

Ravenglass - The Curlew's Tale

The Wild Woodlands

would have spread for miles over the surrounding countryside. Bears and wolves would have roamed free and golden eagles would have soared above. The forest trail from here is still full of amazing creatures. Look out for greater spotted woodpeckers, buzzards and tawny owls in the trees above.



Eskmeals firing range

As you are walking along the shore you might hear a very loud booming sound like cannons being fired. This is the testing of large-calibre ammunition, firing over 45km out to sea in some cases.



Mudlarking

Can you see worm holes and casts on the shore? Beneath the mud and sand there are amazing creatures hiding like the 30cm-long lugworms, frilly ragworms and beautiful razor clams. Curlews use their long, curved beaks to pick them out... what a lovely snack!



The Main Street

Is narrower at both ends, can you see? This helped to enclose the animals brought here to market. It also helped protect the locals from attack. Look at the names of the houses, they can give you clues about the village history and wildlife, for example Drapers, Dunlin and Clanoventa.



Can you spot the old market cross? In the 1200s Ravenglass was granted a charter to hold a market and fair on St James' Day. There was a grand cross in the middle of the street but a lovely plaque marks the spot now.



Can you spot the wooden posts of the ancient fish trap?

This was used for centuries and up until quite recently to catch salmon. Fish swam upstream with the incoming tide, then a gate would shut to trap them as the tide went back out. The fish were then caught with huge nets, sometimes more than fifty at a time. The fish would have been sold at market and eaten in local hotels and at Muncaster Castle. (Thanks to Neil Robson)



Tidal mud flats

The Roman Vicus

Imagine standing there 2,000 years ago when the Roman vicus (town) would have been really busy! Close your eyes and imagine smelling baking bread and fish being smoked, seeing steam rising from the bath house and watching the wheat fields wave in the sea breeze, hearing blacksmiths clanking metal and feeling the hustle and bustle of families living and working here.



Wonderful wildlife

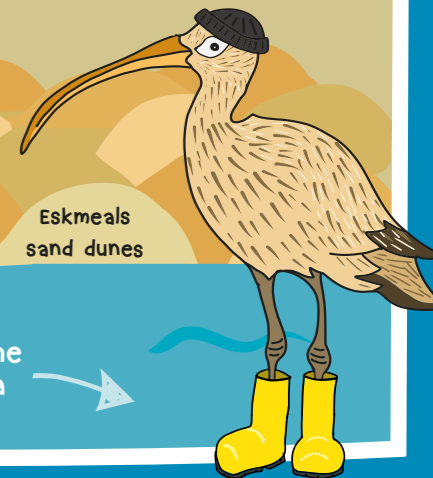
If you are lucky you might spot an otter near the mouth of the River Esk! There are also bright white egrets and herons hunting at the edges of the tide, waders such as ringed plovers, curlews and oystercatchers searching for worms in the mud and bright red-billed shelducks sailing the seas.



Beachcombing is always fun...

You never know what you are going to find. Look along the strand line (the debris the sea has left at high tide) and see what you can spot. There are also lots of pieces of pottery where the cliffs have been eroded; maybe you will find some real treasure! If you spot any barnacles on the rocks near the water's edge you might see and hear them 'clicking' as they open to feed.

!!Take care when you are near the water and be sure to check the tide timetable!!



Out to the Irish Sea

