

BEASTS BY BUS

The Island has a wealth of wildlife attractions, from nature reserves where you can see some of our exciting native wildlife to collections of exotic animals from around the world. You'll also find sanctuaries for animals that have had a more difficult life. Read on to discover some of the best places for animal antics which are easily accessible by bus.



Image © Southern Vectis

Disclaimer: All information is believed to be correct at the time of going to print, however we strongly recommend you check details of bus times, routes and attraction opening times before travelling.

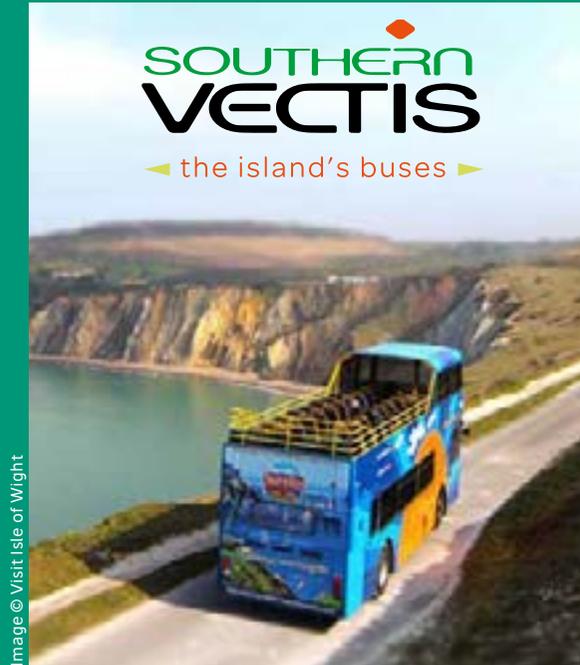


Image © Visit Isle of Wight

Southern Vectis run the local buses on the Isle of Wight with frequent services between the main towns and many of the villages around the Island.

For occasional travel you can buy single tickets onboard, but many visitors find the 24 and 48 hour Rover or seven day Freedom tickets are a better bet, offering unlimited travel for one price. You can buy them on any bus or from the Newport Travel Shop.

During the summer months additional services run in popular locations, including three open-top buses and the Island Coaster route which runs round the coast from Ryde to Yarmouth.

For full timetable information, latest travel information and details of current fares visit www.islandbuses.info or scan the QR code with your smartphone.



BEST BY BUS BEASTS BY BUS



Image © Peter Trimming

A guide to some of the best places to see animals on the Isle of Wight



RED SQUIRREL TRAIL (BLACKWATER TO MERSTONE)



Route to Blackwater: 2,3
Stop: Blackwater Junction



Walk from stop: Two minutes

or

Route to Merstone: 2
Stop: Newlands

Walk from stop: None



Gift to Nature

The Red Squirrel Trail is a great place to see some of the Island's amazing native wildlife, on foot or by bike. The section between Blackwater and Merstone is a lovely level two mile stroll with bus stops at either end. On the way you'll pass Birchmore pond which is home to a range of spectacular dragonflies and damselflies. You may also spot various birds of prey overhead and other wildlife in the hedgerows and woodlands along the trail.

The former railway station at Merstone is now an orchard and the platform has been planted as a wild flower meadow. Merstone Station and Birchmore Pond are managed by Gift to Nature which looks after accessible nature sites for everyone to enjoy.

www.redsquirreltrail.org.uk

www.gifttonature.org.uk

OTHER PLACES TO VISIT

Butterfly World

See hundreds of butterflies flying freely around this indoor attraction.

www.butterfly-world-iow.co.uk

01983 883430

Route number 9 (Butterfly World)

Image © Peter Trimming



We like spotting
red squirrels!

Better by bus

Hopping on a bus is a great way to see the Isle of Wight, whether you're popping over as a foot passenger on one of the fast-ferries, looking for a car-free holiday or just fancy leaving the car behind for a relaxed day out. You can get to some great places and see plenty on the way, with some of the best views you'll find from the top deck of a bus.

Get on board

Buses stop outside ferry terminals at Yarmouth, Cowes, East Cowes and Ryde Hoverport. From Fishbourne there is a ten minute walk to the nearest stop. If you arrive at Ryde Pier Head you can either stroll down the pier or catch the train to the bus station. Wightlink, Red Funnel and Hovertravel sell combined ferry and bus tickets from their mainland ticket offices. Pick up a bus timetable from Yarmouth, Newport or Ryde bus stations or download one at islandbuses.info

Extra summer services

During the summer Southern Vectis runs a number of visitor-focused extra services; three open-top buses - Downs Breezer, Shanklin Steamer and Needles Breezer plus the Island Coaster bus which runs along most of the Island's coasts. Check timetables for the dates these services run.

