

Jurassic Coast

What is the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site?

- The Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site is England's first and only natural World Heritage Site.
- The site is a 95 mile stretch of the south coast from Exmouth in East Devon to Studland in Dorset.
- It was awarded World Heritage Site status in December 2001 by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) because of its outstanding Earth science interest.
- It is the only place on Earth where 185 million years of the Earth's history are sequentially exposed in dramatic cliffs, secluded coves, coastal stacks and barrier beaches. The 'tilt' of the rocks creates a unique 'walk through time' from 250 million to 65 million years ago, through the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods as you walk eastwards along the Site.

What is a World Heritage Site?

- World Heritage Sites are carefully selected by UNESCO as places of 'outstanding universal value'. It is the highest global level of designation for a natural area.
- UNESCO promotes the protection and conservation of these sites and encourages them to be presented and passed intact to future generations.
- The Great Barrier Reef, the Grand Canyon and the Galapagos Islands are all examples of natural World Heritage Sites.

Why is it called the Jurassic Coast?

- The Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site is more popularly known as the 'Jurassic Coast'.
- The name comes from the best known of the geological periods found within it, but in fact the site includes rocks from the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods.
- The different rocks tell a fascinating story from ancient deserts to tropical seas throughout the Mesozoic era, between 250 million and 65 million years ago.
- By emphasising the Earth science story, the phrase 'Jurassic Coast' is fast becoming as familiar as the UK's other natural wonders such as the Lake District and Giant's Causeway.

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- Marketing of the Jurassic Coast includes the following strap-lines:
 - England's first natural World Heritage Site
 - 185 million years of Earth's history in 95 miles of coast
 - A Walk Through Time

Where can I find out more information about the Jurassic Coast?

The official Jurassic Coast website **www.jurassiccoast.org** has up to date details on the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site, including press releases and events.

The Official Guide to the Jurassic Coast is a 64 page guide packed full of stunning photographs and fascinating information. It explains the stories of the World Heritage Site, including the rocks, fossils and features that make it a place of global importance.

The guide is produced and sold on behalf of the Jurassic Coast Team by the Jurassic Coast Trust. The guide costs just £4.95 and is available from local bookshops, Tourist Information Centres and visitor centres along the coast, or can be ordered online at **<http://www.jurassiccoasttrust.org/store>**

The Mini Guide – This free leaflet is available along the coast, from Tourist Information Centres, visitor centres, museums and local attractions. It suggests how best to explore the Jurassic Coast and highlights some of the key places to visit.

Jurassic Coast Trust – an independent charity working with partners to support World Heritage education, conservation, science and arts programmes for the benefit of all – now and in the future.

Jurassic Coast World Heritage Team – responsible for managing and coordinating the work programme along the Jurassic Coast.

World Heritage Coast – this not only refers to the cliffs which make up the World Heritage Site, but also the hinterland

For more details see **www.whc.unesco.org**

For a Jurassic Coast travel map see **www.jurassiccoast.org/visiting**

FACT SHEET

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