

Get wild about Devon at Skern Lodge

Appledore, Bideford, Devon, EX39 1NG

t 01237 475992

e skern@skernlodge.co.uk



Skern Lodge operates from an 18th Century converted farmhouse and courtyard which is situated just outside the picturesque village of Appledore, near Bideford in North Devon.

There is plenty of wildlife to see around the site – all the fields are lined by hedgerows and these provide shelter, food and nesting sites for small mammals, birds and invertebrates and are heavily used by rabbits in places. There are open patches where the rabbits have created their warrens and here nettles thrive. The hedgerows are a mix of species with hazel, hawthorn and scrub elm with hedgerow plants such as jack-by-the-hedge (which when the leaves are crushed has a smell of garlic), red campion, herb robert, cleavers and bramble.

Get wild about Devon

is a wildlife appreciation scheme for tourism businesses in Devon who are serious about proactively improving wildlife as part of their business. The scheme is supported by Devon County Council on behalf of Visit Devon.

www.visitdevon.co.uk



Skern Lodge

Through the winter, redshank, curlew, whimbrel, oystercatcher and dunlin can be seen feeding in the fields and shelduck, little egret and heron out on the estuary.

Look for raptors in the sky, kestrel hovering over the grassland, the 'flap, flap, glide' of a sparrowhawk or the buzzards soaring on the thermals.

Look for signs of fox as there are plenty of rabbits on site.

In the white poplar trees watch the jackdaws congregate and the old apple trees in the courtyard make good nesting sites for blue and great tits.

In the long grass and vegetation look for grasshoppers and crickets- giant green bush cricket is here.

The hedgerow down the centre has a ditch next to it which is wet through the winter, the hedgerow plants include greater wood rush, nettles, celandines and cow parsley and in the fields creeping buttercup, redshank and lesser dock can be found amongst the fine leaved grasses.

Around the buildings watch the house sparrows and through the summer swallows make their nest in the outbuildings.

The hedgerows are a mix of scrub elm, hazel and hawthorn. Hedgerow plants include hartstongue fern, navelwort, jack by the hedge, yarrow and cow parsley, red campion and herb robert, with large patches of nettle.

In the fields butterflies such as meadow brown, gatekeeper, small white and large white can be seen and red admiral, comma, tortoiseshell and peacock can be seen along the hedgerows.

Species List at Skern Lodge

Trees and shrubs

Beech
Blackthorn
Buddleia
Elder
Field Maple
Hawthorn
Hazel
Holly
Oak
Rowan
Scots pine
Silver Birch
Sweet chestnut
White poplar
Wild cherry
Willow

Mammals

Badger
Bank vole
Common shrew
Field mouse
Fox
Pipistrelle bat
Rabbit
Stoat
Wood mouse

Plants

Annual meadow grass
Bluebell
Bramble
Burdock
Black medick
Celandines
Cleavers
Cuckoo flower
Cocksfoot
Ground Ivy
Giant hogweed
Common dog violet
Cow parsley
Creeping buttercup
Creeping Thistle
Enchanters nightshade
Greater plantain
Greater sedge
Germander speedwell
Hairy willow herb
Herb robert
Herb bennet
Ivy
Lord and ladies
Mullein
Nettles
Primrose

Ribwort plantain
Red campion
Teasel
Timothy
Yorkshire fog

Ferns

Hard fern
Harts tongue fern
Lady fern
Male fern
Scaly male fern

Birds

Blackbird
Blackcap
Blue tit
Buzzard
Curlew
Carrion crow
Chaffinch
Chiffchaff
Coal tit
Dunnock
Fieldfare
Goldcrest
Goldfinch
Great tit

Greenfinch
Heron
House martin
House sparrow
Jackdaw
Jay
Kestrel
Little egret
Long tail tit
Mistle thrush
Pied wagtail
Raven
Redshank
Robin
Rook
Skylark
Song thrush
Shelduck
Sparrowhawk
Swallow
Swift
Whimbrel
Whitethroat
Wren
Yellow hammer

NB This is not a comprehensive list

Wildlife places of interest nearby

Northam Burrows Country Park

This reserve features 253 hectares of grassy coastal plain with salt marsh, dunes and unimproved grassland. The park is open to walkers all times of the year and the Burrows Visitor Centre is open from the end of May to October and has bird hides and wheelchair access. **For more information contact 01237 479708.**

Braunton Burrows – OS Map: SS 464 326

Braunton Burrows is one of the richest and one of the largest sand dune systems in Britain. With over 500 different flowering plants, some of which are very rare with many different species of orchid. The habitat consists of huge sand dunes, rocky foreshore, mud and salt flats, saltmarsh, grazing marsh, coastal heath, back-shore marsh and ponds. The best time of year is from April to July for wildflowers and April to June for breeding birds, spring and autumn for migrant birds and winter wildfowl and waders. **For more information contact the North Devon Coast and Countryside Service on 01237 423655.**

Halsdon – OS Map: SS 554 131 (Ashwell Carpark) and SS 560 117 (Quarry Carpark)

This is a 140 acre river valley woodland and riverside pasture, where the reserve offers a beautiful riverside walk along the Torridge with magnificent views to Dartmoor. Otter, deer, badger, dipper, kingfisher and buzzard can be seen throughout the year and in the summer months wood warbler, pied flycatcher and sand martin can be seen. **For more information contact 01392 279244.**