

Blue Meadows Coastal Count

Understanding coastal water usage in seagrass areas



Introduction

Seagrass meadows create incredibly important habitats for marine life and humans alike. These coastal counts will help us to investigate the relationship between the serene environment that seagrass meadows create, and the recreational activities that happen in the area.

This guide will tell you everything you need to know to carry out these counts and help to collect this vital data.

Thank you!

| | |
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Important information

Volunteers can choose to carry out the count using a paper recording form, or our online recording form found here:

[Blue Meadows: Coastal Count](#)

OR scan
here!



After picking your location, head to the coast and make yourself comfortable. Please do **NOT** carry out the coastal count in bad weather. The length of the count is 1 hour, in which we ask volunteers to observe and note any recreational activity within the count location.

The recording form has been split into 3 sections to help with recording, “At the start of the count”, “During the count” and “At the end of the count”. Please work your way through the sections, not forgetting to take a picture at the beginning and end of your count. There is space for tallies, but please remember to total each box!

What you'll need:

- Volunteer guide - you can download this guide ahead of your count.
- Binoculars (essential)
- Recording form and pen/pencil **OR** access to the online form
- Hot drink and snacks
- Camera
- Sunhat and suncream
- Something to sit on! (some locations do have seating)

Submitting your count data

Once you have completed your count, please send scanned copies (or a picture) of forms, with photos, to:

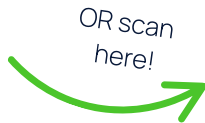
bluemeadows@oceanconservationtrust.org

If you have used the online form, you don't need to send us anything.

Volunteer expenses

We really value your contributions in helping us collect this vital data and will gladly reimburse any reasonable travel expenses incurred whilst volunteering. Any parking, bus tickets or milage can be claimed through our expenses form here (please download and edit rather than saving your details to SharePoint):

[Expenses Form](#)



PLEASE NOTE:

- We will only reimburse 2 hours of parking.
- We will only reimburse milage up to 20 miles from a count site.
- We will need photographic evidence of parking and bus tickets, with matching dates to your count on.
- Expenses will be paid on a monthly basis.

If there is a site that's a bit too far away, please get in touch so we can consider setting up another location!

Please send expense forms with attached photos to:

bluemeadows@oceanconservationtrust.org

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Location: | | What 3 words: https://what3words.com/ | | Date: | | Recorder: <i>(optional)</i> | |
| Start time: | | Weather conditions <i>(Please use the Beaufort wind scale):</i> | | | | Wind direction: | |
| End time: | | Sea state: | | | | Wind speed <i>(mph):</i> | |
| BEFORE YOU START THE COUNT | | | | | | | |
| Please take a picture of the entire count zone or Voluntary No Anchor Zone | | | | | | | |
| How many vessels TOTAL were in the count zone or Voluntary No Anchor Zone? | | | | How many of these vessels were anchored? | | | |
| DURING THE COUNT | | | | | | | |
| <i>(Please refer to the coastal count guide for help identifying vessels)</i> | | | | | | | |
| Number of vessels travelling <u>within</u> the count zone or Voluntary No Anchor Zone | | | | | | TOTAL: | |
| Large sailing boat: | | RIB: | | Fishing boat: | | Commercial vessels: | |
| Small sailing boat: | | Power boat: | | Non-powered craft: | | Other: | |
| Number of vessels travelling <u>outside</u> the count zone or Voluntary No Anchor Zone | | | | | | TOTAL: | |
| Large sailing boat: | | RIB: | | Fishing boat: | | Commercial vessels: | |
| Small sailing boat: | | Power boat: | | Non-powered craft: | | Other: | |
| Number of vessels anchored within the VNAZ | | TOTAL: | | Type of vessel/s anchored: | | | |
| AT THE END OF THE COUNT | | | | | | | |
| Please take a picture of the entire count zone or Voluntary No Anchor Zone | | | | | | | |
| Were there swimmers present in the water at any point during the count? | | | | YES / NO | | | |
| Approximately how many swimmers were present? | | | | TOTAL: | | | |
| Any other comments <i>(this might include a type of vessel spotted not on the list, wildlife seen or anything else of importance):</i> | | | | | | | |







Please scan this form or take a picture and send it to bluemeadows@oceanconservationtrust.org, along with your before and after photos.

