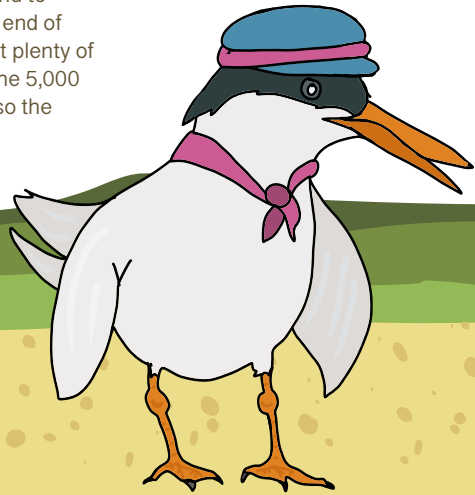


## My ancestors have lived and fished here on the Duddon Estuary for thousands of years.

Some folk call us 'sea swallows' or 'flying angels' and it's easy to see why from our long, forked tails and angelic wings when we unfurl our beautiful white feathers. If you come to visit Hodbarrow you will spot us nesting from April until September, before we make ready and fly all the way back to Africa for winter.

We are actually a type of gull and we love living here in the warmer months. We think Hodbarrow is the best place in the whole world to bring up our chicks. At the end of the summer we need to eat plenty of little fish before we travel the 5,000 kilometres back to Africa, so the



estuary is extremely important to us.

At Hodbarrow, our friends the great crested grebes perform amazing dances in the air when they are trying to find a mate and we like to twist and swoop along the sea wall carrying our catch. It's easy to spot us with our pointed yellow bills and black caps... come and see us!

It's not just feathery friends in these parts, though. Let me tell you about the mysterious Hob-thross, the horrible Hagg Worms and the precious haematite that have also shaped the stories of my home here by the Duddon Sands.

## Hagg Worm Ahoy

Now I did mention that some mysterious creatures lived around the Duddon Sands... you might even spot a frilly ragworm on your travels but let's hope we don't meet the horrid Hagg Worm! In medieval times a mythical creature called a Hagg was spotted flying over the sands. It appeared to be half worm and half serpent and lived at night in the woodlands on the other side of the Duddon Estuary. The local folk who saw it said it was covered in dark hairs and was big enough to swallow a bird whole! Apparently the only way to get rid of it was to set it on fire! Let's hope it's just a legend to stop people trying to walk across the bay!

Can you spot the old, strangely named mussel and cockle bed names on your map...

Mitchillear Scar, Wortbrigg Scar and Tinkler Scar? Why do you think they were given these names? Long ago people used to fish and gather food on the sands every day. It was dangerous but their lives depended on it. The fisherman from Haverigg gathered fluke (bait) in little boats and sadly some never returned. The Romans used the bay as a shortcut too. Imagine crossing the sinking sand in that heavy armour...

let's stick to the shore!



## Hodbarrow Heritage and Haematite

In a lost world beneath your feet lies something rather strange.. some of it is pencil-shaped, some more like an elephant's tusk and some like a curious blobby ball from an alien planet... it's actually a special mineral called haematite!

Mining haematite, also known as iron ore, really changed the area around Millom in the Victorian times and the town grew really quickly. My great, great grandfather told us tales about the chimneys and mine buildings springing up out of the ground and hundreds of ships coming into Haverigg harbour to collect the haematite cargo. You can still spot the old stone lighthouse that was built to guide ships into



harbour. It is called the Hodbarrow Beacon and helps guide me home sometimes too as it is very tall!

As you walk along the old sea wall you might be able to spot chunks of red iron ore and also the newer cast iron lighthouse that was built to replace the Victorian stone one.

There is one other tall building to explore here too. Can you see it by White Rock Beach? It's an old windmill that once ground grain to make flour. It was also used to store gunpowder for blasting in the mines!

## The Hob-thross of Millom Castle

Talking of mythical creatures, Millom lays claim to one too. In the castle below the woodlands of Millom Park, a Hob-thross was said to live. Hobs are small, wizened creatures with long hairy ears and a big squishy nose; they look a bit like goblins. If you treat a Hob kindly they will do lots of work for your family around the house. But be unkind to them and they will become a real nuisance. They are famous for turning milk sour, stealing precious things and annoying your pets!



The Hob at Millom Castle was said to sleep by the fire during the day, and then work all night, doing the yucky jobs that the humans didn't want to do. All was well until the lord of the manor left some clothes out for the Hob one cold winter's night. This apparently is a terrible insult to a Hob-thross, and the next day he was gone and never returned to the castle. Maybe he will come and visit your house?

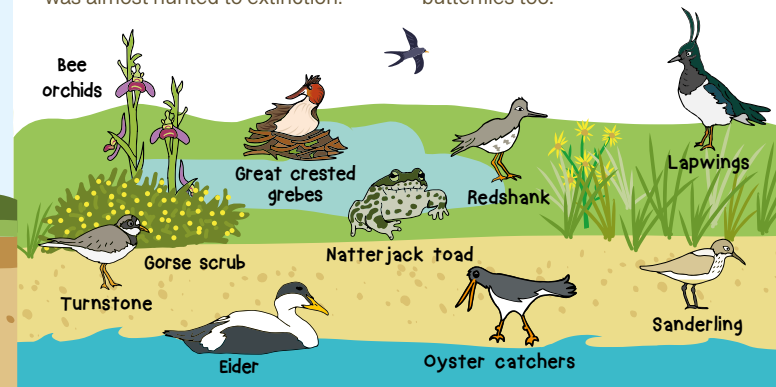
## The Seven Wonders of Hodbarrow

Although you can still spot whispers from the industrial past all around, isn't it amazing how wonderful nature is taking over? There are seven different habitats (homes for plants and animals) here at Hodbarrow... let's see if you can find them all.

