

## ROUTE DETAILS

**LENGTH:** Main loop = 3.5km,  
extra loop = 1.5km, total = 5km

**TIME:** 1-2 hours

**DIFFICULTY:** Moderate

**GRADIENT:** Slight inclines - sand dunes  
can be difficult underfoot

**DOGS:** No restrictions

Start and end location: Woolacombe Tourist Information  
Centre (TIC) (EX34 7DL)

1. Leave the Woolacombe TIC and carefully cross the road and turn left. Keep on the same side of the road and follow the pavement around until you reach the sand dunes.
2. As the road starts to incline turn off the pavement onto a path on the right going towards the sand dunes this will slope up for a short distance.
3. At the first intersection onto the dunes turn right and head down a gently sloping path onto the beach. This deep sand can be difficult to walk through but worth it to make it onto Woolacombe Beach!
4. On the beach turn left and walk along the bottom on the sand dunes. Depending on the time of year you should find the strandline. The strandline is a strip of seaweed and other items from the sea that get pushed up onto the beach each time the tide comes in. Amongst the seaweed you might find shark and ray egg cases, cuttlefish bones, seashells, barnacles and most likely small fragments of plastic which have been broken up in the sea.
5. Enjoy this easy paced stretch of beach for 1km then take the path cutting up into the dunes on your left hand side. This is a short uphill climb to an intersection. If you'd like to explore a bit further then follow the path in a straight line up the hill. If you'd like to return back along the sand dunes take the left hand fork in the path and skip to direction number 10.

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL TRUST

The National Trust is Europe's largest conservation charity, as a charity we are reliant on our supporters and have over 5 million members and 60,000 volunteers. In North Devon we look after over 8,000 acres of land and 101 miles of footpath for ever, for everyone.

In the UK nature is on the decline and the National Trust are determined to reverse this. We have made the Woolacombe dunes a haven for wildlife, if you visit during the winter you'll see the North Devon Red Cattle grazing the dunes. The cattle are great at trampling through overgrown brambles and chomping away at some of the grasses, this means that during the warmer months you'll see a spectacular array of plants growing on the dunes, which in turn support a diverse array of mammals, birds and reptiles.

## ABOUT THE NORTH DEVON COAST AONB

The North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a stunning coastal area which is nationally protected for the beauty of its landscape. It covers 171 km<sup>2</sup> of the coastal landscape including special places such as Combe Martin, Lee Bay, Woolacombe, Croyde, Saunton, Braunton Burrows, Westward Ho! and the Hartland Peninsula. Learn more on our website: [www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk](http://www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk) or on Facebook and Twitter @ExploreTheCoast. Coastal Creatures was a coastal education project by the North Devon Coast AONB funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

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Credits:

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# WOOLACOMBE WILDLIFE TRAIL

## SAND DUNES & BEACH



## COASTAL CREATURES SELF-GUIDED WALK

This wildlife trail is a self-guided, circular walk around the beach and sand dunes at Woolacombe where you will encounter a range of incredible coastal species on the sand dunes, beach and coastal heathland.

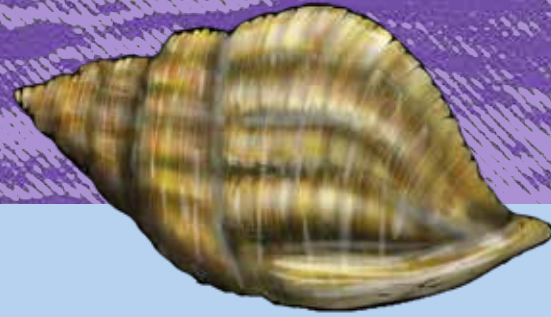




**KEY:**

- YELLOW LINE:**  
Main walk (anti-clockwise)
- RED LINE:**  
Extra loop (clockwise)
- PURPLE LINE:**  
Caution along this stretch of route

- |                |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Beach          | Sand dunes          |
| Heath          | Strandline          |
| Mill Rock      | Tourist Information |
| Public toilets | Woodland            |



Bristol Channel

Woolacombe Beach

Woolacombe Down

100 m



6. On the extra loop keep continuing walking up the hill until you reach a gravelly road, turn right and walk along this path for 100m and then take the path on your left hand side. Follow this path up a gently sloping hill keeping the sea on your right hand side.

7. This section of walk takes you through coastal heathland where you can find plant species such as heather, bell heather and gorse. In summer these plants are vibrant colours but watch out, they can be spikey! When you reach an intersection take the path pointing towards Marine Drive and cross the stile.

8. When you reach Marine Drive, cross the track and take the sign towards the Coast Path. This will take you through a small section of coastal woodland.

9. When you come out of the woodland take the right hand fork on the path and follow it straight along the sand dunes.

10. Continue walking along the path through the sand dunes keeping the sea on your left hand side. Feel free to explore the paths around the dunes, you may find a variety of wildlife including slow worms, butterflies and moths and a range of coastal plants including sea holly, birds foot trefoil and dune pansy.

11. When you arrive back at the start of the loop, retrace your steps back to the Woolacombe Tourist Information Centre.

