

You and your dog can help protect the local wildlife

Please follow these simple steps when visiting:

- Respect other people and the local community whilst enjoying the outdoors.
- Protect the natural environment by taking your litter and dog mess home with you.
- Keep your dogs under control, and out of all water and undergrowth
- Keep your dogs on a lead near livestock. (Let go if chased).
- Look out for the yellow signs >>



Why are there no litter bins on the reserve?

We ask that people take their dog mess away with them. We don't have bins on the reserve to prevent the risk of spreading disease to the livestock and wildlife. We also make an effort to keep the environment as natural as possible for you to enjoy.

Thank you

Thank you for your help and we hope you and your dog enjoy your visit. If you have any queries, please contact Natural England or WWT Steart Marshes.

WWT Steart Marshes

Reserve Office, Stert Drove, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA5 2PU

T: 01278 651090

E: info.steart@wwt.org.uk

Natural England

Somerset National Nature Reserves
The Avalon Marshes Centre, Shapwick Road
Westhay, Glastonbury. BA6 9TT

T: 01458 860120

E: somersetavonandwiltshire@naturalengland.org.uk

Further information about your dog and the countryside code can be found at www.thekennelclub.org.uk

FSC
LOGO

Dog walking information

Steart peninsula



WWT Steart Marshes
Bridgwater Bay National Nature Reserve
(Natural England)



working in partnership with
 Environment Agency



Sam Stafford / WWT

Welcome

Welcome to the Steart Peninsula, home to the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) Steart Marshes and National England's Bridgwater Bay National Nature Reserve.

These beautiful reserves are recognised as important areas for wildlife and are managed to maintain and enhance them for the benefit of people and wildlife. They are popular with dog walkers and we hope this leaflet will help you to protect this important area as you and your dog enjoy your walk.

Why is Steart Peninsula so important?

Birds and other wildlife

The Steart Peninsula is an internationally important stop-over site for migrating birds, such as the golden plover, dunlin and redshank. Birds stop here to feed and rest after a long migration and may have travelled from as far away as Siberia. We also have lots of nesting birds at Steart, with avocet, oystercatcher, little ringed plover and lapwing all using the reserve for breeding. Shelduck also breed here in large numbers.

If nesting birds are disturbed by dogs they can abandon their nests and their chicks. Migrating birds can also use up vital energy through unnecessary flying if they take fright. This is why in some areas we ask for dogs to be kept on leads and at times we close off sections of paths.

Please support our wildlife by keeping your dog on the path rather than allowing it to run through the undergrowth or onto the foreshore

Water

We know that some dogs love going for a swim but if you are walking your dog here we ask that you keep it out of the water. The estuary, saltmarsh, ponds, lagoons and ditches at Steart are all home to important wildlife. Otters, water voles, dragonfly nymphs, fish, eels, newts and other amphibians have all been recorded here.

Livestock

You will see grazing sheep and cattle at Steart. They do a vital job maintaining grassland and saltmarsh which allows rare plants and animals to thrive. However, livestock can be nervous of dogs so we ask that you keep your dog on a lead in areas where there are animals. Where your dog can be let off the lead, please ensure that it is kept under effective control at all times. If you feel you are under threat from the livestock, let go of the lead and get to an area away from the livestock before calling your dog back.