



Fact Sheet

What is the Avalon Marshes?

The Avalon Marshes is a part of the Somerset Levels and Moors – England’s largest lowland wetland. It is a low-lying region of northern and central Somerset, bisected by limestone ridges and hills. It covers almost 12,500 hectares (roughly fifteen miles by five miles) of the River Brue floodplain between Glastonbury in the east and the M5 motorway in the west. The River Brue is just one of the rivers that feed the wetlands of the Avalon Marshes.



Why are the Avalon Marshes important?



Wildlife

Many bird, wildflower and invertebrate species found in the Avalon Marshes’ natural habitats are very rare elsewhere in the UK.



Peat

Most of the valley lies on peat soils which store thousands of tonnes of carbon. Peat extraction is declining as a business.

Food

Over 400 farmers produce beef, dairy and arable crops on the area’s fertile soils.



Tourism

Well over 70,000 tourists visit throughout the year to enjoy the natural areas, providing revenue for local business.



Archaeology

Amazing evidence of the area’s history has been preserved in the peat, including one of the world’s oldest known track-ways.



Water

Water connects the landscape, providing ‘wet fences’ and drinking water for livestock as well as habitat for wildlife.