Yellowcraig – Wildlife for all Seasons

Welcome to Yellowcraig – a beautiful mixture of seashore, sand dunes, grassland and woodland – a place for wildlife and everyone who visits too!

This booklet will guide you around the area and point out features of interest along the way.

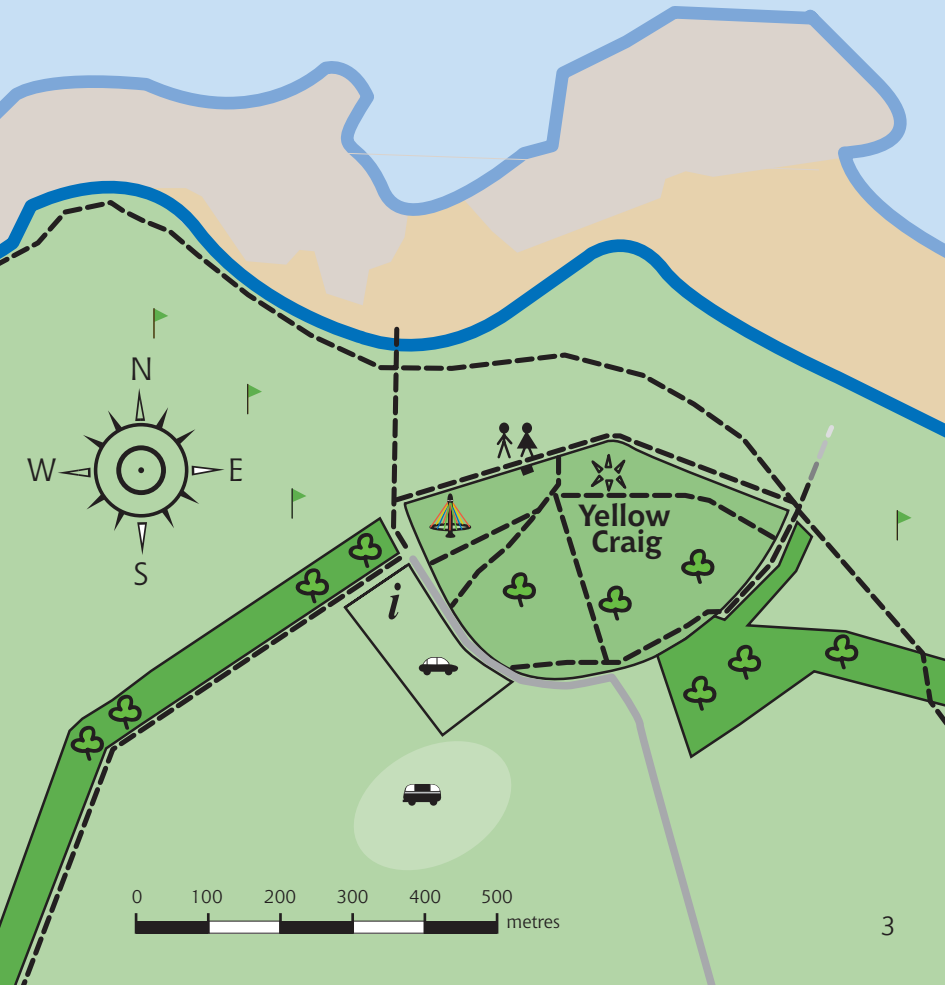
Contents

Top left:
View from top of Yellow Craig
Left:
Beach Fun
Right:
Twisted Pine

• Start Car Park

These large panels by the path to the beach give you a little information about the site and the wider area and for the dog walkers among you, this is an ideal chance to take a dog-waste bag from the dispenser. Please clean up after your dog, (using the bins in the car park).

Yellowcraig and the surrounding area



The Woodlands

Sycamore – deciduous

Scots Pine – evergreen

Yellowcraig Trees

B = broad-leaved
E = evergreen

Ash **B**
Beech **B**
Corsican Pine **E**
Elm **B**
Holly **E**
Larch **B**
Norway Spruce **E**
Oak **B**
Scots Pine **E**
Silver Birch **B**
Sycamore **B**
Western Hemlock **E**

Beech

Ash

Birch

Woodland Trees

Much of the woodland is quite recent in origin – having been planted in 1960. You should be able to spot trees of a much greater age, however, particularly around the boundaries. The basic rule is, the bigger the trunk (in circumference) the older the tree. (In fact if you are old like me and remember pre-metric times, a tape measure with inches on it, wrapped about 5 feet above ground level around the trunk, will give you a rough age for a tree, with each inch of girth equating to one year in age.)

In particular there are some large beech trees near the car park and some old sycamores on the north side.

These boundary trees suggest that the area may have been wooded for some time (at least since 1860), though the exact composition of the wood changed as trees have been felled and replanted.

If you cannot identify one tree from another though, do not despair…this guide will try and assist. Essentially there are two types to tell apart – **broad-leaved** (deciduous) and **evergreen** (coniferous). Telling these apart is easy – walk here in winter and all the trees with leaves still on them are evergreen – they do not shed their leaves in one go each autumn.

Identifying individual trees, however, is a bit trickier. The best way, whenever possible, is to look how the leaves are shaped.

The box opposite lists the trees found here and the pictures below show some of the commoner species that you are likely to find.

Oak

Wych Elm

Horse Chestnut

Holly

Larch

Woodland Plants

Whilst trees abound throughout the plantation, gaps in the canopy allow smaller woodland plants to thrive. For a comprehensive list of flowers refer to the appendices.

Here are a couple of readily identifiable plants to look for:

Red Campion

Bluebell

Woodland Mammals

Early, and quiet observers, may well spot the resident roe deer slipping through the trees. For a medium-sized mammal (an adult's shoulder height is 65-75cm), they have an uncanny ability to disappear in front of you, the only sign being a flash of white hair on their rump as they slip away.

Only the males grow antlers and these are shed each year. Both the male and female have reddish coats in summer, which change to grey as winter approaches. The young are born in early summer.

Even if you don't see the roe deer themselves, signs that they have been around can be detected. Look for their tracks in muddy patches, their round droppings, or low parts of tree trunks that may have been scraped by the male rubbing his antlers.

Roe Deer

Roe Deer tracks

Other mammals of the woods are equally good at hiding – but being much smaller and mostly living in tunnels or underground – they should be. Wood mice, field and bank voles, and common shrew are all about, but mostly only after dark, scurrying about for a bite to eat. In turn though, many of these small mammals end up as food themselves for the tawny owls that likewise live here.

Bank Vole

Roe Deer Fawn

Field Vole with young

Woodland Birds

Bird watching in the woods can be surprisingly difficult – and if it is high summer you'll find out why. First, with all the trees in leaf, the birds are hard to see. Second, by mid-June most birds have had their young and therefore are not so keen at identifying themselves with loud calls. So, although you will spot a few species (see appendices) perhaps the best time to go bird watching in the wood is between autumn and spring.

Blue Tit

Goldcrest – being returned to the wild

Robin

Chaffinch (male)

Chaffinch (female)
not to scale

Woodland Fungi

Fungi play a vital role in woodland regeneration – breaking down dead wood to eventually make soil for new plants and trees. For most of their life fungi exist underground as tiny threads (known as the mycelium). We only get to see them when they shoot up their fruits – mushrooms – whose job is to shoot microscopic spores into the air and commence the life cycle once again.

