

Seashore Safaris - Volunteer Tasks

North East Kent



Marine Protected Area



Setting up –

1. Arrive 45 mins before the event starts
2. Put up the Thanet Coast Project banners with attached event poster along railings (direction arrow if needed). Put up storm flag with wet table/s.
3. Help set up equipment: one **dry table** (*on promenade – for signing in*) & one **wet table** (*on sand near chalk reef – with specimen tanks*).
4. a) Collect clear cold sea water with buckets, & fill tanks/bowls (separate fish / shrimps / anemones etc).
b) Fill one plastic container with 'wet sand' (for burrowing crabs);
c) Very fine amount of sand over one 'damp tray' (for periwinkle trails);
d) Fill one large 'baby bath' with clean water; leave on the sand besides wet table (for large crabs/specimens).
Note: Include a small amount of 'clean' seaweed in all containers for some cover for specimens.
Keep two full buckets beneath table to exchange water if getting hot in bowls;
5. Rockpool for a few varied species to start the 'wet table tanks'
- including a few different seaweeds for 'cover' for the wildlife.

Sign-in (Reception) – 'dry table'

One to two people are required at the enrolment table. However, **more volunteers are needed at the very start** to help sign in quickly

1. **Greet & note down the participants details:**
 - Online booking list: check/amend details of all & 'tick' online applicants;
 - Any others: use monitoring form & record 'parent name, address & email' and then the children's name and ages – one person per line!
2. Give out Black & White **Identification Sheet/s, and a pencil**, per group.
3. Give every child a '**Thanet Coast**' **sticker** (*– shows their participation at the wet table*)
4. Free – but say **donations most welcome**. We suggest what you can give, from £1 per person: child and adult! Have a donations box/jar on table. NOTE: some people have donated online
5. **Direct the group safely** to the wet table.
6. Promote Coastal Codes, summer events flyer, website and online information distribution (explaining that it is to save paper and expense).
7. Whilst donations are welcome, occasionally, we have postcard sales available (£1.00 for 4, or 30p per card). Mark in receipt book & cash in cash-tin.

Rockpooling – 'wet table'

1. **Ask 'signed-in' participants to collect tub & sieve per group/or each** if they prefer.
(Refer others to sign-in table, or use extra clipboard list - if available at this event!)

2. **Welcome to the NEKMPA** & explain that they are *helping us investigate the shore life that can be found around the Thanet Coast* – & we want them to look for - & 'tick' - as many of the species on the ID sheet as they can identify & find (like i-spy)...but they need to follow simple rules:
3. Encourage children to **look and collect responsibly**:

- **Start by placing a little clean seawater in the tub** to make sure it is suitable for any marine creatures that they may find
- **Never pull wildlife or seaweed off the rocks/reef**, where they are attached as may not survive
- **Walk very carefully on rocks** (slippery/sharp) & **within rockpools**;
- **'Turn back rocks carefully'** to correct position after looking under them as its their home that your turning upside down, & needs to return to same position.
- **Try not to have more than 'one or two crabs' in any tub**, as they may fight & lose limbs!

Remember: this is their 'home' (habitat) that we are on!

4. **Help participants identify species using the ID sheets** (*Black & White*).

Note: There are a few ID coloured reference sheets; & an identification book around to help.

5. **Encourage responsible use of the coast and 'coastal codes'**.

We need to respect that the shore is the home for wildlife right on our doorstep. They need to be left here to thrive - **Take photos, and leave only footprints!** There are Coastal Codes for a few 'themed' coastal activities.

6. Now and then, **check the water temperature** in the tanks/containers – replace some with colder water if warming up, **add seaweed cover for shelter**.

Note: - Any sand eels or fish fry should be observed & returned to the sea ASAP, as they need much more oxygen to survive than will be found in small tanks;
- Encourage only one or two crabs max. in buckets, as likely to fight & may lose limbs unnecessarily!
- Keep peeler ('soft') crabs separately in a tank (such as with shellfish), as very vulnerable to crab damage!
- If keeping large crabs to show, keep a few in the larger 'baby bath' but ensure they have plenty of seaweed cover
Help people to 'act responsibly' and allow marine life to stay where seen on the shore where possible - so only collect one or two creatures at the most (eg starfish or crabs), leaving others to live freely on the shore

7. **Reference sheet:** keep one reference ID sheet completed for all the day's records per safari!

8. **Afterwards, ask people to help to return the shore life species back to rockpools** in a **safe area down on the shore where found** (ie in rockpools; under seaweed away from seagulls or people). Initially, we keep just a few samples at the wet table & tanks to show other people what has been found, or for help with identification & information. At the end all must be returned to part of the shore where the creatures were found – usually the lower shore!

9. Ask people if they would like to help to complete a **feedback** postcard before they leave after returning tubs & sieves – if we are asking for feedback on that day.

Camera – (TCP camera or your own digital camera)

1. Take photos of everything that moves - we need some **marine life images** & records!
2. Take records of participants/activities – **ask if they gave parental permission first, when they signed in** and if they would be okay for us to take their picture
3. If the people have not signed-in encourage to sign in & give their photographic permission. We also have some detailed "photographic permission forms" for publicity purposes & where it would be good to also obtain their names & ages. Most publicity will be on facebook or social media; and work linked to the Thanet Coast Project.

Packing Away –

Wet Tables

1. Return all shore life (or rocks with life attached) to safe areas – rockpools (away from seagulls/people) and as far down the shore as possible, close to where they were found.
2. **Clean:**
 - a) all tubs/sieves & stack carefully to take away
(use clean water in buckets from a rockpool or the seawater if nearby);
 - b) Clean all tanks/bowls/trays **& stack** – then when ready take up to ‘dry’ table
(to take to car/s when ready).
3. Retain a few ‘dry’ specimens to show for next safari / educational purposes and return the rest in a less obtrusive place on the shore.
4. Wash or wipe clean the top of the ‘wet’ table.
5. Pack away storm flag and collate any paperwork (eg Reference record sheet; or additional sign in forms/photographic permissions) & cameras to dry table area/cars.

Dry Tables

1. Keep tables staffed for enquiries as activity is packed away... so can handle any late public enquiries *eg about wardens/guardians; leaflets; any freebies available*
2. Pack away papers; leaflets; postcards, and take down banners.
3. Ensure all enrolment paperwork is clearly labelled for the date/location and is compiled together – with forms from ‘wet table’ (including photographic forms/other enrolment forms/ref. sheet). Make sure donations jar and any payments are kept secure for use for next event.
4. Take down tables and, when all ready, take to roadside for transporting by car.

**IF TIDE IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY OUT, we may need fast action to run a
“Scavenger hunt” along the tideline, or find a suitable alternative activities**