



## What the devil is a 'Duver'?

Welcome to St Helens Duver!

Looking around you as you stand on St Helens Duver, how would you describe what you can see? Write some ideas next to the picture...



## Teaching resources by Education Destination Ltd.

Curriculum relevant materials supporting school trips to the Isle of Wight

Book today with Education Destination and get full access to this and hundreds more quality resources

The word 'Duver' (pronounced to rhyme with 'duvet', a British term for an area of sand dunes).

During your visit to St Helens Duver, you are going to learn about...

- ✓ What a sand dune is and how they form
- ✓ What sand dunes are like, e.g. some of the plants and animals that live here, and why they are important habitats
- ✓ How human beings are using St Helens Duver.

### It all starts with sand...

Sand, glorious sand... we all love it, don't we? (Except maybe when it gets into our sandwiches!).

It's the essential ingredient of sand dunes, but what is sand exactly?

Which of the following do you agree with the most, and why..?

Sand is made from crushed sea shells

Sand is made from tiny bits of rock

Sand comes from crushed objects like glass or pottery

**Well, to an extent, all 3 are true...**

Sand is made from a variety of different things, and it can vary from place to place. Sometimes it's fine and golden, sometimes it's almost muddy, and it can even be black!

Essentially, it's made of quartz crystals that have eroded from rocks, as well as from tiny pieces of shell and bones, so how it looks and feels depends on which rocks and creatures have contributed to the sand!

**Making a baby dune...**

Technically, in geography, the term for a 'baby dune' is embryo dune, just like a human baby is called an embryo in its early development. So, how does an embryo dune form? See if you can put the following sentences into the correct order to explain it...Number them 1-6:

The wind blows the sand inland

Sand begins to accumulate around the obstruction

## Teaching resources by Education Destination Ltd.

Curriculum relevant materials supporting school trips to the Isle of Wight

Book today with Education Destination and get full access to this and hundreds more quality resources

[www.edudest.uk](http://www.edudest.uk)

Hey, presto... A young dune is born!

**Survival of the fittest...**

Life as a baby dune is tough. It's salty, dry has a high PH (8 or over, making it alkaline), no nutrients, and is highly exposed to the wind and sea.

Many embryo dunes don't make it, and disappear almost as soon as they appear. It's a battle to survive and in order to make it these babies need one thing...  
vegetation!

**Bring on the marram...**

The hero of the day, marram grass is one tough little plant!

They can cope with the harsh conditions and have long roots which bind the sand, and trap even more sand so the embryo dunes can grow bigger.

New shoots grow from the long roots and a 'mat' of marram grass develops.

Here is a picture of marram grass on embryo dunes... See if you can find some!





### A walk back in time...

As you walk back from the shoreline through the dunes, you are literally walking back in time. As you go back, the dunes get older and older and are therefore more stable and established. These are called the **yellow dunes** (closer to the shore, behind the embryo dunes) and, eventually, the **grey dunes**.

Walk back through the dunes slowly, and watch for how the vegetation becomes more **diverse** (varied). **Find two species of plants that you like the most, and sketch them in the boxes below.**



--	--

## Teaching resources by Education Destination Ltd.

Curriculum relevant materials supporting school trips to the Isle of Wight

Book today with Education Destination and get full access to this and hundreds more quality resources

[www.edudest.uk](http://www.edudest.uk)

### Setting up home...

Once vegetation is established, along come the insects and the birds and the other animals. Some strange creatures lurk on St Helens Duver...

The **beewolf** is a burrowing wasp that digs tunnels in the sandy soil to lay her eggs. She hunts bees, paralyzes them with her sting and drags them into her tunnel to feed her larvae!

You may also see a **wasp spider** with distinctive black and yellow stripes of a wasp, which have given it its name. There are grasshoppers and crickets and other critters galore – what might you find?

The Duver and surrounding habitats also provide a home for birds, and is an important stopover for migrating birds. Listen and look – you may see a **whitethroat**. These nest in the bushes and the male flies up singing, before sailing back down into the bushes with its wings spread and tail erect!

There is a large population of rabbits. See if you can find some evidence of their presence here...

And where there are rabbits, Mr Fox isn't too far away!



**Adding some human activity...**

There is evidence all over the Duver of human activities. All of the following images are part of the human features on the Duver. **Can you find what each one belongs to?**

When you have found each one, **fill in the table** to show the range of human activities/features here and try to give at least one positive and one negative impact of each activity/feature!



Teaching resources by Education Destination Ltd.

Curriculum relevant materials supporting school trips to the Isle of Wight

Book today with Education Destination and get full access to this and hundreds more quality resources

[www.edudest.uk](http://www.edudest.uk)



Human feature/activity	Positive impact(s)	Negative impact(s)