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



the young at heart or children and **Walks KIOIS** 003 uni

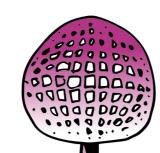
Buck the Barnacle and the seven wonders of Blackpool seashore

Did you know that right under your feet there are thousands of very tiny, clever creatures, secretly hiding in miniature suits of armour? They are called barnacles. Some of them have made the sea wall their home, some of them cling to the pillars under the piers and some of them even live under boats!

Now, most baby barnacles like to take a few months to decide where their home is, but some take a little longer. It is a VERY important decision because once a barnacle decides where to call home they will stay in that very same spot for the rest of their lives, sometimes up to ten years ... can you imagine staying still in one place for ten years?!

Occasionally, an adventurous barnacle just isn't quite ready to settle down yet and this is the tale of one little barnacle called Buck, who has a little bit more exploring to do..

Barnacles don't start out life as the tiny armour-plated creatures you recognise from trips to the beach. They start off as a strangelooking, one-eyed baby barnacle called a nauplius, that drifts around the ocean looking for his forever home



He dreamed of adventures at sea and on land,

The bit for grown ups....

The Blackpool Coast

Places to visit around

Blackpool is the UK's favourite holiday resort. A town that is famous for its tower, three piers, amusement parks, vast beach and (from September to November) the Illuminations. But why not explore some of Blackpool's hidden gems with us though this interactive Tale Trail? Follow Buck's journey as he discovers the seven wonders of the Blackpool seashore and find some of the friends he met along the way.

Short trail route

Starting at the Mirror Ball, walk to South Pier along the shore and back along the promenade (or vice versa depending on the tides). This is about 2 miles and will take you 30-40mins...or longer if you stop to explore the treasures of the strandline and rockpools in the sea wall along the way

Long trail route

If you have a little more time (and energy), extend your journey from the Mirror Ball right the way up to North Pier. This is about 2.5 miles and will take you about an hour to walk... without stops and adventure time! On your return journey, walk back past the Blackpool Tower and SEA LIFE – perhaps stopping to visit the attractions – to the Central Pier tram stop (opposite Madame Tussauds) and rest any weary feet on a tram ride back to the Harrow Place tram stop, just a couple of hundred metres south of the Mirror Ball.

Getting there

The Mirror Ball is situated on Blackpool's New South Promenade. Access to the M55 motorway is only a few miles away. The Blackpool South rail line stops a few minutes'

Find out more at: www.livingseasnw.org.uk

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walk away at the Pleasure Beach station. The area is also well served by public transport routes including the No.1 bus and tram service, both stopping very close by.

Facilities

There is a café and play area at the Solaris Centre (opposite the Mirror Ball) as well as a small car park. Additional free parking is available on side streets in the area, as well as pay and display parking on the promenade

Terrain

A mixture of hard, flat walkways along the promenade and sandy and muddy trails along the shoreline.

Fylde Marine Conservation Zone

The protected area is located just a few miles off the Blackpool coastline. It was created to protect a 260km² area of muddy and sandy seabed that is important for a wealth fe from fish and crabs to star razor clams. It is also an important feeding area for birds.

Get involved

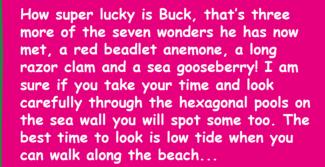
Spread the word about the amazing variety wildlife on Blackpool's seashore! Share pictures of your coastal adventures with us, ioin one of our events, volunteer with us or become a friend of Marine Conservation Zones.

Visit www.livingseasnw.org.uk or follow us on social media @livingseasnw to find out more and help protect our seas for the future.

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sea-changers





Now Buck was excited and begged to see more, so the helpful gull dropped him back off at the shore. "Hop on that crab and she'll show you the pools; take care of her pincers, they're super-sharp tools!"

So Buck settled down on the helpful crab's back, as she crept over the sea wall and brown spiral wrack. Hexagonal pools each filled full of treasures. Secretive hideouts, the best Blackpool sea pleasures!

