

## Introduction



Reed Warbler in reed bed

Well-planned developments next to our estuaries can create better places to live and work.

When reconstructing or refurbishing the banks of an estuary, your project should include features that support wildlife, improve public access, and educate people about the importance of protecting the environment.

Replacing grey sheet piling with lush colourful plants and swards of reed stems rustling in the wind add significantly to the waterside experience.

The natural habitats of our estuaries are often missing, especially in urban areas. For example, in the Thames Estuary only around 2% of the tidal banks are now natural in profile. The absence of the soft edges – where wildlife is most abundant – impacts on the ecological recovery of our rivers and estuaries.

Improving lengths of estuary habitat could eventually help to restore commercial stocks of Sea Bass. By seeking refuge in the margins at the early stages of the flood and ebb tide, the juvenile fish avoid being swept kilometres up and downstream from their preferred feeding areas.



A Sea Bass



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[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

[www.thamesweb.com](http://www.thamesweb.com)

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