Fungi tend to be most abundant in the autumn, when dead leaves carpet the ground. But they do pop up earlier in the year as well. Puffballs of all sizes occur especially in tall grassland and on woodland edges.

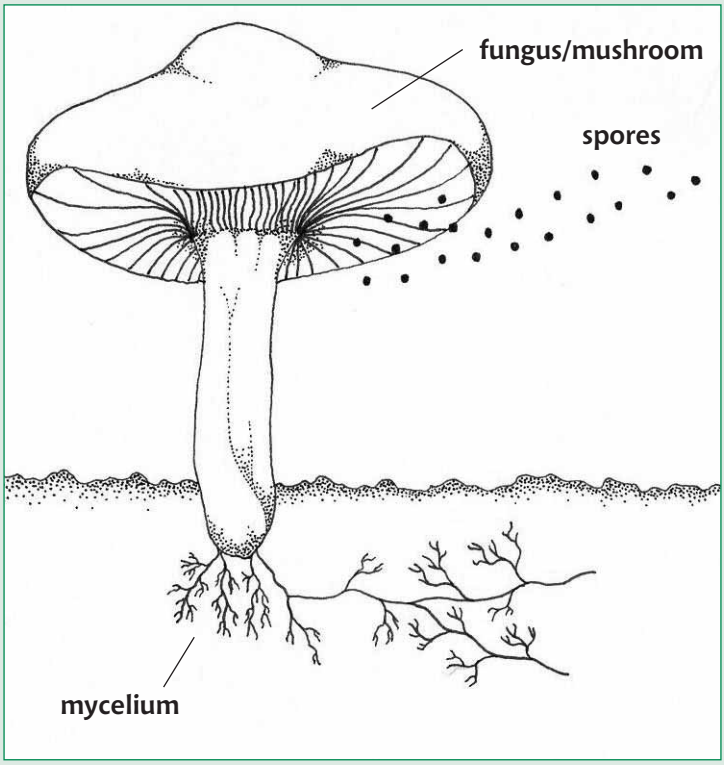
Shaggy Parasol

Puffball (above left)
Fly Agaric (left)

Safety note

Whilst most fungi are harmless to people, some will give you a nasty stomach upset if you eat them, and a few can kill. So, please, in common with all wild food, do not pick mushrooms unless you are an expert. By 'expert' you must be able to identify the 4,000 species that occur in Britain. For the rest of us, why not leave the mushrooms where they are, after all they have a job to do!

Earthstar



Fungi Life Cycle

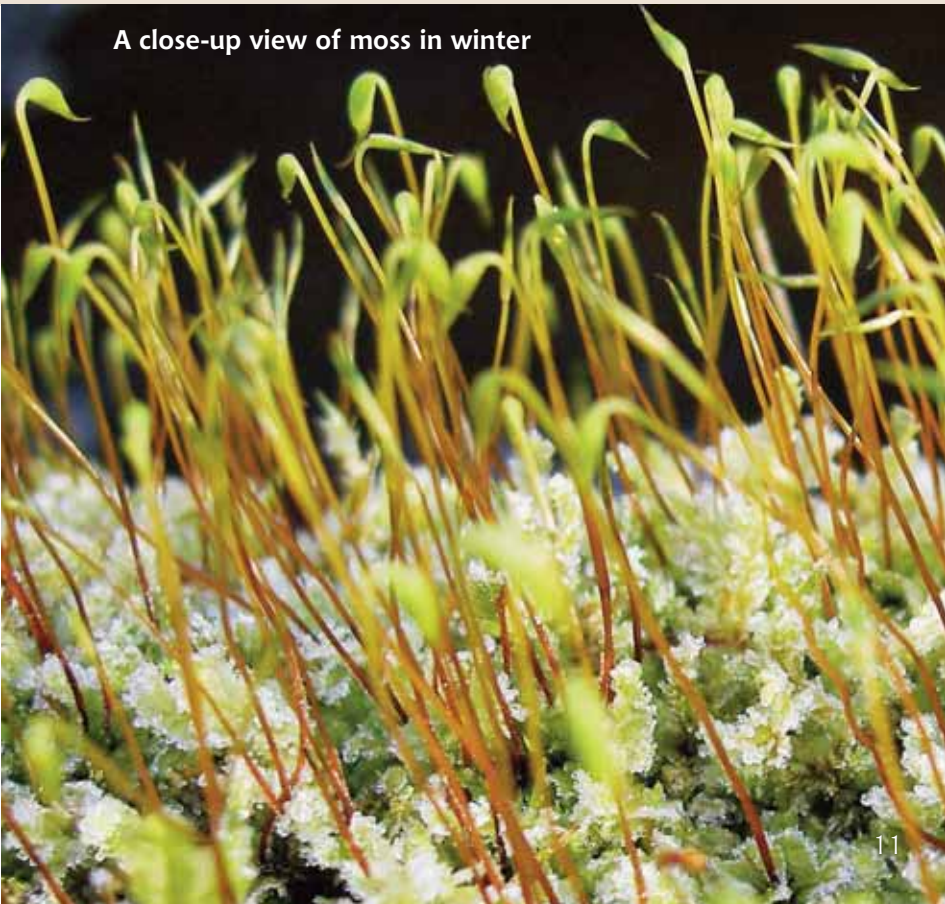
Something Else in the Woods...

As you tiptoe through the trees, perhaps wandering on paths of ever-decreasing size, who knows what other features of natural beauty and interest you may find? Some keen explorers may even come across a strange looking monument. Is it all that remains of some mighty monstrous hedgehog? Is it a giant's backscratcher? Or perhaps the only clue to a mysterious underground church organ? Obviously I'd love to tell you, but sometimes it is good to go and discover these things for yourself!

The Dune Grasslands

Confused by woodland riddles? Well, how about clearing one's head by heading out onto the grassland? You'll find several low-lying rocks (called agglomerates, but more of that later). These rocks, on close inspection, are covered in minuscule plants – lichens and mosses. Both, though small, are extremely important, as it is these plants that begin the 'cycle of life'. By being able to grow on bare rock, slowly but surely they will transform the area into one where other plants can live, starting a change from the bare rock habitat to one which will eventually be covered by plants, shrubs and trees.

So, enjoy them whilst you can, these guys may only be here for a few thousand years!