Buck spotted starfish and long clams called razors, amazing sea gooseberries with rainbow-light lasers, huge honeycomb worm reefs bulging up high and tiny striped prawns with legs blue as the sky.

A beadlet anemone that looked like red jelly, and a shy shanny fish lying flat on her belly. Each pool filled with shells so shiny and bright. "AMAZING!" Buck said, "but it's time to take flight." "I can't come with you, Buck, my home is here, but you'll surely remember me every year. Just look up to the skies each dark autumn night and you will see a spectacular sight, the Blackpool illuminations for all to see, an amazing display to remind you of me.



How lucky is Buck?! He has already spotted two of the seven wonders of Blackpool, a dolphin and a black-headed gull. Can you tick them off yet? From the Mirror Ball ook out towards the green floating buoy; dolphins are sometimes spotted here on calm summer days.

Buck was sitting on a wall by the sea, but wasn't quite sure that he wanted to be.

of fast roller coasters and warm golden sand. The seven wonders of Blackpool seashore, are treasures he wanted to see and explore. So settling down right now seemed so dreary, he knew what to do to help him feel cheery.

A trip to the Mirror Ball so shiny and bright, would give him a view that was sure to delight. So he hopped on a gull and took to the sky, as he wanted to meet some creatures nearby.

And what a view there was from the shore, A DOLPHIN! A PORPOISE! A seal waving her paw! And soaring above in the blue Blackpool skies, were curlew, gulls and the odd 'poo surprise'!

> Can you spot any crabs with a cheeky, red-beaded anemone stuck on their shells? The clever crabs let the anemones stay there to help defend the crab by using their stinging tentacles. The anemones are then able to catch more food as the crab moves along, as well as catch any leftovers... It looks like the crab is wearing a fancy hat!

But "what's out at sea in the big blue deep?" Buck asked a gull who was half asleep. "Well hop on my wing and I'll give you a tour, if I glide near the water you're bound to see more."

So Buck hopped on board and they dived through the waves They saw leatherback turtles and deep sea caves, Octopus, plaice and seabirds diving, brittlestars and eider ducks... Wow, the sea was thriving!

> Sea gooseberries are very special creatures that look like clear blobs of jelly. If you look closely you will see they have colourful rows of combs going up and down their tiny 2cm-long body, which they beat together to allow them to swim. They also have two long sticky tentacles but don't worry they don't sting like real jellyfish.

A kind oystercatcher with bright orange feet said, "Hey, hop on board, you're in for a treat! Mermaid's purses and cockle shell prizes are a few of Blackpool's sandy surprises." 00000

They flew past Blackpool Tower and down to the sand where a delicate brittlestar was waving her hand "Look at these shells," she said with a smile. "There are so many wonders! Just look for a while..."

So Buck and his friends all beachcombed for hours... Sea glass, egg cases and shells shaped like towers! "What a magical time I have had by the sea but I feel now it's time to settle for me."

Each barnacle knows they'll find home one day. Buck knew that Blackpool was where he'd stay. A special place where the sea meets the lights, where wildlife and humans can smile at the sights

But always remember that you hold the key to keep Blackpool special for all to see So leave only footprints and memories too so Blackpool stays special for Buck and for you.

Can you spot two more wonders on the beach? Look out for mermaid's purses and beautiful tower shells. Beachcombing is so much fun and I am sure you will find seven wonders all on your own if you take time to look.

So Buck waved a foot in the next high tide and a passing blue jellyfish gave him a ride "Can we go to the piers to find a pipefish?" "Sure thing!" said the jelly who set off with a swish. Under the pier was a whole new strange world, where seabirds roosted and starlings swirled, hundreds of barnacles clung to the poles and long slimy lugworms dug long sandy holes.

Then just past the pier in the shimmering sea, a pretty long pipefish said, "Hey, look at me!" She looked like a dragon or seahorse or snake, Buck loved her so much, it made his heart ache. But Buck knew he wanted to travel some more, so he waved her goodbye and set off back to shore. "It's the big sandy beach where I want to go now but this barnacle needs to beachcomb it somehow."