

# Strandlines

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*UK Coastal Wildlife Photography*



The strandline with its accumulation of organic matter is a vital component of the ecology of the Fleet shore and the Chesil Bank. In the Fleet there are some rare creatures which live in this habitat.

The scaly cricket lives within nooks and crannies between the pebbles. Other fauna in this habitat include hoppers, sea slaters, centipedes, flies, beetles and spiders. Many of these species are found only in this habitat and are rarely recorded in Dorset.



The rare scaly cricket



Burrowing strandline beetle



Centipede



Sea slater



A spider which is a strandline specialist



Hoppers are crucial in breaking down organic matter in the strandline



Shrew



Wheatear with a hopper in its beak



Dunlin with a small crustacean

Birds and mammals such as shrews, hedgehogs and mice which are higher up the food chain feed on the smaller strandline fauna.



Goose barnacles

On the seaward side of the Chesil Bank you will find long distance drift with goose barnacles and Columbus crabs hitching a ride. The best chance of finding fresh examples is after a strong south-westerly wind has been blowing.



Columbus crab