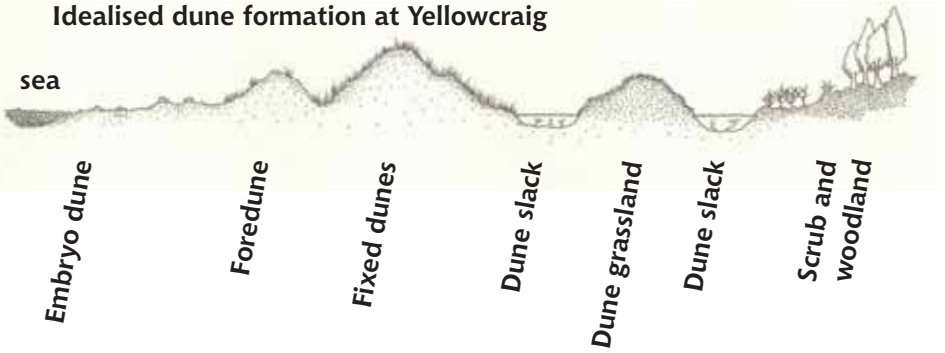


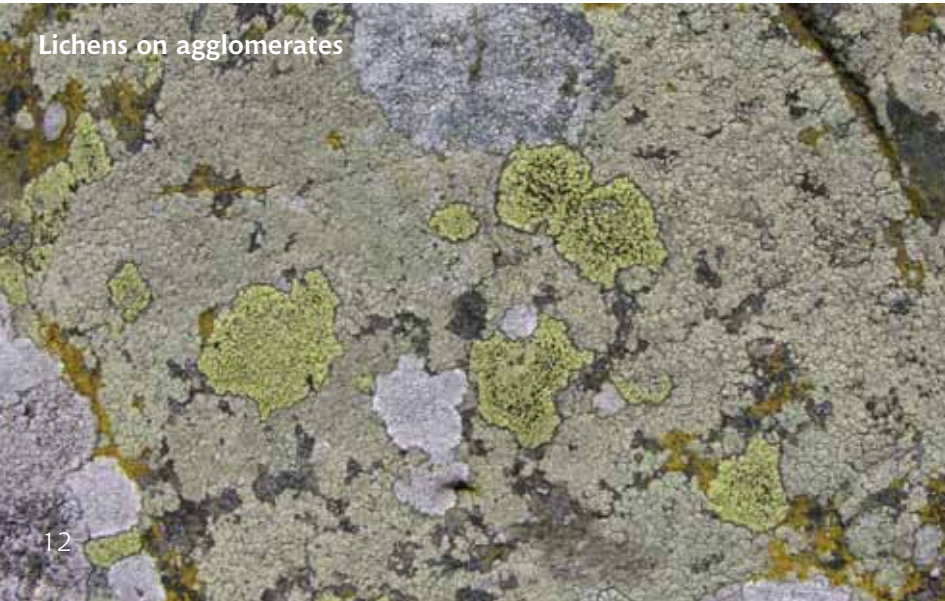
A close-up view of moss in winter

The Dune Grasslands

Agglomerates

Idealised dune formation at Yellowcraig





Lichens on agglomerates

Flowering Plants

The area around you now has developed on top of the sandy soils that at one time would have been carried in by the wind and water. Dunes develop from the sea inland – by the shore you have bare sand, then moving inland the range of plants becomes more varied as the salt content of the soil decreases and the amount of organic content increases.

Along the way you'll pass other areas within this dune system.

Typical plants of the fixed dunes are the purple wild thyme and the yellow & orange bird's-foot trefoil. The pictures below show both plants. You can also see why the bird's-foot trefoil gets its name – it is due to the shape of the large seed pods.

Bird's-foot Trefoil seeds

Wild Thyme

Bird's-foot Trefoil

Dune Slacks

Where you get a low-lying area between two dune ridges, the damper ground supports a different mix of plants. This area, the dune slack, can support water-loving plants such as butterwort, along with members of the orchid family, including common twayblade and common spotted orchid.

Common Spotted Orchid

Animals and Birds of the Scrub and Grassland

Rabbits have left their mark everywhere – from piles of their droppings, an abundance of burrows and scrapes, to the neatly clipped appearance of the grassy rides. Despite their numbers, you will only see the occasional bunny during the day – particularly the young ones in early summer. Indeed crossing the grassland during the day you could be forgiven for imagining that no mammals are there at all, as they really only come to life after dark. If lucky though, you may sneak a glimpse of a stoat or a fox.

Young Rabbits

Sea Buckthorn berries

Greenfinch – a seed eating specialist

Easier to see are the birds. Since the grassland is dotted with sea buckthorn and hawthorn bushes, there are numerous perches from which birds can drop down to feed amongst the grasses when all is safe. Many species prefer this more open habitat to that of the woods. You'll notice that the birds present here changes over the year. In the colder months, the small insect-eating birds of summer migrate to warmer regions. However, in their place, ripening sea buckthorn berries attract winter visitors. Two species of thrush in particular – the redwing and the fieldfare, come here in large numbers from Scandinavia to enjoy this rich source of energy. They make their way back across the North Sea from February to April.

Redwing

Birds feed either on the berries and seeds of grassland plants, or on the minibeasts that live there as well. Snails, perhaps surprisingly, are common through the sand dunes, and if you come by a collection of broken snail shells, you'll have discovered a song thrush at work. The thrush uses a favoured stone / similar – called a Thrush's Anvil – to smash open a snail's shell and reach the tasty snack inside. At least they think it is tasty…

A Thrush's Anvil

Dune Grassland Minibeasts

Summertime is perhaps the best time to look at grassland minibeasts. Some 12 species of butterfly can be seen during the summer, together with two colourful day-flying moths – the burnet moth (shown below), and the cinnabar moth, both of which appear in late July. The cinnabar moth is grey with a thin red stripe along the wing. Their caterpillars are very distinctive – with black and yellow bands down the length of their body. The caterpillars only feed on ragwort – a plant that has toxic juices, with the consequence that the caterpillars themselves are poisonous and left alone by hungry birds.

Burnet Moth

Cinnabar Caterpillars

Ringlet Butterfly

Marram Grass

Foredunes

Once the soil becomes too thin to support flowering plants, the area instead is dominated by dune grasses. Both marram grass and sea lyme grass grow here – playing a vital role in keeping the sand in place, thereby allowing the dunes to establish. They each have extremely sharp leaves, which can take a slice out of sensitive skin, so beware!

Continuing further towards the sea, eventually the sand and exposed nature of the coast become too much for even these grasses to take hold. You now stand, in many ways, right at the edge of creation – between the land and the sea. This is where objects trap blown sand around them, beginning the formation of new dunes. Many will be but temporary features – to get blown away completely in a gale, but a few will build up and join the network of dunes to their rear.

Gulls

The Seashore

The coastline at Yellowcraig is a beautiful combination of rocky shore – with pools teeming with life and open sand where people can relax in the sun or play on the beach. Again, wildlife abounds in both, though you need a keen eye, and a quiet day to see all of the animals that live here. To start with, let's examine life on the hard stuff ...

A typical rock pool

Rock Pools

Before going onto the rock pools two words of warning / practical advice:

1. The Tide

For those that do not know, the tide comes in and out twice each day. It doesn't suddenly rush in and out, but at the same time, the water can creep up around you with alarming speed if you are not paying attention. So, if you are exploring the rocky shore please check the tide times (see p41). If you can hardly see any rock, it is high water and you'll have to save exploring them for later. Between the tides however, many pools and rocky corners are revealed.

2. Ouch!

Walking on rock pools takes some skill. Experts can skip and bound across the rocks with ease. But for most of us, the rocks are awkward and the seaweeds extremely slippery. So take your time and walk. The tide will not move that fast!

Slippery rocks, beware!

The tide comes in ...

Between High and Low Water

With every high tide, all the flotsam and jetsam washed in by the waves gets deposited in a thick line at the top of the beach, called the Strandline, but more of this later on. Between this feature and the lowest point where the tides goes out, is a harsh world, known as the inter-tidal zone, within which anything that chooses to live must be very tough to survive. Imagine it for yourself – having to spend half the day underwater, swept about by the crashing waves, only for the other half of the day to be spent out in the open air, exposed to freezing winter winds and baking summer sun.

No wonder the plants and animals that live here have developed a few tricks to survive in this harsh environment.

