by your presence:



If they start to call louder to each other - this is an alert to danger!



If they start to walk or swim away from the perceived threat



If they fly away - this is called flushing and it's a sign of distress!

Why does it matter?



Many birds travel thousands of miles to spend the winter here

Species such as wigeon, redshank, and black-tailed godwit migrate from colder regions in northern Europe and the Arctic to find food and shelter here in winter.

After their long journey, they need safe places to rest and feed to recover their energy and build up reserves for the return migration.

As the river gets busier, their lives get harder

Human activity, such as walking, boating, and letting dogs off leads can cause birds to be disturbed, losing valuable feeding time and using up the energy they desperately need to survive the winter.

You can help to avoid this by following the guidance on the back cover of this card.

Disturbance can have serious long-term effects

The energy birds burn when they're startled takes a long time to replace, especially during cold weather when food is limited.

If they can't feed and rest enough, they may become too weak to make the long journey back to their breeding grounds. They might not even be able to survive the winter.



Map Key

= Sensitive area for Wildlife

= Speed limit for pleasure craft

This map is for illustrative purposes only. Do not use for marine navigation.

*The speed limits are enforced from May to September inclusive, but to protect people and wildlife please follow them all year round. A full copy of the Bylaws for the River Deben can be found online or on signage at launch sites.