Identification Guide

The information below shall to help you fill out some of the important information for your coastal count!

Sea State

The Beaufort Wind Scale will be used to measure the sea state. Below are the official numbers and descriptions:

| Beaufort number | Wind speed | Wave height | Sea conditions | Sea state photo |
|-----------------|------------|------------------------|--|---|
| 0 | < 1kt | 0 m 0 ft | Flat. |  |
| 1 | 1 – 3kt | 0 – 0.2 m 0 – 1 ft | Ripples without crests. |  |
| 2 | 4 – 6kt | 0.2 – 0.5m 1 – 2 ft | Small wavelets. Crests of glassy appearance, not breaking |  |
| 3 | 7 – 10kt | 0.5 – 1m 2 – 3.5ft | Large wavelets. Crests begin to break; scattered whitecaps |  |
| 4 | 11 – 16kt | 1 – 2m 3.5 – 6ft | Small waves with breaking crests. Fairly frequent whitecaps. |  |
| 5 | 17 – 21kt | 2 – 3m 6 – 9ft | Moderate waves of some length. Many whitecaps. Small amounts of spray. |  |

Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys:



These yellow buoys mark out seagrass habitats, making them visible to water users. Inside these buoys there is a Voluntary No Anchor Zone (VNAZ). It is within these VNAZs which we would like you to count activity. If a location does not have these buoys, we will provide the count areas.

Vessel Types



Large Sailing Boat: typically over 10m in length



Small Sailing Boat: typically less than 10m in length



Commercial Vessel: including ferries, wildlife tour operators, commercial shipping and service boats e.g RNLI



Powerboat: any boat without a sail, with an engine. This can be with or without a cabin and includes motor yachts



RIB: a rigid inflatable boat, solid hull and inflatable tubes on the sides



Fishing boat: This includes both mobile and static gear vessels, beam trawlers and ring netters of any size.



Non- powered craft: any vessel without an engine e.g kayaks, SUP's, rowboats, canoes, dinghy's

Anchoring Vessels

If you're unsure if a vessel is anchored here are a few tips:

- An anchor line (either rope or chain) will be visible from the bow or front of the boat into the water
- Boats will remain stationary despite wind or currents
- There won't be a wake behind the boat
- Some boats will pop up an anchor ball – a black ball on their bow – when they are anchored



Anchor line

At the end of the count, we ask 'any other comments', this could be details on a specific type of vessel spotted which we haven't covered, or any wildlife seen, or any activity you think might be important.

Count Locations

These coastal counts can be carried out in a variety of locations across the Southwest. These are areas with seagrass, and most host our Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys. Please find these locations below.

If you would like to know more specifically where the seagrass is in each location, the National Seagrass Layer is the best place to find out!

[National Seagrass Layer](#)

OR scan
here!



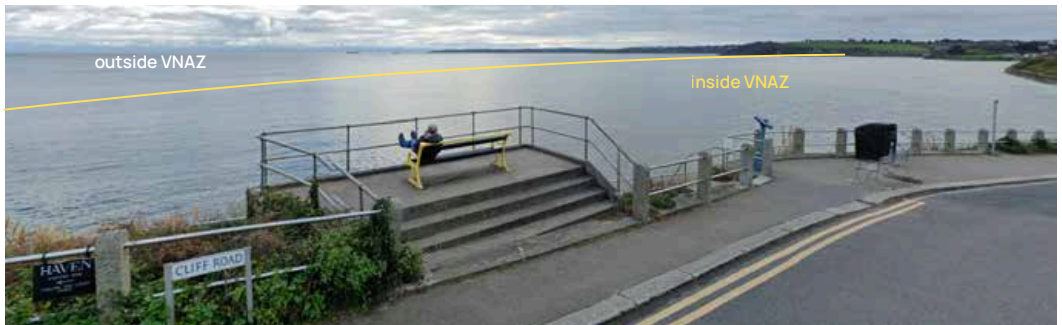
It is important for observations at each location to be consistent to allow for comparisons in data, so please make sure to record your What3Words location when completing the count. If you find a location along the Southwest with high levels of recreational activity, please let us know so we can consider setting up another location.