Seaweeds of the Shore

Just like other plants, seaweeds need a combination of water, air and sunlight to grow. They also need to be able to grip the ground – something that is difficult when there is no soil to puts roots into. Instead most seaweeds have a 'holdfast' – a plug shaped, or root-like adaptation that sticks the plant onto the rock surface. These are incredibly effective – and they must be as the plants have to endure a battering from stormy seas, especially in the winter months.

A mixture of seaweeds

A washed-up holdfast

Seaweeds can be divided into 3 broad groups, separated by colour and where they are found down the shore. Red seaweeds are either found only at the lowest points on the shore, (or where rock pools recreate an equivalent habitat); greenish-brown seaweeds from the low to mid-shore areas and brighter green seaweeds at the highest sections of the rocky shore.

Obtaining enough sunlight is not a problem for seaweeds near the top of the shore, but further down, in the murky water, little light penetrates, so some seaweeds here tend to be very long – typically up to 3 metres. Oarweed and sugar kelp are two common examples.

You can find occasional washed-up specimens along the high-tide mark. Oarweed looks like a large fan and sugar kelp like a long broad belt. Both plants belong to the kelp family, and over the past 250 years were at times important sources for soda for use in glass and soap manufacture and also as sources of iodine and alginic acid – the latter a type of artificial silk with a variety of industrial uses.

Oarweed

Across the lowest part of the shore you'll also find examples of red seaweeds, not as long as the kelps, but whose (red) colour allows them to absorb sunlight more effectively. These seaweeds are the least tolerant to exposure to the air and quickly dry out. One example – coralline weed – becomes white and brittle, resembling coral, if it dries out and in this form can usually be found amongst the strandline.

Coralline Weed in water

Dried out Coralline Weed

Typical seaweeds of the middle shore are the family known as the wracks. Serrated wrack is common on the low-middle shore, knotted and bladder wracks in the middle and channel wrack on the upper middle part of the shore.

Above these, the brighter green seaweeds take over – with sea ribbons – *Enteromorpha* resembling long, ribbon shaped masses.

A medley of Seaweeds

Spiral Wrack

Knotted Wrack

Serrated Wrack

Channel Wrack

Sea Ribbons *(Enteromorpha)*

A Broad-clawed Porcelain Crab and Grey Topshells

Dog Whelk and Periwinkle

Rock Pool Animals

As with seaweeds, animals that live amongst the rock pools have had to adapt themselves to this tough habitat. Some have hard shells or bodies to protect themselves, others have sticky feet for gluing themselves tight onto the stone. Others again have evolved elongated bodies – ideal for wriggling underneath stones and out of harm's way.

Sea Anemone

Before you go examining the variety of animals in the rock pools – a plea on behalf of the residents! – please put stones etc. back where you find them and carefully too. Also, if you do want a close-up look at these creatures remember they need water in which to live, so you should always place them carefully into a collection tray with about 2cm depth of sea water.

Most pools contain an array of sea snails – from the several different species of periwinkle which graze upon plant matter, to the carnivorous dog whelk. This wee beastie has a trick up its sleeve, or rather shell, as part of its body is similar to a built-in drill! The dog whelk uses this to bore into the shells of other rock pool dwellers.

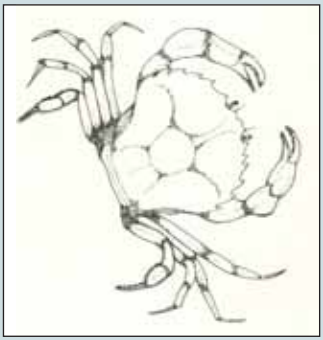
Starfish

Brittlestar

Mind you, for a really bad dinner guest, look no further than the starfish. Attractive they may be, but come feeding time they wrap themselves around a hapless victim, before forcing their stomach out of their own body and into/onto that of their prey – nice! – and from then the digestion process breaks down the food before the whole lot is gulped back in.

Brittlestars differ in being scavengers, searching rock pools and passing food along their long delicate legs to their mouth. The various crabs that occur are a combination of scavenger and hunter, with the hermit crab being particularly common in the pools of the middle shore. Most hermit crabs are right-clawed – the large pincer used to protect the entrance of the empty shell in which they have made a home. Can you find a left-handed one?

The other crab regularly seen in rock pool is the greenish-brown coloured common shore crab. They have large pincers and can give you a nasty nip if you do not know how to pick them up safely, so why not enjoy them without getting up too close!



Common Shore Crab

Hermit Crab

Beach fun

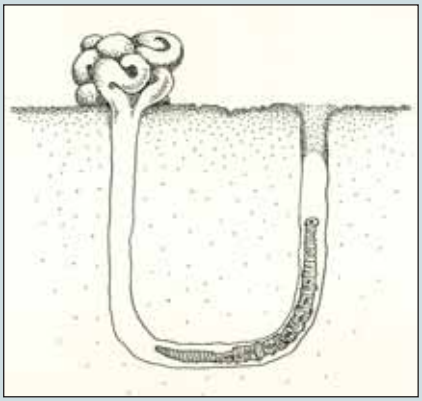
The Sandy Shore

The sandy shore is beloved by young and old alike as a place to play and relax. For animals and plants, however, it presents real problems in terms of survival. Indeed, so loose and infertile is the material, that no seaweeds can take hold here.

Some animals have, however, adapted to survive in this habitat and they are right beneath your feet.

Lugworms are the best known of these, with their U-shaped tunnel being marked by a sink hole at one end and the worm cast at the other, representing material that the lugworm has filtered through its body. Other worms in the sand include ragworms, which can bite. They are, however, much sought after by fishermen for use as bait.

Lugworm cast



Lugworm burrow cross-section

An empty Razor shell

Alongside worms, some snails make a home in the soft sand, burrowing into the surface before sending a feeler up to catch fragments of food when the area is covered by the tide. razor shells are a well-known example and they are extremely quick burrowers too – it is said they can burrow quicker than you can dig if you are trying to catch one! Other snails include members of the tellin family and venus shells.

The best way, perhaps to see evidence of these snails is not by digging in the sand, but by exploring the strandline for examples of washed-up empty shells.

Coastal Mammals

You will be fortunate to see any mammals along the shore. Perhaps you may catch a glimpse as they break the water's surface to come up for air, or as they haul up to rest on the rocks in the distance.

The otter is an extremely rare visitor to this part of the coast, having previously suffered from the effects of pollution and habitat loss. They are dark brown on the upperside, with pale underparts. Most people confuse them with the American mink. This is a smaller beast, typically cat-sized. It is usually completely dark in colouring, save for a small white patch on the lower lip.

Mink were released / escaped from fur farms many years ago, and have become a real nuisance, destroying native wildlife. The good news, though, is the otter population is now recovering and as it does so, they are helping to drive the mink out.

Both animals are most likely to be spotted at low tide amongst the kelp beds and lowest rocky areas.

Mink

Otter

Adult Grey Seal

Grey Seal pup

Common Seal pup

Two types of seal are seen along the shore. To tell them apart, you need to ideally see their heads in profile. One, the common (or harbour) seal, has a rounded, almost puppyish face. The other, the grey seal, has a much more elongated head – a 'Roman nose' profile. Other distinctive features – the common seal is much smaller than its cousin, typically 1.4m, whereas the grey seal can reach more than 2m in length.

