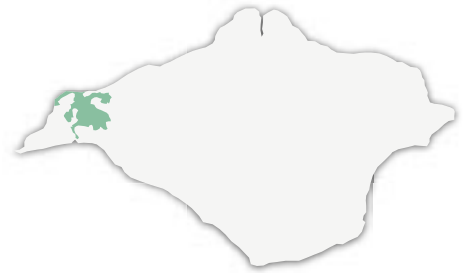


# Isle of Wight Biodiversity Opportunity Areas

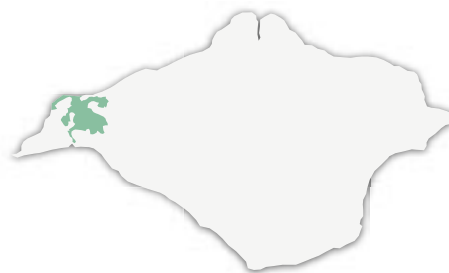
## Western Yar



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# Isle of Wight Biodiversity Opportunity Areas

## Western Yar



### Opportunity area description

The Western Yar valley, from source to mouth of the Western Yar, with the tributary of the Thorley Brook and the coastal strip to the west as far as Fort Albert.

### Joint Character Area

#### Landscape descriptive unit

IW Joint Character Area: harbours and creeks, intensive agriculture, landscape improvement zone, northern coastal cliffs.

### Landscape types

A wide shallow valley with estuarine habitats, including saltmarsh, mudflats, reedbeds. Arable fields. The northern cliffs are wooded.

### Geology (bedrock)

Hamstead beds, Bembridge Limestone, Bembridge Marls.

### Geology (superficial)

Alluvium, river terraces and tidal flat deposits.

### Topography (landform)

The Western Yar flows south –north, and it is tidal from Freshwater Causeway. The Thorley Brook flows east - west to join the estuary 200m south of the mouth of the river. A creek to the west of the main channel has a small sand dune system. The slumping low clay cliffs further to the west have secondary woodland.

### Biodiversity (BAP habitat, Designated sites)

#### UK BAP Species

**SSSIs:** Western Yar, Freshwater Marshes, Colwell Bay

**SINCs:** Mill Copse, Saltern Wood, Wilmingham Plantation, Backet's Plantation, Backet's Spinney, Backet's Copse, Thorley Meadows, Thorley Copse, Fort Victoria, Tapnell Furze

### BAP habitat

- Saltmarsh Mudflats
- Saline lagoons
- Coastal Grazing marsh
- Sand dunes
- Reedbed
- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

### UK BAP Species

Starlet sea anemone; Adder; Water vole; Divided sedge; Reed bunting; Brown Hare; Black-tailed godwit (wintering); Curlew (wintering); Borrer's saltmarsh grass; Red squirrel; Dormouse; Lapwing (wintering); Desmoulin's whorl-snail.

### Access

There is a footpath along the eastern side of the Western Yar. From Freshwater Causeway it becomes a cycleway. There is a circular walk around the estuary from Yarmouth. Fort Victoria has been designated as a country park.

### Targets – main opportunities

- Managed retreat of estuarine habitats
- High tide roosts for estuary birds
- Reedbed management and enhancement
- Neutral grassland management and enhancement