Cornwall

Falmouth – Cliff Road, Gylly

What3Words: ///donor.slot.bench

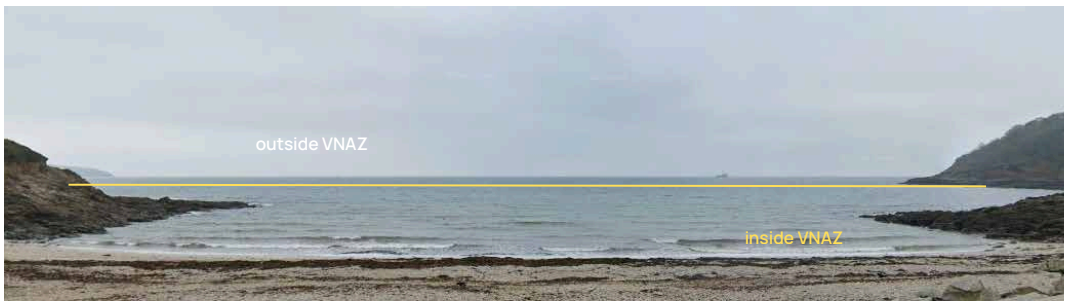
- Free parking along Cliff Road and nearby residential roads.
- The count area is a 10 minute walk from Falmouth Town train station and bus stop (bus service no.60 stops here)
- The count area is located at the top of cliff road, next to Castle Drive turning. See raised viewing platform.
- Any bench along this stretch towards Castle beach can be used.
- Blue Meadows Marker Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys will be visible, denoting the count area.



Falmouth – Swanpool beach

What3Words: ///snaps.feed.many

- A pay and display carpark can be found opposite the beach, at Swanpool Beach car park. Limited free parking can be found in nearby residential areas, behind the lake or towards Gylly beach.
- Regular bus services run from Falmouth Moor to Swanpool Beach (67, 64) or the location can be accessed by foot, a 20 minute walk from Falmouth Town train station.
- From any point on Swanpool Beach, you will be looking at the count area, where there are Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys present.



St Mawes - Castle Road

What3Words: ///disbelief.raves.strapped

- St Mawes can be accessed via the passenger ferry from Falmouth, leaving from Price of Wales Pier every hour. Once off the ferry the count location is an 11 minute walk towards St Mawes Castle.
- You can also access St Mawes via car using the King Harry Ferry, following road signs to St Mawes Castle, which will bring you to parking opposite the count site.
- There is a pay and display car park on Castle Drive or St Mawes car park further into St Mawes, a 15 minute walk from the count site.
- Looking towards St Anthony Headland, there is a seagrass meadow directly in front of you. It is Marked with Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Markers. This is your count area.



Flushing – Kiln Quay

What3Words: ///filled.encounter.gears

- Once through the small town of flushing, free parking can be found along Elmslie Road.
- Once at the end of Elmslie road, turn right at the gig club, and you'll see Kiln quay.
- A water taxi and Flushing ferry service is also available from Falmouth to Flushing, with bus stops in Flushing Village (service 69).
- The count area located on Kiln Quay, where the seagrass meadow spans from just right of the Quay to Trefusis Point, with Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys present.



Looe - Hannafore Point

What3Words: ///dorms.streaks.grain

- There is free parking along Marine Drive, near Hannafore Point, and in nearby residential roads. Alternatively there is a car park situated on Quay Road, an 8 minute walk from the point. At the point, there is a grassy area with benches opposite the Hannafore Point hotel.
- The count area is a 20 minute walk away from Looe train station, with multiple bus services stopping along Marine Drive (10, 73 and 272).
- The seagrass meadow here expands from Hannafore Point, to Millendreath. It is patchy, but we want to record activity across the whole meadow.
- There are currently 3 Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys located within Looe, which cover part of the seagrass meadow. Please carry out the count past these bouys as well as recording any anchoring that happens within the marked VNAZ.