Try the train

Some destinations in the leaflet are accessible by train, look out for the train icon.

Visitor information

Visit visitisleofwight.co.uk 01983 813813 or drop into the Visitor Information Centre, Guildhall, Newport.

This leaflet is one of a series, look out for **Beaches by Bus**, **Birds by Bus** and **Beauty by Bus**. They have been produced by Natural Enterprise to help you explore the Island by sustainable means. Find out more at naturalenterprise.co.uk.

AMAZON WORLD

Routes: 8, Downs Breezer
Stop: Amazon World

Walk from stop: Two minutes

We like the daily meet the animal sessions.



Amazon World houses the largest exotic animal collection on the Isle of Wight. Here you will discover a range of interesting wildlife including insects and spiders, fish and amphibians, plants, birds, reptiles and mammals. The zoo participates in international breeding and conservation work. Open year round.

www.amazonworld.co.uk
01983 867122

Image © David Jones

DONKEY SANCTUARY

Route: 3
Stop: Donkey Sanctuary

Walk from stop: Two minutes



The Donkey Sanctuary houses over one hundred animals. These are mostly donkeys but also horses and ponies, including animals which have previously been abandoned or poorly treated. The sanctuary run events throughout the year. There is a gift shop and café on site. Open year round with free admission.

www.iowdonkey.org
01983 852693

We like their cakes. A lot!

ISLE OF WIGHT ZOO

Routes: 2,3
Stop: Sandown Library/High Street

Walk from stop: Ten minutes

Other travel options: Island Line (Sandown Station)

Sandown Zoo is situated on the town's seafront. It has a special interest in tigers and lemurs with a particular focus on older tigers, giving them a happy retirement on the Isle of Wight. To help you plan your visit feeding times are advertised on the zoo's website. You can hear about the animals from the keepers plus book a 'Meerkat Adventure' to get up close to the zoo's mob of meerkats. The zoo offers discounts to people visiting neighbouring attractions on the same day. Open year round but check the website for exceptions.

www.isleofwightzoo.com
01983 403883

Almost next door to each other, Isle of Wight Zoo and Dinosaur Isle make a great beastly double-bill if you're after a packed day out in Sandown.

DINOSAUR ISLE

Routes: 2,3
Stop: Sandown Library/High Street

Walk from stop: Seven minutes

Other travel options: Island Line (Sandown Station)

If you want to explore the beasts of the Isle of Wight from millennia ago, then a visit to Dinosaur Isle is a must. The museum has over a thousand fossils on display along with a range of interactive exhibits. There are real fossils, skeletal reconstructions and animatronic dinosaurs, all housed in a purpose-built museum designed in the shape of a giant pterodactyl. Dinosaur Isle is just across the road from the beach, which you can explore on a pre-booked fossil walk.

www.dinosaurisle.com
01983 404344

We like the fossil walks.
(advanced booking is required)

Image © Visit Isle of Wight



We like watching the tiger feeding.



Image © Visit Isle of Wight

MONKEY HAVEN

Route: 9 (via Staplers)
Stop: Heath Farm

Walk from stop: Two minutes

We like the Keeper for a Day experience.
(advanced booking is required)



A rescue centre and sanctuary for primates and birds of prey, Monkey Haven has a wide range of monkeys and other primates plus a meerkat mob. The animals are kept in spacious modern enclosures. There are keeper talks throughout the day, plus you can book a 'Marmoset Encounter' where you spend time in the enclosure feeding monkeys. There are also play and picnic areas, a café and shop.

www.monkeyhaven.org
01983 530885



Image © Steve Collins

We like alpaca wool clothing, available in the shop.

Located in the quiet West Wight village of Wellow, this alpaca and llama stud-farm offers farm visits and has a café on site which is free to enter. As well as the llamas and alpacas you'll find a range of other animals from pygmy goats to guinea fowl. You can also book a llama or alpaca walk on the farm or an off-farm llama trek. Open year round

www.westwightalpacas.co.uk
01983 760900



Image © Susan Gibson

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