Seal pups are born offshore on safe islands in the Forth and are nursed by their mothers until sufficiently robust to cope with all that the weather can throw at them. Initially this can be quite a lot – typically in November many grey seal pups – still in their white coat of youth, are found seemingly washed

up with the tide and looking forlorn. They are still dangerous animals and have a nasty bite. So if you do come across any seal and you are concerned, please do not approach and disturb it further, but contact the SSPCA on 08707 377722.

Lastly, and perhaps most unusual of all, sometimes whales and dolphins enter the Firth of Forth. Often these are animals that have lost their way and ended up here by mistake, though sometimes they may be here deliberately, following a large shoal of fish. Either way, views are usually limited to seeing a plume of spray rising from the water's surface, as the whale comes up for air. Sightings are indeed very rare, if anything, tending to be more likely in late summer – early autumn.

Male Eider

Adult Herring Gull

Gannet pair on the Bass Rock

Birds of the Coast

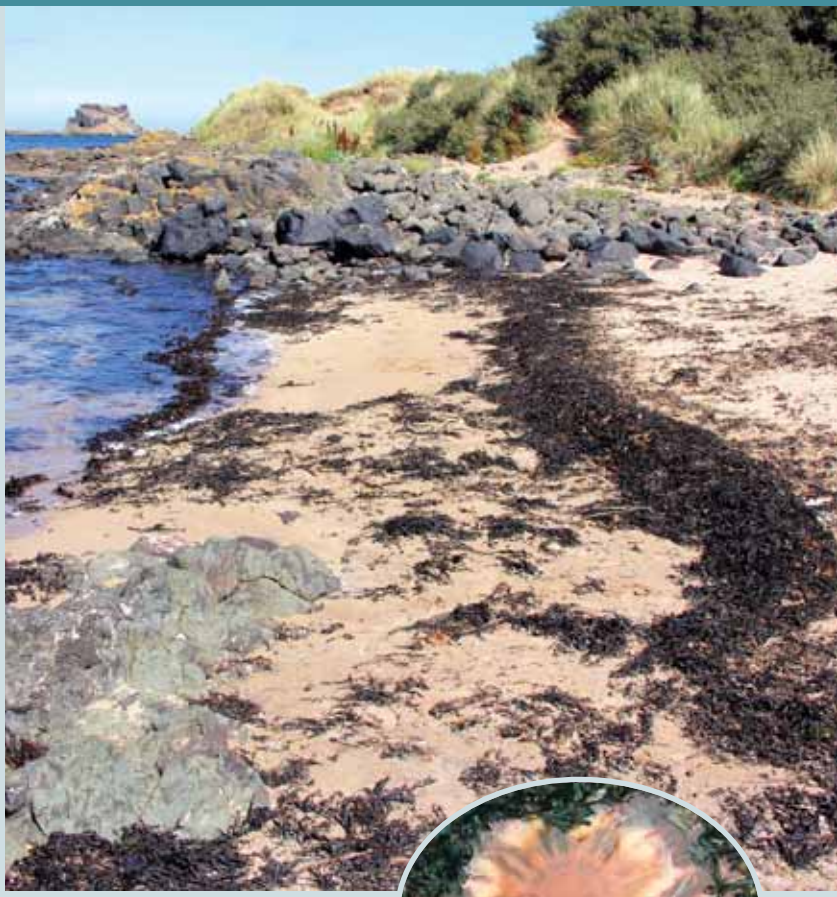
The Firth of Forth is internationally important due to the abundance of the seabirds that occur there, so it is little wonder that many can be seen from Yellowcraig. A set of binoculars is essential and really a spotting telescope is needed if you wish to see the birds that occur out to sea. If you don't have either of these, a trip into nearby North Berwick will give you a different chance to get close to the birds of the coast – either by visiting the Seabird Centre, or, (in summer) taking an organised trip around the islands in the area. Of these, the most spectacular is the Bass Rock, which, with an estimated 80,000 pairs, is home to the largest (northern) gannet colony in the world. These magnificent birds can be seen offshore from Yellowcraig, flying in small lines to and from the Bass. They feed by diving from heights of up to 40m, deep down into the water to catch fish. Their heads are specially reinforced to sustain the repeated bashing this impact has upon them.

Shag on a nest

Plenty other seabirds are seen near the shore – with terns, gulls, cormorants and red-throated divers to name but a few, a full list appears in the appendices.

Eider ducks are regularly seen, the male a striking mix of black and white feathers, and a lime green head. The female, by contrast, must be more subtly adorned, for she has the job of nesting amongst the grasses of the shore. Almost as soon as the young hatch in late May – June, they are taken to the water, a safer place, despite the waves. Eiders develop crèches, with several broods of young being jointly guarded by a few females. This way, they all have a bit of time off from rearing the young (this being all the more important as the male takes no part in the process).

Eider and her young



Strandline

A washed up Lion's-Mane jellyfish

The Strandline

When the tide reaches its highest point on the shore, all the material that is washed up by the water is deposited to leave a distinct line of debris – the strandline. These days, unfortunately, items found here are often man-made and have ended up here due to deliberate littering or because people still do not understand the consequences of flushing plastic items etc. into the sewage system.

Strandline Litter

Thin Tellin

Whelk Egg Cases

The strandline contains natural materials including shell fragments, old seaweeds, crab shells and egg cases of whelks. The latter appear as a mass of white round sacs, joined together to look like a strange sponge.

So see how many different items you can find – look out particularly for the tiny, but beautiful pink shells of the Thin Tellin.

You'll notice that there is often more than one strandline on the beach. This is because the line of the high water mark varies with each tide – due to a number of factors, but mainly the gravitational effect of the moon upon the pull of the water, and also due to the strength and direction of wind. After a big onshore storm a beachcomber may find, in addition to the usual offerings, all manner of deep water flora and fauna and exotic items that have been churned up and spat ashore by large waves.

Geology

Having spent time on the shore, you may just wonder why some parts of the coast are rocky, some sandy, and just what are the names of those islands offshore? To answer all matters geological, it is best to get a good view of the land around you, and as long as you can make the climb up some rocky steps, head now for the small hill which gives the area its name. If you can't see it, it lies on the coastal side of the woods, adjacent to the toilet block. *(see map inside back cover)*

Yellow Craig is part of the core of an ancient volcano that erupted some 340million years ago, at about the same time that North Berwick Law was formed. The vent of the volcano was filled with a rock called agglomerate, a soft rock made up of ash and rock fragments of varying sizes. You (hopefully) saw some of this when looking at lichens and mosses earlier.

The old core of the Yellow Craig volcano

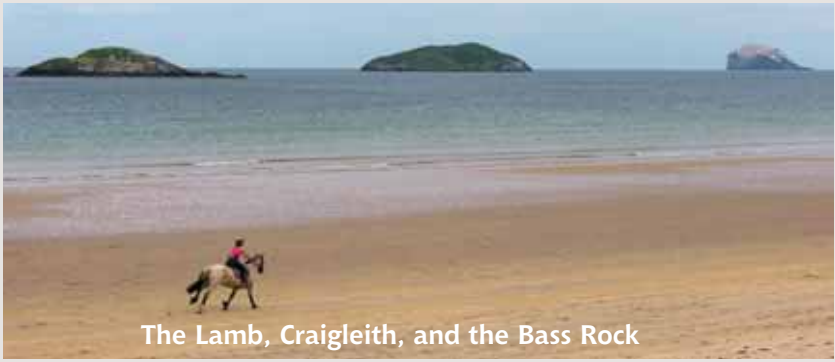
Agglomerates

Fidra

Later in the life of the volcano, a boiling hot plug of material cut through the agglomerate and cooled to form an incredibly hard rock – basalt. This has withstood weathering and erosion to form the upstanding hill of Yellowcraig and the other exposures (hills and islands) you can see immediately around you. The islands are all made of basalt. They are from west to east: Fidra, the Lamb, Craigleith and the Bass Rock. Beyond the Bass, the island far out in the Forth is the Isle of May.

