

# Marine code for Kayaking and agreed access restrictions

One of the joys of kayaking on the sea is the freedom to view wildlife in its natural habitat. However kayakers have a responsibility to develop an understanding of the needs of wildlife in order to minimise any negative impact.

It is recommended that paddlers explore the marine environment in small groups both for safety, and to minimise wildlife disturbance / environmental impacts.



## Seabirds

From the 1st of March to the 31st of July is a particularly sensitive time as birds come ashore to nest. Particularly sensitive sites are steep cliffs and zawns. Many (but not all) of the sensitive sites are clearly marked on the Pembrokeshire Marine Code Maps [www.pembrokeshiremarinecode.org.uk](http://www.pembrokeshiremarinecode.org.uk) - Please follow the Pembrokeshire Seabird Code of Conduct:

*General advice;*

1. Plan trips carefully and with respect to Agreed Site Specific Access Restrictions. They are in place to protect wildlife for future generations.
2. Observe bird's reactions from a distance.
3. The following bird behaviour indicates preparedness to fly; head craning, head turning, head bobbing and wing flapping in situ. Do not proceed if you observe this as you will make them fly - never approach closer than 10m.
4. Auks (guillemots, razorbills) incubate eggs on their feet; if they fly off ledges in a panic their eggs are dislodged and destroyed.
5. On open water you may encounter 'rafts' of sea birds. Avoid causing disturbance to rafting birds as they may regurgitate food meant for their young / take flight during valuable resting time.



Razorbill

## Seals

Seals haul out to pup on open beaches, and on beaches at the back of caves in Pembrokeshire mainly from August to the end of November. Therefore, unless in an emergency, landing on seal pupping beaches is restricted during these times. Please also avoid landing where there are seal pups or large gatherings of animals at any other time of year.



Particular sites of high density are on Pembrokeshire's many offshore islands and north of St. David's Head. Many (but not all) of the sensitive sites are clearly marked on the Pembrokeshire Marine Code Maps

*General advice;*

1. Do not land on seal pupping beaches from August 1st to the end of November.
2. Avoid creeping up on seals or approaching seals bow on. They may perceive you as a predator.
3. Allow seals an escape route.
4. Do not disturb mothers nursing pups. Adult females often rest in the water about 10-30m from the shore

and their pup - never paddle between the female and the pup.

5. For the sake of your safety and for the health of the seals themselves do not seek to swim with, touch or feed seals.
6. Limit observation time to 10 minutes then move on.

### Cetaceans

1. On encountering cetaceans continue on your intended route as this will present predictable movements.
2. Allow groups of cetaceans to remain together.
3. Leave cetaceans with young alone.
4. Always allow cetaceans an escape route and avoid boxing them in.
5. Leave if you notice any signs of disturbance.



### Agreed Site Specific Access:

- Access onto the Bishops and Clerks (RSPB), is restricted to hard rock areas below mean high water as there are delicate puffin burrows, and Manx shearwater burrows on the islands.
- Access to Grassholm is restricted due to the Island being the world's third largest Gannet colony. (RSPB) Please keep your distance from the Island, (roughly 100m) and if the colony shows signs of being disturbed by you then move further away.
- Access onto Skokholm is restricted above mean high water due to ground nesting birds.
- You are welcome to land at the Harbour on Ramsey, GR 706 237. Access up onto the island is from April 1st to October 31st, 7 days a week between 10am and 4pm. There is no charge if you remain in the vicinity of the harbour, landing fees for access to the island are £4 Adults, £2 children, RSPB members free. Please find a member of staff for an introductory talk. Ramsey warden: 07881 846498.
- You are welcome to land on Skomer in North Haven (on the right hand beach as you approach from the sea) GR 735 095. Access up onto the Island is between 10am and 6pm every day except Mondays, (bank holidays excluded). It's free if you remain on the beach, £6 landing fee payable for access onto the Island. Please find a member of staff for an introductory talk and stay on the paths to avoid the puffin burrows. Skomer Warden: 07971 114302

Always seek permission from the landowner before wild camping in remote locations. Remove all rubbish.

**Further information and advice is available from the Activities Liaison Officer on 01646 696134 or 07977939325 and on the Marine Code Website [www.pembrokeshiremarinocode.org.uk](http://www.pembrokeshiremarinocode.org.uk)**



Pembrokeshire  
Outdoor Charter Group  
Grŵp Siarter Awyr Agored  
Sir Bertho



COASTAL ZONE  
& MARINE ENVIRONMENT STUDIES  
RESEARCH UNIT  
PEMBROKESHIRE COLLEGE



for birds  
for people  
for ever



Parc Cenedlaethol  
aufofdir Penfro  
Pembrokeshire Coast  
National Park

Produced with agreement from The Welsh Canoeing Association, Pembrokeshire Outdoor Centres, The Pembrokeshire Marine Code Group, Pembrokeshire College, The RSPB and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority