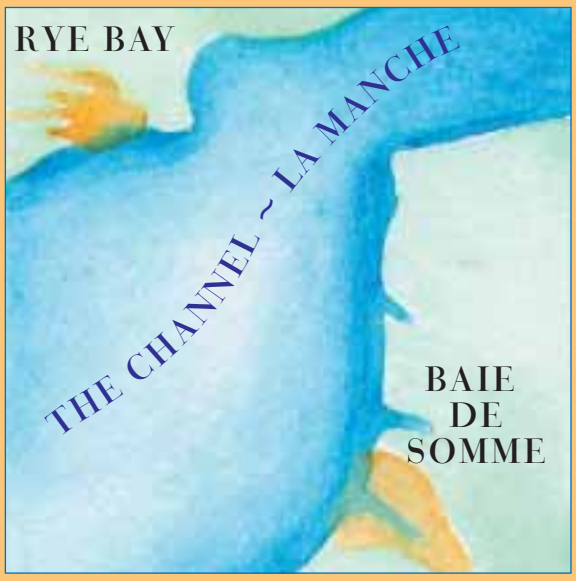
TWO BAYS
one environment

The Two Bays initiative is a new wildlife project that aims to study and enhance the habitats and species in the Rye Bay area and across the Channel in the Baie de Somme, Picardy, France.

This approach to nature conservation recognises that wildlife does not occur in isolation and moves across borders into neighbouring countries.

The project has four main objectives:

- Identify the main habitats present and the potential for habitat enhancement.
- Study and record the wildlife and maintain a wildlife database (already more than 4000 species).
- Encourage farmers and landowners to manage areas for wildlife and apply for suitable grants, to fund the work.
- Promote understanding of the environmental importance of the Two Bays.



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For further information please contact:

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Visit the Two Bays web site:

http://home.clara.net/yates/2bays.html

Peter Greenhalf

Sea-kale at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

This project is part funded by the European Community European Regional Development Fund through INTERREG II.

The English lead partner is East Sussex County Council. Other partners: Environment Agency, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, English Nature, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Wetland Trust, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, Sussex Ornithological Society, Rye Harbour Nature Reserve Management Committee, The Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve. The French lead partner is the Syndicat Mixte pour l'Aménagement de la Côte Picarde (SMACOPI).

SMACOPI

East Sussex County Council

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TWO BAYS
Shingle

Shingle

Rye

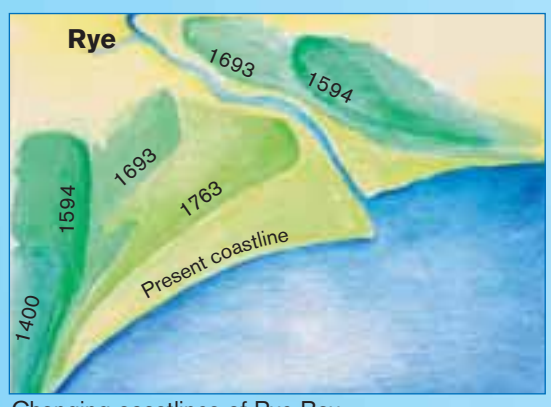
Dungeness

Calais

Shingle areas

Rye Bay and the Baie de Somme support similar habitats and species. Shingle is a globally scarce habitat found along the coast of the Two Bays.

Rye Bay and Dungeness form the largest coastal shingle feature in Europe. Shingle in Rye Bay mainly consists of flint pebbles eroded from the chalk cliffs further west. The sea has carried and deposited them along the coast and onto the beaches, by a process called 'longshore drift'.



Changing coastlines of Rye Bay

The coastline of the Two Bays has changed under the forces of wind, tide and changes in sea-level. 4000 years ago there was a great shingle barrier across Rye Bay. This was breached 700 years ago, and has been reforming ever since.

B. Yates

Beach feeding

Shingle plays an important role in sea defences. At Rye Harbour the Environment Agency moves shingle from the river mouth back along the coast towards Cliff End. This process of 'beach feeding' helps to maintain the sea defences.

Little tern nesting on shingle

Little terns, common terns, ringed plovers and oystercatchers all make their nests in the shingle, laying their camouflaged eggs directly onto the pebbles.

Waves can be very powerful during storms and, if the tides are very high, the shingle will pile up on the shore in large ridges. Many ridges built up over hundreds of years are now a considerable distance inland.

B. Yates

Waves at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

These older shingle ridges have developed a thin soil with a rich variety of grassland plants. This undulating ridge formation can be seen near Camber Castle.

B. Yates

Old shingle ridges

Shingle supports many specially adapted plants and animals. Close to the sea they have to cope with being frequently covered by shingle, salt spray and seaweed. In addition to this there are very few nutrients and little fresh water.

B. Yates

The Hable d'Ault Nature Reserve

The **Baie de Somme** in Picardy, France lies across the channel, just 90km to the south east of Rye Bay. The nature reserves of the Hable d'Ault and Rye Harbour support similar shingle habitats and species.

St Valéry Sur Somme

Little Tern

Common Tern

Wheatear

Painted Lady

Oystercatcher

Garlic Snail

Woodlouse Spider

Ringed Plover

Mottled Grasshopper

Viper's-bugloss

Sea-kale

Bittersweet

Biting Stonecrop

Silver Y Moth

Sea Campion

Yellow Horned-poppy

Red Hemp-nettle

Sea Pea

Common Blue

Bristly Oxtongue

Red Valerian