The age of the basalt is testimony to its strength, as is the fact it withstood subsequent periods of cover by ice ages when softer rocks around them were worn away.

The rocks on the shore are a mixture of basalt and agglomerate. If you look to the rocks at the NW corner of the beach (Longskelly rocks) these are different volcanic rocks, namely ancient lava flows that happened before the Yellow Craig volcano.



The Lamb, Craigleith, and the Bass Rock

Seashore pebbles reveal a varied geological past

Landscape changes

Over time the volcanic activity ended. Since these ancient days, there have been substantial movements of the rocks, as they have been folded and faulted by massive pressures. The sea level has varied over time too. Sea level height changes are responses to alterations in the climate. During ice ages, Scotland was weighed down by ice sheets, which eroded away all but the hardest rocks. The sea levels altered by both falling and rising as the land recovered from the weight of ice upon it and as more water was released from melting ice at the end of the last ice-age. The raised beach here has been dated about 5,500 years ago and indicates a sea level some 8-10 metres above the current shore.

The Influence of People

Just before you descend, pause for thought as to who else may have made this climb up before you. It is likely that people have roamed around and lived here for thousands of years, but there are only few traces of our ancient ancestors.

More recently, however, there is evidence for a well-known face who was thought to have wandered up here. In the late c19, Robert Louis Stevenson spent several holidays in North Berwick. Many people believe that Fidra, with its distinctive arch and cave, provided him with the idea for one of his most famous novels, Treasure Island. Perhaps you are inspired to pen a line or two yourselves?

The Stevenson link does not end here… for the lighthouse on Fidra was built jointly by his uncle David and father Thomas, who completed the work in 1885.

Although lighthouses were designed to give safe passage for shipping, on very low tides, just off Longskelly Point, you can see a rusty piece of metal breaking the waterline. This is all that remains of HMS Ludlow, a former convoy ship that was used for shipping goods down the East coast during WW2. The ship did not, however, become wrecked during a storm, but rather unluckily ended its days here being used for target practice. So even the lighthouse was of no protection in this circumstance!

Wreckage of HMS Ludlow

Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850-1894.
Essayist, poet and novelist.
Unknown ('T.G.D.')
Scottish National Portrait Gallery

Play Area

For the younger amongst us, the play area adjacent to the car park gives a further nod to the Stevenson legacy. Perhaps now it is time to return in that direction. Head back down the steps, and take the main path through the woods, where both the car park and play area will soon be found.

I hope you have enjoyed the tour around Yellowcraig, and trust it will be re-visited and enjoyed for many years to come.

Useful addresses/contacts

If you have any queries about Yellowcraig, or wish to report anything, please contact the Countryside Ranger Service on ranger@eastlothian.co.uk or telephone 01620 827279

BBQ booking

If you want to book the BBQ site at Yellowcraig, please telephone 01620 893957

Coastguard

For general enquiries (e.g. tide times), please call 01333 450666. In the event of an emergency call 999

Injured animals

If you see any injured animal, please contact the Scottish Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA) on 08707 377722

Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB) has been operating as an organisation to improve the quality of local environments in Scotland for over 40 years. The group has been at the forefront of anti litter, waste and marine issues to encourage good practice and sustainable development.

For details telephone 01786 471333 or

Email: ksb@ksbscotland.org.uk

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

For issues to do with water quality please contact SEPA on 0131 449 7296 or via their website www.sepa.org.uk

Scottish Outdoor Access Code

Whilst enjoying yourself at Yellowcraig, whether walking, picnicking or horse riding please make sure you follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. This means that you have a right of access, provided that you act responsibly. Some of the key points of the Code are:

- Take responsibility for your own actions
- Respect the interests of other people
- Care for the environment

To find out more about the Code go to: www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE

Tide Times

Available online from several websites, e.g. www.bbc.co.uk/weather/coast/tides/scotland/fidra or by telephoning the coastguard (see below)

Yellowcraig Caravan site

For details contact the site warden on 01620 850217

For information about services provided by East Lothian Council, please go to www.eastlothian.gov.uk

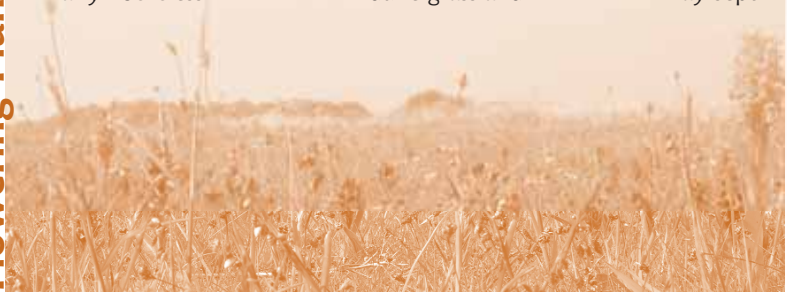
Beech

East Lothian Council

EAST LOTHIAN COUNTRYSIDE RANGER SERVICE

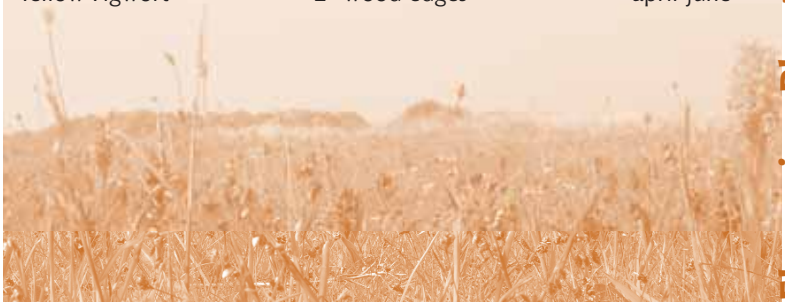
Local frequency (LF) 1 common, 2 occasional, 3 rare

Name	*LF*	*Where*	*When*
Autumn Gentian / Felwort	3	dune grassland	july-sept
Basil Thyme	3	low grassland	june-sept
Bird's-foot Trefoil	3	low grassland	may-july
Biting Stonecrop	2	rock outcrops	june-july
Bittersweet	2	east edge of woods	may-sept
Black / Lesser Knapweed	2	near car park hut	june-sept
Bluebell	2	woodland	march-june
Blue Fleabane	2	dune grassland	june-sept
Bog Pimpernel	3	grassland - wet flushes	may-sept
Broad-leaved Dock	3	woodland, grassland	april-sept
Common Centaury	2	dune grassland	june-july
Common Cleavers	2	woodland	april-june
Common Nettle	3	woodland	march-oct
Common Spotted Orchid	2	grassland - wet flushes	june-july
Common Twayblade	2	grassland - wet flushes	may-july
Cow Parsley	3	grassland	april-june
Creeping Bellflower	3	occasional on bare ground	july-sept
Creeping cinquefoil	2	foredunes	may-july
Daisy	3	grassland	march-aug
Dog rose	2	scrubland	may-july
Dove's-foot Cranesbill	2	low grassland	may-aug
Early Forget-me-not	2	rock outcrops	may
Early Marsh Orchid	3	grassland - wet flushes	may-july
Eyebright	2	low grassland	june-sept
Fairy / Purging Flax	3	rock outcrops	june-july
Frog Orchid	3	grassland - wet flushes	june-july
Goatsbeard	2	dune grassland	april-july
Grass of Parnassus	2	grassland - wet flushes	june-july
Greater Knapweed	3	near car park hut	june-oct
Ground Ivy	3	scrub / wood edges	april-july
Hairy Rockcress	2	dune grassland	may-sept



