

In and around the Wyre Estuary



Explore the beaches and marshes along the River Wyre and coast and soak up the rich soundscape of waders and pink footed geese.

The river Wyre and Rossall Point are at the southern end of Morecambe Bay. The marshes and mudflats are an important food source for many birds that spend their winter here.

Don't Miss...

There's so much to see and many hidden corners to explore, but these top 3 highlights are not to be missed!

- 1 Admiring the views across the Bay and amazing wildlife from Rossall Point.**
- 2 Hearing the evocative calls of huge flocks of pink-footed geese at Lane Ends, Pilling.**
- 3 Exploring up stream for leisurely nature watching and a chance to see otters and kingfishers.**



On a rainy day...

Discover the fascinating story of the town and its fishing heritage at Fleetwood Museum (01253 876621), or find out more

In this guide you will find...

- Seasonal highlights**
- Three great days out**
- How to get around**

about our farming heritage at Farmer Parrs Animal World and its country life heritage museum (01253 874389).

Fascinating fact

The most important single breeding site for pink-footed geese, at Þjórsáruer in Iceland, was only discovered in 1951 by Sir Peter Scott and his team. Lancashire is the second most important wintering area for the geese in Britain with over 44,000 birds flocking each year.

Seasonal Highlights

This area is full of wildlife, with something spectacular and different to see whatever the time of year:

Look out for:

SPRING

Rossall Point is the best place to see migrating terns – look for little, arctic, and sandwich terns.

SUMMER

Look out for magnificent osprey over beaches, orchids on the marshes, and dragonflies in the mosses.

AUTUMN

Skeins of pink-footed geese fly overhead, and flashes of black and white cross the sky as knots gather in murmurations.

WINTER

Teal quietly feeding on the Wyre Estuary near to Stanah.



arctic terns are known locally as sea swallows
© Chris Gomersall RSPB Images

Fleetwood

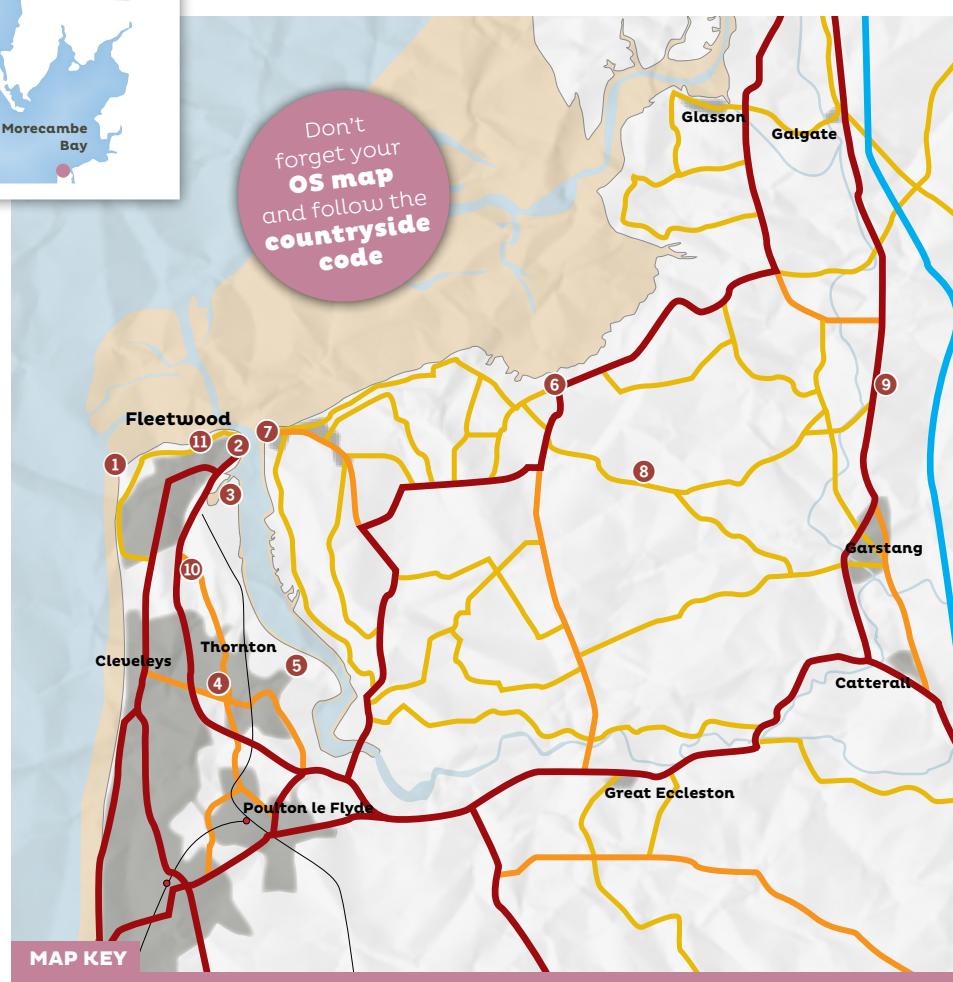
The Victorian seaside town of Fleetwood is a great place to get away from it all and get closer to nature. The promenade and beach are just waiting to be explored.

