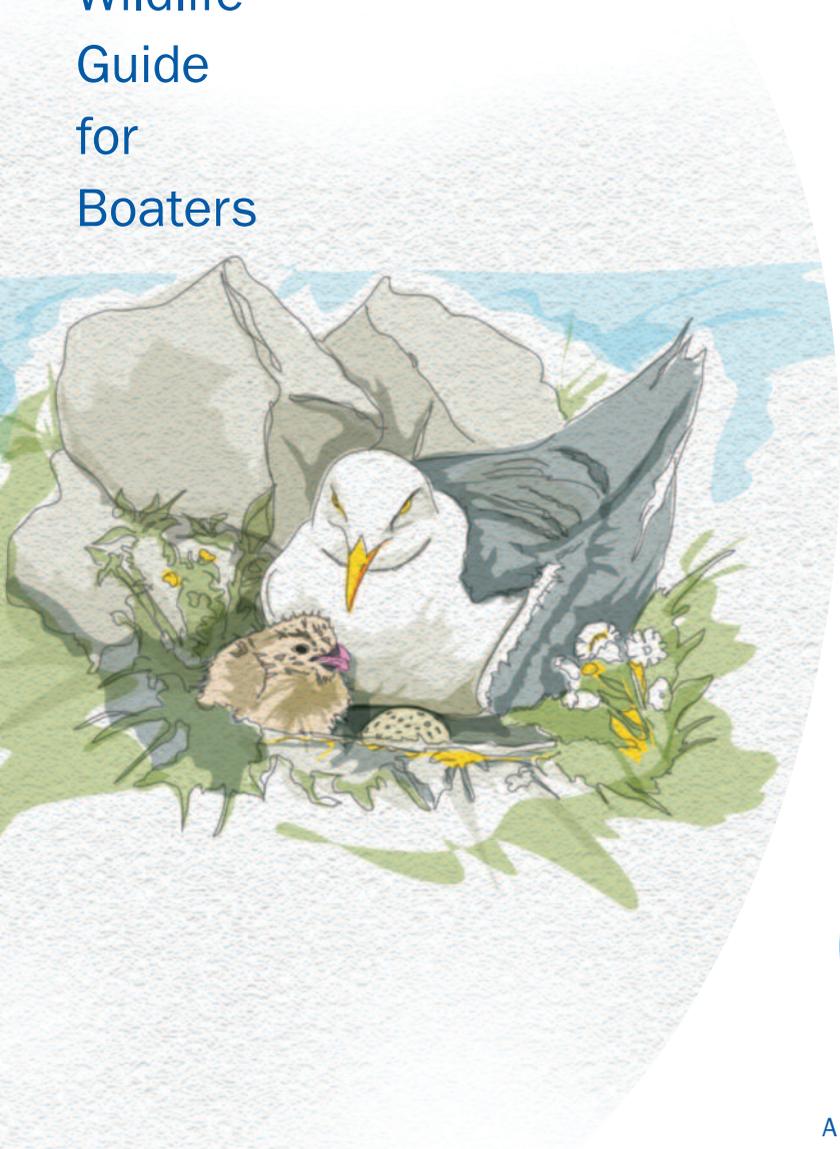


Writing  
a  
Green  
Wildlife  
Guide  
for  
Boaters

**The Green Blue**  
Making the environment second nature



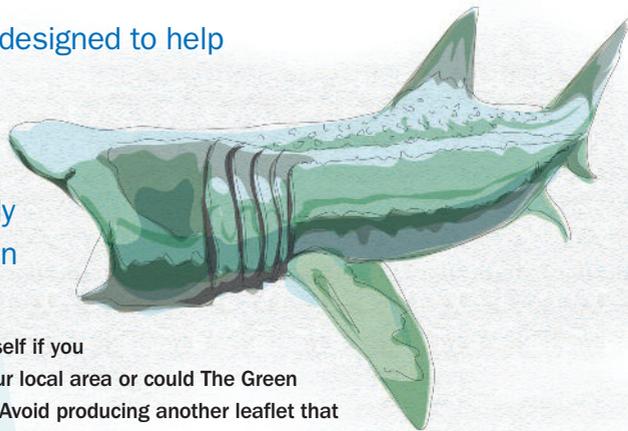
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Illustrations Courtesy of Pete Galvin

# Writing a Green Wildlife Guide for Boaters

The following prompts are designed to help you decide what to include in a guide or code of best practice for boaters on how to navigate carefully around marine wildlife when out on the water.



Before starting, it's worth asking yourself if you need to develop specific advice for your local area or could The Green Wildlife Guide For Boaters fit the bill? Avoid producing another leaflet that just reiterates generic guidance; make it specific to the audience and activities in your local area.

## Who

- Who is your target audience? There are many different types of watercraft – all have the potential to create disturbance in a variety of ways, but it helps to highlight any specific features or groups to make it relevant. Work with the relevant governing body who can help you to tailor the messaging and help with communication and distribution.

## Why

- Why are they on the water? Generally, boaters and watercraft users are either cruising or racing for leisure and pleasure. Is your guide aimed at a boater who may encounter marine wildlife by chance or boat operators who are specifically registered to offer wildlife watching experiences? If it's the latter take a look at <http://www.wisescheme.org> or the Scottish Marine Wildlife Watching Code [www.marinecode.org](http://www.marinecode.org)



## Where

Are there particular species, features or locations in your target area that you wish to emphasise?

- Help your audience to visualise the area by including a map.
- Are there particular considerations within a Marine Protected Area that you need to highlight?
- Are there any specific behaviours you would like boaters to follow in your local area?
- Are there particularly good avenues through which you can distribute and communicate the guide, e.g. local harbour handbooks, marinas and sailing clubs? Produce information in different formats to make it easy for these organisations to incorporate into their materials, e.g. print-ready PDFs they can include in a publication, a standalone insert or pull-out page, or a poster for their noticeboards.

## How

- Try to think like a boater!
- Use a tone of voice that will engage the audience - informal, interesting and knowledgeable.
- Use language that demonstrates that you can relate to key issues a boater will have to consider when managing different types of watercraft. Ensure that boaters' safety is kept in mind at all times.
- Emphasise a collaborative approach and the opportunity for boaters and marine wildlife to co-exist harmoniously.
- Be clear and consistent. Avoid mixed messages and instructions, for example be sure of when you're asking boaters to maintain speed, slow down or stop!
- Be logical. Think of different scenarios on the water and give clear and practical suggestions that a boater can realistically do and easily remember.
- Encourage best practice at all times and around all species. Try not to rely on boaters having to identify which species they have seen before taking action.
- Use examples of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour to clarify points.
- Try to engage and encourage rather than emphasise legislation and prosecution. If you do refer to the legislation, make it easy to understand and be clear that it doesn't apply to accidental disturbance.

## Headlines to Consider

- Benefits of best practice
- Key species, habitats and their locations
- Actions to take
- Impacts of disturbance
- Causes of potential disturbance
- Signs of disturbance
- Sightings and strandings
- Helpful links (including [www.thegreenblue.org.uk](http://www.thegreenblue.org.uk))



## The Green Blue

The Green Blue is a UK wide programme created by British Marine and the Royal Yachting Association in 2005 to enable the UK recreational boating sector to decrease its impact on the environment by:

- Raising awareness amongst industry and users
- Reducing harmful discharges
- Reducing environmental disturbance
- Encouraging sustainable choices

For more information visit our website  
[www.thegreenblue.org.uk](http://www.thegreenblue.org.uk)



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