Local frequency (LF) 1 common, 2 occasional, 3 rare

Name	*LF*	*Where*	*When*
Harebell	2	grassland	july-sept
Haresfoot Clover	2	dune grassland	june-aug
Hemlock	2	grassland, Path verges	april-july
Hogweed	3	grassland	april-aug
Lady's Bedstraw	2	grassland	may-aug
Ladies Smock / Cuckooflower	2	wet flushes	march-may
Little Mouse-ear Chickweed	2	dune grassland	april-june
Marjoram	2	n.e. corner of woods / grassland	july-sept
Meadow Buttercup	2	grassland	may-aug
Meadowsweet	2	n.e. corner of woods / grassland	june-sept
Northern Marsh Orchid	2	grassland - wet flushes	june-july
Perennial Honesty	2	woodland	april-june
Pirri-pirri Burr	1	foredunes	may-july
Purple Milk-Vetch	2	low grassland	may-july
Quaking grass	3	dry tall grassland	june-july
Ragwort	1	dry grassland	july-aug
Red Campion	1	woods	march-nov
Red Clover	2	grassland	may-aug
Restharrow	2	low grassland	june-sept
Scarlet Pimpernel	3	dune grassland	may-oct
Scots Lovage	3	top of rocky shore	july-aug
Sea Mouse-ear Chickweed	3	dune grassland	march-july
Spring Beauty	3	scrub edges	april-july
Spring Vetch	3	low dry grassland	may
Thistles - various	3	grassland	june-sept
Viper's Bugloss	2	low grassland	may-sept
White Clover	1	grassland	june-aug
Wild Thyme	2	dune grassland	june-sept
Yellow Figwort	2	wood edges	april-june



Mammals

Local frequency (LF) 1 locally common, 2 occasional, 3 rare

Name	*LF*	*Where*
Bank Vole	1	woods / grassland
Common Seal	2	offshore
Common Shrew	1	woods / grassland
Field Vole	1	woods / grassland
Fox	1	woods / grassland
Grey Seal	2	offshore
Grey Squirrel	1	woodland
Hare	2	grassland
Hedgehog	1	woods / grassland
Mink	3	lower shore
Mole	1	grassland
Otter	3	lower shore
Pipistrelle 45 Bat	1	woodland
Pipistrelle 55 Bat	1	woodland
Pygmy Shrew	2	woods / grassland
Rabbit	1	woods / grassland
Roe Deer	1	woods / grassland
Stoat	1	grassland / woodland
Weasel	1	woods / grassland
Wood mouse	1	woods / grassland

Rockpool Animals

Name	*Where*
Barnacle	stuck on rocks
Beadlet anemone	stuck on rocks
Blenny sp.	open water
Broad-clawed Porcelain crab	lowest pools
Brittlestar	underneath rocks
Butterfish	open water
Chiton (coat-of-mail)	stuck on rocks
Common Shore Crab	underneath rocks
Dogwhelk	rocks / pools
Edible crab	lowest pools
Edible periwinkle	rocks / pools
Flat periwinkle	rocks / pools
Goby sp.	open water
Hermit crab	lives in old shells
Limpet	stuck on rocks
Pipe fish	amongst seaweeds
Rough periwinkle	rocks / pools
Starfish	stuck on rocks
Topshell	at bottom of pools

Coastal Birds

Local frequency (LF) 1 common, 2 occasional, 3 rare

Name	*When*	*LF*	*Where*
Bar-tailed Godwit	autumn–spring	3	tideline to shallow water
Black-headed Gull	autumn–spring	1	offshore
Common Gull	winter	2	offshore
Common Scoter	winter	3	open sea
Cormorant	all year	1	open water / roosting on rocky shore
Curlew	autumn–spring	2	rocky shore
Dunlin	autumn–spring	2	tideline / Roosting on rocky shore
Eider	all year	1	open sea
Gannet	all year	1	far out to sea, esp. summer
Goldeneye	winter	2	open sea
Great Black-backed Gull	winter	3	offshore
Grey Heron	winter	2	rocky shore
Guillemot	winter	2	open sea
Herring Gull	all year	1	offshore
Kittiwake	spring–autumn	2	far out to sea
Lesser Black-backed Gull	all year	1	offshore
Long-tailed Duck	winter	3	open sea
Oystercatcher	all year	1	shoreline
Pied Wagtail	autumn–spring	2	shoreline
Puffin	summer	3	far out to sea
Razorbill	winter	2	open sea
Red-breasted Merganser	all year	2	open sea
Redshank	autumn–spring	1	rocky shore
Red-throated Diver	winter	3	open sea
Rock Pipit	winter	2	rocky shore
Sandwich Tern	spring–autumn	2	offshore
Shag	all year	2	open water / roosting on stacks
Snow Bunting	winter	3	sandy shore
Turnstone	autumn–spring	2	tideline

Scrubland Birds

Local frequency (LF) 1 common, 2 occasional, 3 rare

Name	*When*	*LF*	*Where*
Blackcap	spring–autumn	2	in scrub
Bullfinch	all year	2	in scrub
Chiffchaff	spring–autumn	1	in scrub
Dunnock	all year	1	in scrub
Fieldfare	autumn–spring	2	feeds on Sea Buckthorn berries
Goldfinch	spring–autumn	2	in scrub / tall vegetation
Greenfinch	spring–autumn	2	in scrub
Kestrel	all year	2	hovering above grassland
Linnet	all year	2	low grassland
Magpie	all year	1	general
Meadow Pipit	spring–autumn	1	tall grassland
Redwing	autumn–spring	2	feeds on Sea Buckthorn berries
Reed bunting	spring–autumn	2	isolated scrub thickets
Skylark	spring–autumn	1	tall grassland
Starling	summer	1	flocks of young on short grass
Stonechat	spring–autumn	3	isolated scrub bushes
Swallow	spring–autumn	2	hunting on the wing above grassland
Swift	summer	2	hunting on the wing above grassland
Waxwing	winter	3	feeds in small groups on berries
Wheatear	spring–autumn	3	migratory, on short grassland
Whinchat	spring–autumn	3	migratory, on short grassland
Whitethroat	spring–autumn	2	in scrub
Willow warbler	spring–autumn	2	in scrub
Yellowhammer	spring–autumn	2	in scrub