Along the old sea wall, you can see right across the Duddon Estuary where some very mysterious creatures lurk on the **coastal lagoon!** Ducks and geese shelter from the Arctic winters; it's a special place for them too. In spring and summer you can see terns, lapwings, redshanks and ringed plovers, teals, mergansers and eiders too. Also little sand martins nest in the ruins of the old sea walls at the lagoon edge. Look out for large flocks of wading birds on **Tern Island** in front of the hide. You'll also find great crested grebes nesting here. This magnificent bird was almost hunted to extinction!

In the **woodlands** you can hear so much birdsong and spot amazing toadstools in autumn. Also listen for warblers singing in spring, hidden away in the bushes and trees or among the wild flowers. Around the **gorse scrub** and willow woodlands there is an old flooded quarry where rare plants grow. Watch out too for thrushes and other birds feeding happily on berries. Magnificent dragonflies dart around the **pools** in summer and we are hoping natterjack toads will soon return and sing to us in springtime.

The **grassland** path is a very special place where you can see bee orchids in summer and breeding redshanks and oystercatchers. The wild flowers are a sea of rainbow colours.. the long-eared, bounding hares love to play here. The **dunes** by White Rock Beach are a super place to see butterflies too.



Us terns are true seafarers, helping sailors back to shore. Let's see how well your grown-ups know these these wild west, seafaring phrases...

- 1) **Ya landlubber:** A clumsy person who can't sail very well
- 2) **Gan furra ratch:** Going for a search around
- 3) **Hornswaggle fizzog:** The face of someone who might cheat you out of money
- 4) **Lookin a larl bit squiffy ya grog blossom:** A sailor who has drunk too much alcohol!
- 5) **Ont poop deck:** On the deck above the stern cabin at the back of the boat
- 6) **Scuttle:** To sink your own boat
- 7) **Clemmies:** Big rocks
- 8) **Gaan furra dook:** Going for a swim
- 9) **Fine fettle:** In good condition
- 10) **Gammy:** Rotten

What did they score out of ten?

We hope you have enjoyed your adventures, and we wish you fair winds and friendly seas!



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This trail is six of six developed with Copeland Borough Council and The Outdoor Partnership as part of the Connecting Cumbria's Hidden Coast programme.  
Find out more [www.copeland.gov.uk](http://www.copeland.gov.uk)

**Route Length**  
Shorter loop: You can enjoy a beautiful and diverse 2.5km loop from the Hodbarrow Nature Reserve car park, past Hodbarrow Beacon to the old windmill at Haverigg Point. Lots to explore for little legs and plenty of wildlife and picnic spots.  
**Directions and Parking**  
A5093 near Millom. Parking is available at Haverigg Beach car park; there are toilets, a play area and the Beach Cafe. The nearest postcode is LA 18 4ES. Hodbarrow Nature Reserve car park is a great spot to park for a shorter windmill Reserve and back through Port Haverigg holiday village.  
**Trail Safety Information**  
This Tale Trail follows a mixture of grassy/silty footpaths, gravel tracks and quiet roads. It is part of the famous Cumbria Coastal Way. Please stick to the marked footpaths and avoid unstable ground along the coast. There are exposed quarry edges and steep cliffs. The stretch along the coast is tidal, so please check the tide timetables before setting off. Do not attempt to cross the estuary as the tidal flats have areas of sinking sand and deep channels. The outer barrier can be very exposed in windy conditions.  
**Cycling and Prams**  
Most of this trail is accessible on wheels but can be rough in places. If you are interested in the geology of the area visit Millom Rock Park. It's free and fascinating too. Visit [www.millomrockpark.org.uk](http://www.millomrockpark.org.uk) to find out more.

The bit for grown ups....

## Walks around

The Lake District Coast

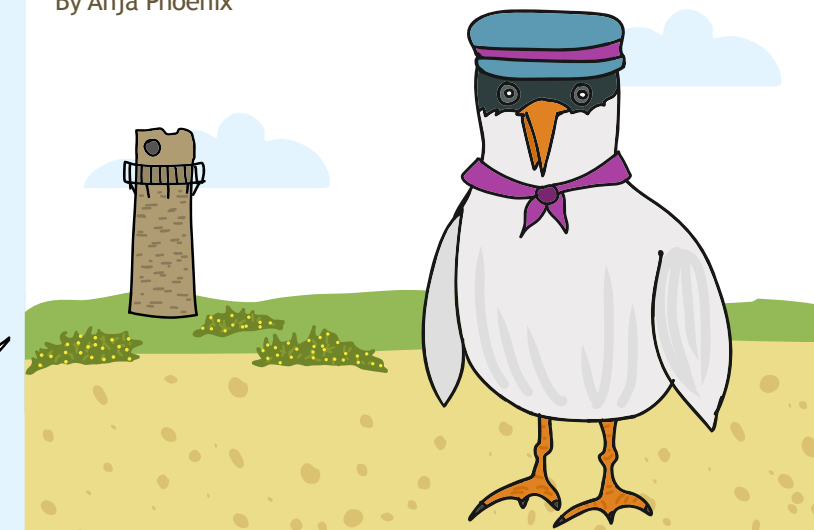
## fun local story walks

for children and the young at heart

## The Tern's Tale

A story walk around Haverigg & Hodbarrow

By Anja Phoenix



Easy to follow Map & Story  
Explore, spot things & search for clues on the way