Cawsand - War Memorial

What3Words: ///leopard.bullion.hotels

- The count area is situated along New Road, at the war memorial.
- There is pay and display car parking at Cawsand car park, a 5 minute walk away from the memorial or there is regular access to Cawsand beach via the ferry from Plymouth.
- The bus service 70 stops near Cawsand car park.
- There are Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys located at Cawsand, denoting the count area.



Devon

Plymouth - Jennycliff

What3Words: ///kite.brief.wished

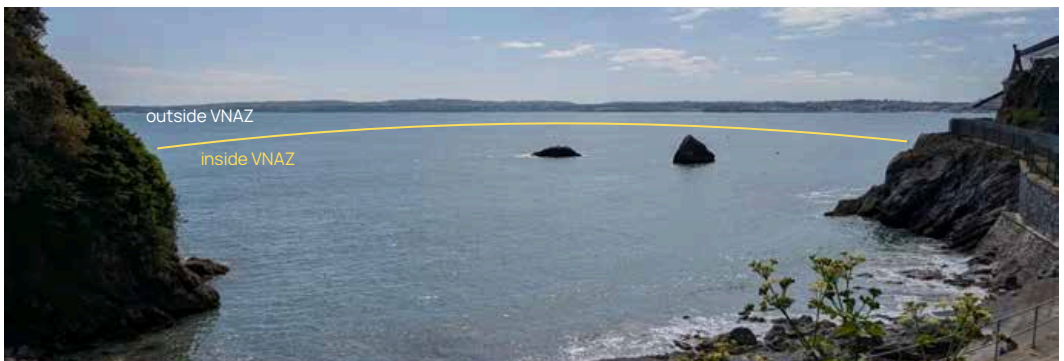
- There is free parking in the Jennycliff car park which, during summer, is serviced by the number 54 bus.
- Walk towards the water, heading towards the benches to the right of the beach path. The two benches closest to you give you the best view of the count area.
- You will not be able to see the beach from this location.
- There are marker buoys denoting the count area - these are not the traditional Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys, but will still be visible.



Torquay - Beacon Cove

What3Words: ///saying.export.nobody

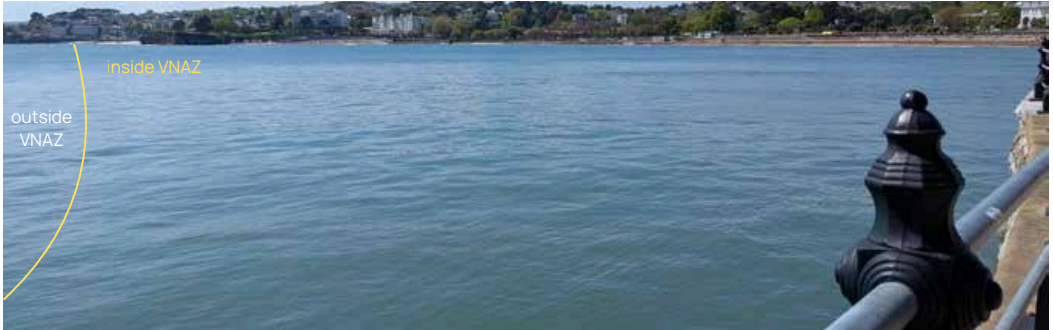
- The count area is situated within Beacon Cove, past the old Living Coasts site.
- There is pay and display car parking at Beacon Quay Car Park, or a bus stop serviced by the number 62 or 64. Torquay train station is roughly 30 minute walk away.
- There are Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys located at the mouth of the cove.



Torquay - Torre Abbey

What3Words: [///drips.boots.edge](#)

- The count area is situated between Princess Pier and Torre Abbey beach.
- Please direct your view towards the beach, which should be visible from any beach along Torbay Road. The bench closest to Princess Theatre gives the best overview of the count area.
- There is pay and display car parking along Torbay road, which is serviced by the numbers 61, 22 and 12 busses. Torquay train station is a 15 minute walk from the count site.
- There are Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys at this site.