Woodland Birds

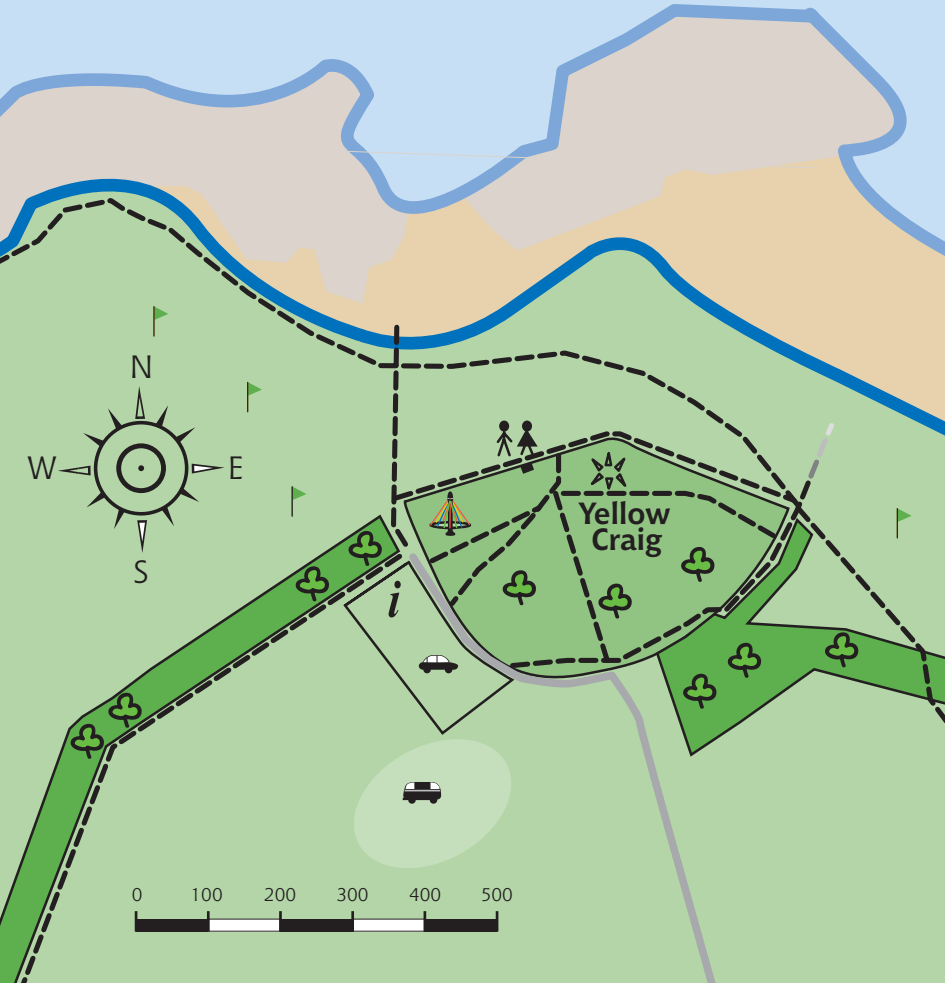
Local frequency (LF) 1 common, 2 occasional, 3 rare

Name	*When*	*LF*	*Where*
Blackbird	all year	1	woodland edges / clearings
Blue Tit	all year	1	general
Carrion Crow	all year	1	roosts in conifer trees?
Chaffinch	all year	1	general
Coal Tit	all year	2	conifer trees
Collared Dove	all year	2	general
Crossbill	winter	3	conifer trees
Goldcrest	all year	2	coniferous trees
Great Tit	all year	1	general
Greater Spotted Woodpecker	all year	3	ash trees / dead wood
Jackdaw	all year	1	general
Long-tailed Tit	winter	2	general
Mistle Thrush	all year	2	general
Pheasant	all year	1	woodland floor
Robin	all year	1	general
Rook	all year	1	roosts in conifer trees?
Siskin	winter	3	conifer trees
Song Thrush	all year	1	woodland edges / clearings
Sparrowhawk	all year	2	general
Spotted Flycatcher	summer	3	deciduous trees
Stock Dove	all year	2	general
Tawny Owl	all year	3	nocturnal / general
Treecreeper	all year	2	climbing up tree trunks
Woodpigeon	all year	1	general
Wren	all year	1	bushes within wood

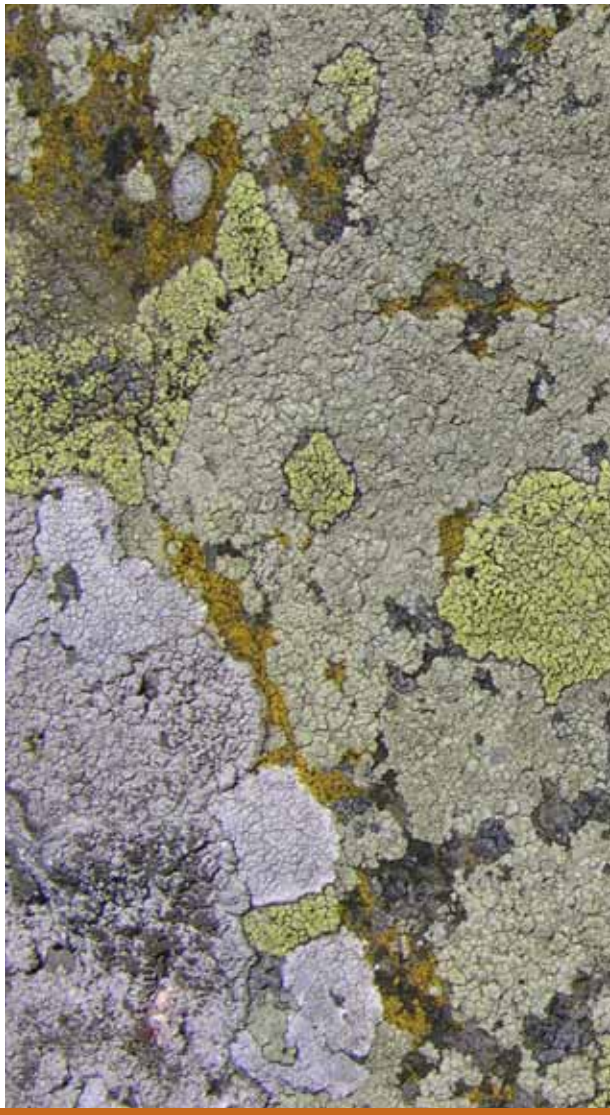
Seaweeds

Name *Scientific Name*	*Where*	*Colour*
Bladder Wrack *Fucus vesiculosus*	middle shore	greenish-brown
Carrageen / Irish Moss *Chondrus crispus*	rock pools	red-green
Channel Wrack *Pelvetia canaliculata*	upper rocky shore	olive green
Coralline weed *Corallina officinalis*	rock pools	red-purple
False Dulse *Gigartina stellata*	rockpools, low shore	red-brown
Knotted Wrack *Ascophyllum nodosum*	upper / middle shores	olive green
Laver / Sea Lettuce *Ulva lactuca*	rock pools	bright green
Oarweed *Laminaria digitata*	extreme low shore	brown
Purple Laver / Stoke *Porphyra umbilicalis*	exposed stones	reddish-brown
Sea Fern *Polysiphonia lanosa*	on knotted wrack	dark red
Sea Ribbons *Enteromorpha intestalis*	rock pools	bright green
Sea Ribbons *E. compressa*	rock pools	bright green
Sea-oak *Halidrys siliquosa*	rockpools, low shore	
Serrated wrack *F. serratus*		greenish-brown
Small / Horned Wrack *F. ceranoides*	brackish water	olive green
Spiral / Flat Wrack *Fucus spiralis*	upper middle shore	olive green
Sugar Kelp *L. saccharina*	extreme low shore	brown

Yellowcraig and the surrounding area



Yellowcraig



Wildlife for all Seasons