



Lulworth Cove

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Hello and welcome!

This booklet will provide information about Lulworth Cove for visitors who prefer to use Large Print.

This guide is intended to be used with an A3 map. Please ask at reception if you do not have the A3 map.

Introduction

Lulworth is famous for its unique natural features such as the Cove and Durdle Door. The area has been owned and managed by the Lulworth Estate since 1641 and now attracts nearly a million visitors each year.

Lulworth is part of the 'Jurassic Coast', formally known as the UNSECO Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site. It is special because of its rocks, fossils, and landforms, which date from 150 million to 65 million years ago. It is also great for wildlife and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. There are a number of rare species at Lulworth, including the Lulworth Skipper butterfly.

Lulworth Estate, which looks after Lulworth Cove, employs up to 30 staff to run the shops and the cafes and there are 6 countryside rangers employed by the estate to help manage 12 thousand acres of land. Parking fees at Lulworth Cove are

used to maintain footpaths, provide information to visitors, protect wildlife and ancient monuments and run an outdoor education service.

The rangers carefully manage the landscape to ensure that it remains an idyllic place for future generations.

Lulworth Cove Beach

Lulworth Cove was formed approximately 10 thousand years ago by the powers of a river and the sea, which created the horse-shoe shaped cove we see today.

It has a shingle beach and a rocky shoreline, its waters are the perfect place

for a spot of rock pooling or a refreshing swim! Dogs are allowed, but banned to the west of the stream, where the sand and rock pools attract children.

Please do not climb on the cliffs or sit directly underneath them as cliff falls can occur at any time. Stay well back from the cliff edge.

Staying safe around the coast and in the water is your own responsibility.

Please look after yourself and those around you. Leaping into the unknown can result in serious injury and hot weather increases wild fire risks. Barbeques are not permitted. If someone is in trouble, please dial 999 for the Coastguard.

Rocks and Fossils

Lulworth is celebrated for its amazing geology. The rocks under our feet are usually covered by soil, vegetation or buildings, but at the coast the rocks are exposed for everyone to experience.

Lulworth's five different rock types were formed over a period of 85 million years, when the climate changed frequently and many weird and wonderful plants and animals roamed the Earth and seas.

The rocks contain fossils which, like time capsules, tell us information about the Earth's history.

Fossils are the remains of living things. When they died, they sank and were

covered over by mud and sands. The soft parts rotted away, leaving the hard parts like teeth and bones to fossilise in the rock. Each type of rock contains different fossils from different times and environments. Over time the rocks have been worn down by the sea and weakened by rain, wind, frost and animals – including humans. The harder rocks wear away slowly, holding up tall structures like arches.

The softer rocks wear away quickly and form low slumped cliffs. Sometimes cliff erosion can devastate housing or businesses but it creates amazing features like Lulworth Cove and brings fresh fossils down to the beach.

Finding fossils is not easy for beginners – one of the best places to search for them is the beach!

Dinosaurs

Dinosaurs would have roamed at Lulworth during the late Jurassic and Early Cretaceous periods. At the edge of briny lagoons where they browsed tree leaves, they left well defined footprints in soft sediments. Quickly filled by more sediment, the footprints become preserved in the rocks. These footprints are sometimes found singly and occasionally as trackways where one or more dinosaurs have made a trail of prints together. These are known as trace fossils. They can be found in the

Purbeck Limestones along this coast between Swanage and Lulworth.

Whilst dinosaurs were roaming the lands their fossilised remains are scarce in this area. Although not classed as dinosaurs, remains of the marine sea monsters Ichthyosaurs and Plesiosaurs, are more prominently found near Lulworth due to the types of rock we have here.

The Strandline

The strandline is a special place on the beach, where the sea reaches up at high tide leaving behind amazing natural treasures to be found. Take care, as man-made rubbish can be left on the beach by

the waves. Do not pick up anything if you are unsure what it is – particularly if it is a metal object.

At the strandline you can find

- **Pebbles**
- **Seaweed**
- **Shells**
- **Welk eggs and mermaid's purses - a type of fish or shark egg.**

Wildlife

Cities and towns are man-made landscapes as is the countryside. In the UK there are very few truly natural wild places left.

Farmers choose how much of the countryside is grass and how much grows

crops, down to the number of hedgerows and trees available for birds.

5 thousand years ago, the wild trees were cleared by people from the chalk hills at Lulworth. Cows and sheep have grazed here ever since, creating the short grass here today. Where the hills are too steep for fertiliser to be used, these man-made habitats are rich in wildlife.

At Lulworth you can find:

- 32 different types of butterflies,**
- 100 types of flowers and plants**
- 130 species of birds have been recorded here.**

Wildlife – Seabirds

The best known sea birds at Lulworth are the ones that steal your sandwiches.

These are the large Herring Gulls that drift in the Cove or cry overhead.

Lulworth provides for a host of other seabirds too.

- On off shore rocks there are Cormorants and shags hanging out their wings to dry after diving for fish**
- Rock Pipits bounce around on the beach searching for strandline insects**
- Jackdaws swoop over Stair Hole seeking out nest sites**

- **Kittiwakes and Fulmars fly, but are more often sitting on their nests ferociously defending their single egg.**

Once in a while the day to day bustling of the seabirds is interrupted by a fearful whooshing noise as a swooping Peregrine bursts onto the scene. Peregrines can travel up to 150 miles per hour. These precision predators knock their prey from the sky in flight, returning to pick it up to feed themselves and their hungry young.

Wildlife – The Rocky Shore

Between the beach and the open sea lies the rocky shore, an amazing environment with wildlife that is especially adapted to live in a place where the conditions change constantly. Rock pooling is a great way to experience the rocky shore and you do not need any special equipment.

In rock pools you might find:

- **Limpets**
- **Crabs**
- **Anemones**
- **Periwinkles and Topshells**

The sea shore code is an important part of rock pooling.

- **Never drop litter on the beach or in the sea**
- **If you turn over a rock, always put it back how you found it**
- **Never take anything alive away with you**
- **If you put animals in a bucket, change the water regularly and do not leave the bucket in direct sunlight.**

We hope that you have had a good trip to Lulworth Cove.

Please return this guide and the separate map before you leave.

Thank you for visiting Lulworth Cove.

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