

# Get paddling!



**National  
Trust**

## Canoe map: Salcombe– Kingsbridge estuary

Let the National Trust guide you on an adventure to discover hidden coves, shipwrecks and shores teeming with wildlife – all without ever having to leave your canoe.

# Estuary information

## An estuary... ria-ly

The Salcombe-Kingsbridge 'estuary' is actually a tidal inlet formed as river-cut valleys were flooded by post-glacial rising sea levels. Such flooded river valleys are known as 'rias', or in this instance a 'dendritic ria' as each creek is itself a ria! The original rivers have long gone, leaving all the creeks fed now by small streams.

## Trust land

The National Trust looks after more than 500 acres inside the estuary: from the coastal slopes of Rickham Common, to Snapes Point which casts a long shadow over the town of Salcombe, and the beautiful estuary woodland at Halwell, nestled in the tranquillity of Frogmore Creek, with its captivating birdlife.



## Beneath the waves

The water beneath your canoe is full of marine life. Although the upper reaches of the creeks are typically estuarine, the middle and lower reaches are entirely marine. These unusually sheltered conditions give rise to a diverse ecosystem, including a sea-slug thought to be unique to this estuary, fantastic seagrass beds, rare seaweeds and rich rock gardens of sponges and corals.

## Relics of the past

Close to the estuary mouth sits Salcombe Castle, a coastal defence built in the 1540s. Despite three sieges and centuries of coastal erosion, the castle stands firm today. Salcombe was once an industrial port. The remains of a sawmill at Waterhead Creek, the wreck of the trawler *Resolute* close to Kingsbridge, and the many riverside lime kilns are all evidence of a busy past.





## Launching sites

Launch sites are shown on the map overleaf: those accessible only at high water are shown in red and all-tide sites in blue-and-yellow.

## Exploring the creeks

At mid-high tide all of the estuary is accessible by canoe, giving you a fantastic opportunity to explore some of the quieter sheltered creeks such as Bowcombe and Frogmore. However, when the tide turns these creeks can drain quickly, so **check tide times when planning your trip.**

## Round trip paddle times

Kingsbridge to Mill Bay: 3–5 hours;  
North Sands to the Saltstone: 2–3 hours.

**Please note: tidal currents and winds may significantly affect journey times.**

## Harbour dues

Canoes attract harbour dues to be paid before you set off (evidence of insurance required). Contact Salcombe Harbour Office for payment.



## Discover more

For more information on the Salcombe–Kingsbridge estuary, see the harbour guide, available from the Salcombe Harbour Office (see below).

The National Trust runs guided canoe adventures on the estuary in all seasons. To discover more about the Trust in South Devon, visit: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk) or our blog at [www.ntsouthdevoncountryside.co.uk](http://www.ntsouthdevoncountryside.co.uk) Tel. 01548 562344  
Email [southdevon@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:southdevon@nationaltrust.org.uk)

## Other useful contacts

Salcombe Harbour Office Tel. 01548 843791

Singing Paddles Canoe Adventures  
[www.singingpaddles.co.uk](http://www.singingpaddles.co.uk) Tel. 07754 426633

Estuaries Officer, South Devon AONB. Tel. 01803 861384  
Email [enquiries@southdevonaonb.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@southdevonaonb.org.uk)



## Water safety

Fast-moving tides can quickly expose mud flats, and at mid-tide there may be rapid tidal streams between Snapes Point and Scoble Point, and to Mill Bay and beyond. Tidetables are available from tourist information centres, or check tides and heights on [www.tidetimes.org.uk](http://www.tidetimes.org.uk)

Blanksmill, Collapit and further to the east can be very windy on exposed sections.

**Always let someone know where you are and when you intend to return. Mobile phone reception on the estuary is not reliable.**

## Canoe conduct

Canoeing allows us to explore the shallower areas of the estuary which others can't reach. Wildlife thrives in these quiet waters and can be vulnerable to disturbance. Please give wildlife respect and space, and paddle with care.

The estuary is a Local Nature Reserve: byelaws restrict open fires on the foreshore and dogs must be under close control.

The estuary can be a busy place. Be aware of other boats when paddling and be considerate of other estuary users.

If you require the information in this leaflet in alternative formats, telephone 01548 562344 or email [southdevon@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:southdevon@nationaltrust.org.uk)

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

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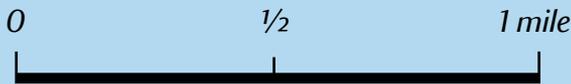
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### Key to symbols

	Ample car parking		Sawmill
	Limited car parking		Limekiln
	Canoe launching/landing at low and high water		Toilets
	Canoe launching/landing at high water only (please take advice)		Cafe
	Mud at low water, but navigable at mid-high tide		Pub
	National Trust land		
	Wildlife habitat - paddle with care		
	Shipwreck (low tide)		
	Underwater reef		
	Seagrass bed		
	Museum		
	Salcombe Castle		
	Information centre		



Beware of swell and breaking waves

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Tidal currents

Limits of harbour patrol