Don't miss the new observation tower at Rossall Point- rising 42 feet above the sand dunes! Pop in to find out more about our coasts, bird life and plant life or just enjoy the view. The views over the beach to the Irish Sea and across Morecambe Bay to the Lakeland fells and the Forest of Bowland are spectacular.

- Follow the Mythic Coast along the promenade from Fleetwood to Rossall Point, and Cleveleys beyond. Look across the shore and into the vast skies to see some of the birds that love to feed on the mud and saltmarsh around here. The best time to see groups of birds is 2 hours before or after a high tide, when the tide pushes the birds closer to shore or onto sand banks to roost.
- Rossall Point is one of the best viewing places around the bay. In spring look out for arctic, little and sandwich terns darting along the water's edge.
- In autumn you're likely to see one of nature's great spectacles - murmurations. Massive clouds of knot fly together for protection against predators, swooping and gliding in unison as though they are one organism.
- On the edge of the estuary and sand dunes you might spot sea holly - a beautiful coastal plant, with blue/green spiky leaves and metallic blue flowers in summer. Up to the end of the 19th century the roots of this plant were dug up and candied for use as a sweetmeat and restorative.
- Kids (and the young at heart) will love beachcombing. See what you can spot - bits of seaweed, unusual shells and driftwood – all with the sea roaring in the background!
- Try some freshly caught seafood brought into Fleetwood harbour.



Don't forget your
OS map
and follow the
countryside code



MAP KEY

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ① Rossall Point | ⑤ Wyre Country Park |
| ② Fleetwood Museum | ⑥ Lane Ends |
| ③ Fleetwood Marsh Nature Park | ⑦ Knott End |
| ④ Marsh Mill | ⑧ Winmarleigh Moss |
| | ⑨ Old Holly Farm |
| | ⑩ Farmer Parr's Animal World |
| | ⑪ Marine Hall |

- A stroll around the town reveals some wonderful buildings originally designed to attract Victorian visitors as well as 2 inland lighthouses.

The North Euston Hotel was the place that people would stay at if they were travelling from London to the west coast of Scotland. In those days you couldn't go direct, you travelled from Euston to Fleetwood on a train, you spent the night in the hotel and the next day a boat took you to Ardrossan on the Clyde.

- Just east of Fleetwood town and near to the Wyre Estuary is Fleetwood Marsh Nature Park. This nature park was created on the site of a former power station and is now a haven for nature. Walk out to the viewing area between two large lagoons to see birds feeding

amongst reedbeds in the freshwater lagoon, and on the muds of the brackish lagoon. Continue over a footbridge to an area of coastal grassland which is filled with flowers in summer, including bee and marsh orchids.



