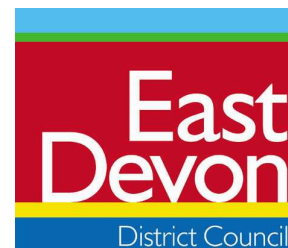




INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



# News Service

**15 August 2007**

EXCITEMENT FOR TWITCHERS AS RARE BIRD MAKES LANDFALL IN SEATON

## No 'Audouin-ary' Gull!

A BEVY of birdwatchers descended on the Axe Estuary this week when an extremely rare bird for Britain appeared at Seaton Marshes.

The rare Audouin's Gull (pronounced "Awdwin's") has only been seen four times in the UK. Its natural habitat is the Mediterranean in the summer and North Africa during the winter. Our bird seems to have got caught up in the South Westerly gale we experienced yesterday and was blown all the way to Seaton.

Fraser Rush, EDDC's Nature Reserves Officer, said: "There is absolutely no doubt this is an Audouin's Gull. It is similar to a Herring Gull but more elegant and pretty. We're really excited that the first sighting was from the hide at Seaton Marshes. A few years ago, before we created the hide, we might never have known that this rare bird had stopped by". Steve Waite, a Seaton man and an expert birder, was the first to see it and it was later spotted on a roof in the town.

No one knows if the Gull will stay around for a few days or if it will head back south straight away. It should get back home safely once the wind direction changes. However, if it does stay around, Seaton can expect to see more visitors armed with binoculars and telescopes and that should be good for business. A straw poll of birdwatchers on the Marshes suggested that most had fuelled a wet day on the reserve with a hot meal in the town's pubs and restaurants.

With the exciting plans for extending the wildlife habitats and the visitor facilities on the Axe Estuary, there will be more opportunities for everyone to view rarities like the Audouin's Gull as well as the more common but equally beautiful wildlife to be seen every day on the Marshes.

**Ends**

**If you wish to publish a photo of Audouin's Gull, please contact Sean Gray at [www.grayimages.co.uk](http://www.grayimages.co.uk)**

For information, please contact:

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