The Eiderling
Under the light of a May moon four little eider chicks made their way down to the shingle beach of Walney Island. One little eider didn’t.

Darwin was snuggled up in his soft, downy nest and was fast asleep. At 1000 she had fallen asleep on the shingle beach of Shingle Sands. She set off to make sure that Darwin had settled and had a good night’s sleep.

If you have one too.

Unfortunately dogs are not allowed on the nature reserve (except guide dogs) due to the vulnerability of the wildlife here.

The Eiderling
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Eiderlings have small bills with grey-footed toes. They are often seen on the nature reserve where they are quite irritating.

The buccaneer pair ventured on through the dunes and Marvellous Meadows, and watched all sorts of amazing creatures ...

Eider mums sit on the eggs undisturbed. You can reserve for non-members. Entry charge for entry onto the nature reserve is £3.00 for adults and £1.00 for children - all monies are used to help manage our nature reserves across the county. Safety: South Walney can be windy and will feel remote in places so make sure you pack appropriate clothing and something to eat and drink before you set off. Take a mobile phone if you have one too.

**Why don’t you have a seem too?** asked Fuzz. “Eiders are the best diving sea ducks I know of. Go on, show your strong tail rudder.”

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### The bit for grown ups....

This interactive Slim Trail explores £3.00 for adults and £1.00 for children - all monies are used to help manage our nature reserves across the county. Safety: South Walney can be windy and will feel remote in places so make sure you pack appropriate clothing and something to eat and drink before you set off. Take a mobile phone if you have one too.

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**Disclaimer**

PLEASE NOTE: during very high winter tides (9.68m and above), the road to South Walney may flood for several hours and be cut off for a period of time. Discover more at [www.taletrails.co.uk](http://www.taletrails.co.uk).

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**Nature reserve entrance**

**Duck spotting zone**

It's freshwater here, so a great place for duck spotting! Eiders breed here, and in winter you might spot wigeon, shelduck and greylag geese. Listen out for croaky toads and eider ducks cooing from the different hides.

**Sea hide**

Watch out for cormorants drying their wings, they look a bit like giant bats! You might see herring gulls flapping their wings...it's the sea road for large ferries and cargo ships. Also, watch out for porpoise rising and little terns nesting.

**Observation hide**

This is where the old gull colony used to be but they moved house to the quieter Gull Meadow. On a clear day, you can spot Blackpool Tower and the West of Walney wind turbines spinning. This is where a very patient man called Niko Tinbergen learnt a lot about gull language and behaviour like Darwin on his adventure around South Walney nature reserve.

**Niko Tinbergen hide**

Look over Lighthouse Bay at high tide and you might spot some seals hauled up on The Spit. It's also a great place to see waders like redshank and curlew digging for food in the 5 mud restaurants.

**Bug zone**

Time to search for minibeasts.

**Marvellous meadows**

Listen out for skylarks singing their beautiful song and stonechats twitting...their call sounds like 2 stones being hit together! Can you spot any hardy plants like yellow horned poppy and viper's-bugloss? You might also see henbane, a poisonous plant farmed by medieval monks, used as a painkiller...DON'T TOUCH!

**Sand dunes**

The sand dunes are a great place to be a footprint detective. Can you also see the spiky marram grass starting to grow here? Marram is a very tough plant that helps to bind the sand together, when it gets too hot or dry marram curls up to save water! Watch out for meadow brown and gatekeeper butterflies around the dunes and meadows too.

**The great ocean (Irish Sea)**

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