A Spectacular Soundscape

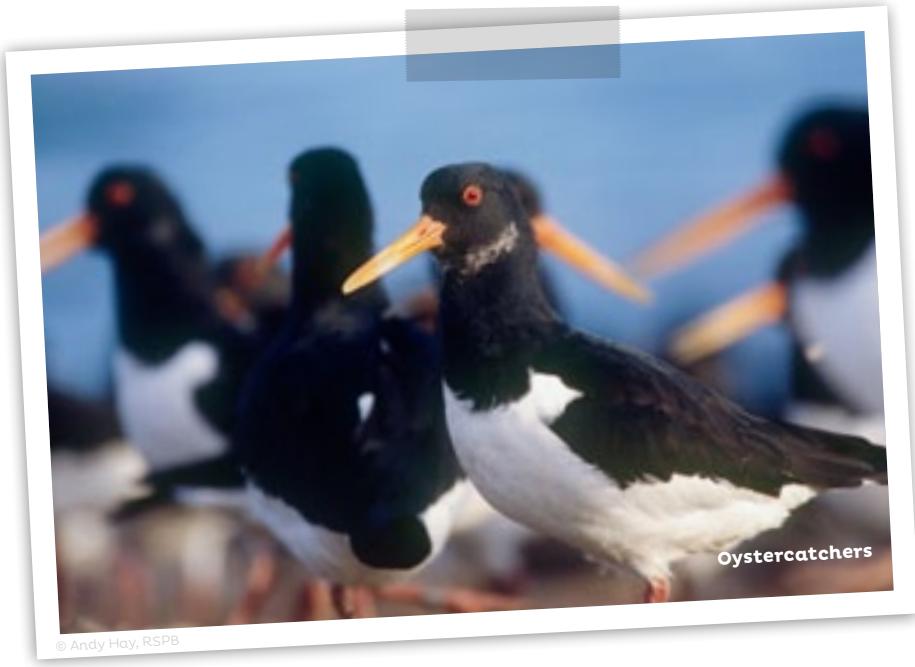
Take a scenic walk from Knott End along the Lancashire coastal way to Lane Ends Picnic site at Pilling. Lane Ends is a popular spot with locals and visitors for bird encounters (and enjoying a picnic!).

High tide is the best time for bird watching because the sands and marshes are covered up, and the birds rest and roost on the edge of the shore until feeding time can start again.

- Massive flocks of pink-footed geese arrive here in autumn from Iceland and Greenland to feed of the marshes and farmland. These geese are fussy holiday makers, and choose to overwinter only in the UK! Lane Ends is the best place around the bay to see them, and dawn and dusk are the best times.**
- Many wading birds gather here to feed - can you spot redshank and greenshank?**
- The saltmarshes are also important feeding grounds for chaffinch and skylark, and these attract predators such as kestrels, sparrow hawks and peregrine falcons. In winter you might also see hen-harrier and short eared owls.**
- Geese love to visit farmland for a tasty treat of wheat and potatoes, but you can visit too. The dairy farms around here are famous for producing great ice cream and Lancashire cheese. Nearby is Old Holly Farm, where visitors can experience a real working farm and enjoy some ice cream made on site (01524 791200).**



pink footed geese
© Andy Hay RSPB Images



© Andy Hay, RSPB

Oystercatchers

- Autumn and winter is a busy time on the marsh, look out for huge flocks of curlew. The curlew is the largest European wading bird, instantly recognisable by its long, down curved bill, brown upperparts, long legs and evocative call.**

Just south of Lane Ends is Winmarleigh Moss nature reserve. This is the largest remaining mossland in Lancashire. The site is home to rare species such as the large heath butterfly and bog bush cricket, along with common lizard (which is sadly not common anymore).