Paignton - Broadsands

What3Words:

[///campsites.cheat.unicorns](#)

- The count area is situated on the headland walking towards Elberry Cove from Broadsands.
- By choosing the benches closest to the water, as you reach the top of the headland, you will be able to see ten white buoys - these are Advanced Mooring Systems and the focus of the count site.
- There is pay and display car parking at Broadsands, or the bus numbers 12, 30 and 130 all stop by Paignton Library, approximately a 15 minute walk from the count site.
- There are Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys at this site.



Brixham - Elberry Cove

What3Words: ///micro.respect.policy

- Most easily accessed via Broadsands car park, as above, and walking South across the headland.
- The count area covers the entire cove - most easily seen by being on the beach rather than the headland.
- There are Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Markers at this site.



Brixham - St. Mary's

What3Words: ///expose.gobbling.logged

- The count area is situated looking over St. Mary's Bay.
- When approaching the bay from St. Mary's road, take the South West Coast Path to the first bench, this will give you a view over the count site.
- There is pay and display car parking at Sharkham Point. The closest bus stop is South Bay Holiday Park, by numbers 15 and 16 - this is approximately a 10 minute walk from the count site.
- There are Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys at this site.



Dorset

Poole - Evening Hill

What3Words: ///appeal.item.method

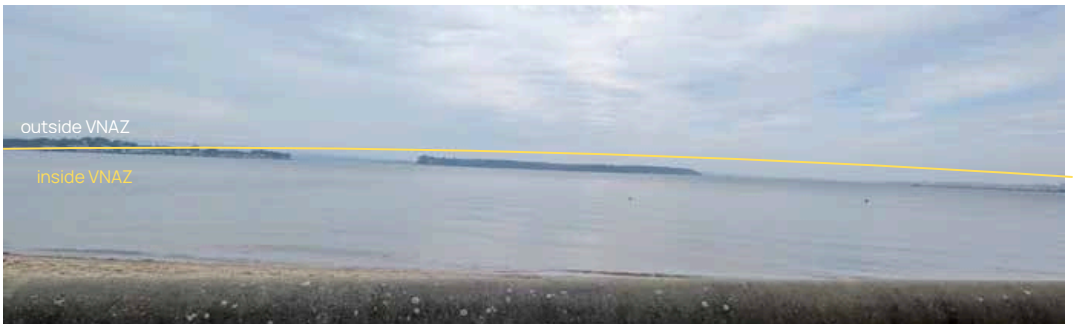
- Parking is free on nearby residential roads, please be conscious of local access. Alternatively, there is pay and display parking along shore road, a 5-minute walk away. The number 60 bus and the CitySightseeingService bus service this site.
- From Sandbanks Road, head down the footpath to the seafront.
- Please angle your view towards Salterns Marina, where Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys will denote the count area.
- Step free access to this location can be found by joining the seafront footpath by East Dorset Sailing Club. Parking spaces by the Sailing Club are not for public use.



Poole - Kite Beach/Shore Road

What3Words: ///long.faced.sands

- There is free parking on nearby residential roads, please be conscious of local access. Alternatively there is pay and display parking along shore road. The number 60 bus and the CitySightseeingService bus service this site.
- The bench situated by Easy Rider watersports company provides the best view point for the count - it is a large area! However, any bench along Shore Road would provide a suitable view.
- There are Blue Meadows Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys denoting the count area here.



Studland – South Beach

What3Words: ///factoring.homeward.

truckload

- Park in the National Trust Car Park (pay and display) and follow the signs down to the beach.
- Take a seat on the beach or ask at Joe's café for a beach chair.
- From here you will look over Studland Bay Marine Partnership's Eco-moorings. Focus your count area to the south of the beach (away from the moorings), remembering to take a picture of your view!
- Blue Meadows Marker Sensitive Habitat Marker Buoys will be faintly visible at this site.



Thank you so much for taking part in the
Coastal Count!

If you have any questions, we always here to chat:
bluemeadows@oceanconservationtrust.org