

coast, heath, combe



## visitor guide



**The Quantock Hills** are an area of wilderness and tranquillity. Panoramic views lead you through coast, heath and combe. Explore and you will find rocky Jurassic coastline, exposed heathland summits, deep wooded combes, undulating farmland and attractive villages all within this protected landscape.

The Quantock Hills are an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which means that its distinctive character, natural beauty and cultural heritage are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them. The area received its protected status in 1956, making it the first AONB in England.

experience

### Tourist Information Centres

Bridgwater: 01278 436438  
Minehead: 01643 702624  
Taunton: 01823 336344

### Accommodation

For all types of accommodation and other Quantock information try the local community website [www.quantockonline.co.uk](http://www.quantockonline.co.uk)

### Public Transport

Take a Steam Train from Bishops Lydeard to Minehead [www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk](http://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk) (01643 704 996) For bus timetables contact Tourist Information Centres

### Other useful contacts

Quantock AONB Service (01823 451 884) [www.quantockhills.com](http://www.quantockhills.com)  
Fyne Court, Broomfield, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA5 2EQ

Somerset Wildlife Trust (01823 652400) [www.somersetwildlife.org](http://www.somersetwildlife.org)

National Trust (01823 451814) [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

Forestry Commission (01278 732319) [www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

**Quantock Hills**  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Image Copyright Ron Carlson: [www.focuswild.com](http://www.focuswild.com)

East Quantoxhead: Copyright Ron Carlson

## a step through time

Kilve to East Quantoxhead  
**Walk across amazing rock layers on this stunning Jurassic coastline.**

An ideal spot for the family to find fossils, with good parking facilities, toilets, picnic benches and tea rooms/garden set alongside historic ruins.



### Explore more

Take a circular walk from Kilve to East Quantoxhead, taking in the magnificent views. This walk will take you about 1.5 hours, covering 5km, across undulating farmland with gates.

heritage

### Coast: Fossils

The Quantock coast reveals some of the finest fossil ammonites recorded in Britain. If lucky, you could be the first person to touch your fossil find since it fell to the sea bed 200 million years ago! Falling tide is a good time to look for fossils. Don't take anything from the cliffs, they can be dangerous. You can see how fragile they are as they flake away, causing more damage makes coastal erosion happen faster.

### Heath: The Common

Commons belonged to manors and estates whose tenants had 'common rights' for grazing, gathering turf, brushwood, berries and nuts. Today heathland is one of the rarest environments in Europe, and home to many species of wildlife who depend upon it for survival. Some rights are still exercised and the Quantock commons are largely looked after for the rich quality of its wildlife.

### Combe: Great Wood

Great Wood has helped us through history. Originally it was a Royal hunting forest. Oak trees were used for shipbuilding in the 1800s. In the 1900s the Forestry Commission planted conifer trees to reduce our reliance on imports. Today the wood is a haven for people and wildlife.

coast

Staple Plain: Copyright Ron Carlson

## a rare common

### Lydeard Hill

**Take a deep breath in the heathland around Lydeard Hill**

The Quantock heathland is very special, a rich and rare home for wildlife of national importance.

### Open Access

You are free to roam on foot, however horses and cycles must keep to bridleways and motorised vehicles are prohibited without special permission as they can damage this fragile habitat. Keep the heathland healthy.

**Take a short walk over Lydeard Hill to Wills Neck, the highest point of the Quantocks**

### Staple Plain

**Easy access to dramatic views**

Wonderful views surround you at Staple Plain. An 'easy access' trail from the car park takes you through woodland to more superb views of the Quantock Hills, great for pushchairs. Follow the circular way-marked trail from the car park over Beacon Hill to see stunning coastal views.

**Use the car park as a springboard to explore the northern end of the Quantock Common**

A beautiful, but sensitive area of rare maritime heath, rich in wildlife.

heath

Holford Combe: Copyright Ron Carlson

## come up close

### Holford Combe

**Amble through atmospheric woods**

Sessile oak woods are rare and protected, identifiable by the twisted shape of the trees and the acorn which sits directly on the branch.

**Follow in the footsteps of William Wordsworth**

William and his sister Dorothy walked here when they lived at nearby Alfoxton Park during their friendship with Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

### Ramscombe

**A quiet grassy glade in the middle of woodland**

Play in streams surrounded by lush grass with BBQ areas, all ability trails and toilets, great for picnics.

### Waymarked trails

Woodland trails (some suitable for wheelchair or pushchair use) and a good family cycle route. See the majestic Douglas Fir trees towering over the oaks.

**A popular destination during school holidays!**

combe

### Coast: Rockpools

**Rock pooling is great fun and it's easy to do for the whole family.**

Look for limpets, crabs, shrimps and sea-slaters (they look like woodlice). The best time to go rock pooling is during low tide. Check Tourist Information for the tide times.

**Don't forget your Wellington boots, a plastic container, a net and a good guidebook.**

### Heath: red deer

**The Quantock Common is a special haven for wildlife.**

Visit at dawn or dusk and you may well see red deer, the largest mammal in Britain. The reclusive adder, Britain's only poisonous reptile, is also to be found in the heathland. You may also see Quantock ponies grazing on the common, these animals may bite so please do not feed them.

Stag: Copyright Matthew Peaster

### Combe: Sessile Oak Woods

**Bird watching heaven**

Sessile oak woods are a great habitat for wood warblers and the 3 species of woodpecker; green, greater and lesser spotted. The woods are also a favoured spot of the pied flycatcher, a small black and white bird no bigger than a house sparrow. Pied flycatchers spend their summers here before the mammoth flight back to Africa over the winter months.

wildlife

protect

## play your part...

### in protecting the Quantock Hills

- **Litter** can harm animals and take years to rot away, so please take your rubbish home with you.
- By being **responsible** with your dog you can help protect this beautiful area. To protect the birds that nest on the ground when you're on Open Access land between 1st March and 31st July dogs must be on a short lead. Through the rest of the year they must be under close control. When you're near farm animals and ponies on the common we recommend your dog is kept on a short lead.
- A **fire** can have a devastating effect on this fragile heath. Please never have lighted fires or barbecues anywhere in open country. There is a designated barbeque area in Ramscombe, Great Wood.
- If you are thinking of holding an **event** on the Quantock Hills, including Great Wood Forest, please contact the Quantock Hills AONB Service.
- Feeding the **ponies** encourages them to pester other people and become a nuisance.
- The **verges** are home to lots of animals and plants, please don't park on them. Stick to the designated car parking areas and play your part in protecting the Quantock Hills.
- There are lots of **official** campsites around the Quantock Hills. Please don't camp anywhere else.





Ramscombe Forest: Copyright Ron Carlson

Take a short circular walk at the coast, through the heathland and in the Combe at Kilve, Staple Plain and Ramscombe.

Get small maps and descriptions from the AONB Service office, or download from [www.quantockhills.com](http://www.quantockhills.com).

Follow the waymarkers for walks of around 1.5hrs..

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