- You can visit the site on the public footpath that runs through its centre, but there is no on site parking. Due to the delicate nature of the site, please stick to the public footpath.**

- Explore on a trumper - a 4x4 motorised off road wheel chair or book an activity with a ranger from sea stories to minibeast hunts.**
- Look out for waders like lapwing and oystercatchers (look for huge flocks in spring and autumn), and ducks like teal and shelduck. Teal quietly feeding are a great sight in winter.**
- Spot salt tolerant plants like sea aster and sea lavender that flower on the largest area of ungrazed saltmarsh in Lancashire.**
- Visit the beautifully preserved Grade II* Marsh Mill, Thornton. This is one of the highest mills in Europe and one of the best preserved and oldest in the UK with original machinery (01253 887445).**

A Park For Everyone

Follow the river upstream from Fleetwood or Knott End to explore Wyre Estuary Country Park, on the banks of the Wyre.

This country park is perfect for strolling with all the family, with good paths around the park suitable for buggies and wheelchairs, a cafe and toilets, play area, and lots of places to stop and watch the world go by.



© Andy Hay RSPB Images

Getting here

We believe that a car free journey is a care free journey.

- Wyre has a well frequented train station at Poulton-le-Fylde. Train times are available on the National Rail Enquiry line on 08457 484950.**
- For local Handybus, Bus and Tram services telephone Blackpool Transport Services on 01253 473233.**
- Stagecoach North West provides services throughout the borough, their traveline number is 0871 2002233.**
- National Express Coach Services operate to and from the area, their enquiry line is 08717 818178.**

Getting around

The quiet lanes, promenades and Lancashire coastal way are perfect for exploring on foot. Find routes around Fleetwood, Thornton or the countryside at www.visitwyre.co.uk

- Join the Wyre Way - a 41 mile route following the River Wyre from its source in the Forest of Bowland to the sea at Fleetwood and Knott End.**
- Follow the Lancashire Cycle Way through Pilling to Lane Ends and on to Lancaster.**
- Take a health walk at Fleetwood, Stanah and Knott End.**
- Take the ferry to Knott End and cycle the delightful country lanes of Ouer Wyre.**
- Hire bikes from Waterfront Wheels, Marine Hall, Fleetwood. Bicycles adapted for people with low mobility or disabilities are available.**
- Buses run from Blackpool and Garstang, and the nearest train station is Poulton-le-Fylde.**



Staying longer

Fleetwood is a great base for a long weekend or a longer break.

- There are many hotels, B&Bs and caravan parks nearby. To book, go to www.visitwyre.co.uk or call the Visit Fleetwood Centre on 01253 887693.**

Moving on

Look out for other itineraries in this series at www.morecambebaynature.org.uk/discover:

- Visit Lancaster and Glasson Docks where wading birds gather against a rich maritime heritage.**
- Head to Witherslack and Whitbarrow to see red deer amongst mosses and dramatic limestone hills.**
- Explore Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, famous for its wildlife and landscape and a haven for butterflies.**



Useful contacts: call or search online

- Visit Fleetwood Centre 01253 887693**
- Visit Garstang Centre 01995 602125**
- Visit Wyre www.visitwyre.co.uk**
- Fleetwood museum 01253 876621**
- Knott End Ferry www.wyre.gov.uk/ferry**
- Old Holly Farm 01524 791200**
- Wyre Estuary Country Park 01253 887515**
- Marsh Mill 01253 887445**
- Waterfront Wheels 01253 887693**

This leaflet is brought to you by Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnership's Nature Improvement Area and Morecambe Bay Partnership's 700 Days to Transform the Bay scheme. It is funded by Defra, DCLG, Natural England, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, Coastal Communities Fund and RSPB Futurescapes EU Life Comms +.

The routes described are for guidance only. Please use an up to date map when exploring this area. It's a good idea to plan your route in more detail before you set off, and to check the weather forecast and tide tables. Wear appropriate clothing and don't forget to take food and water. The Partnerships above cannot be held responsible in the unlikely event of injury or accident whilst exploring this area. For more information on exploring the nature of Morecambe Bay visit www.morecambebaynature.org.uk