

# Baie d'Audierne //



RAMSAR SITE NUMBER  
**2460**



Area :  
**2 396 ha**

Date of designation :  
**September 4<sup>th</sup> 2021**

Coordinates :  
**47° 52' N, 04° 21' W**

## Summary

Audierne bay site is a vast flat area formed by the accumulation of marine sediments at the foot of an ancient coastline.

The second largest dune complex in Brittany, the site presents a juxtaposition of wet and dry natural environments, as well as two largest natural ponds in Finistère: Trunvel and Kergalan.

Human activities, ancient and plural, have shaped the territory and are closely linked from wetlands' current morphology.

## International importance

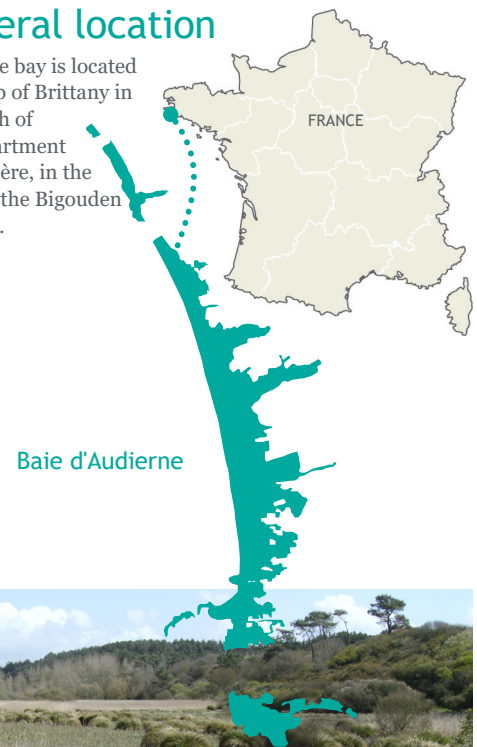
Audierne bay presents a wetlands mosaic of subject to fluctuations in the water table and strong winds that throw sand and salt on the natural environments.

These constraints shape foreshore, wet meadows (paluds), reedbeds and ponds that intertwine in the dune plain, forming an original ecosystem.

This originality stimulates the expression of a diversity of environments and remarkable species such as the Locustella luscinioides, the Moustached Panure, the Summer Spiranthe or the Marsh Orchid.

## General location

Audierne bay is located at the tip of Brittany in the south of the department of Finistère, in the heart of the Bigouden Country.

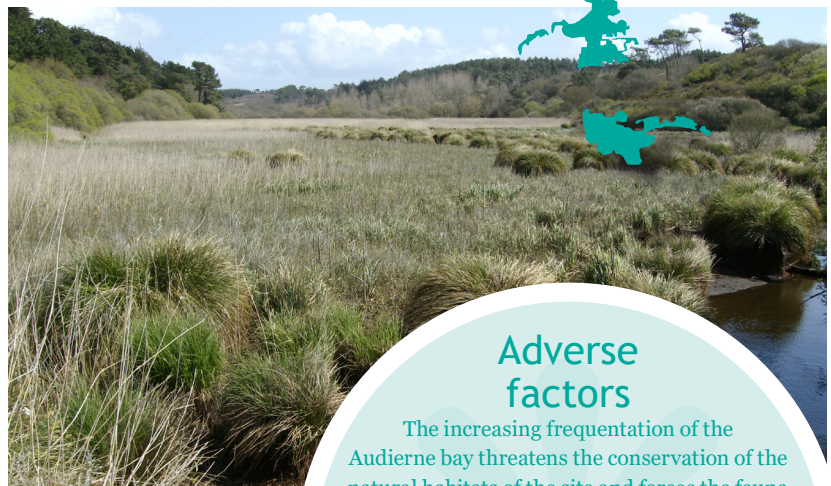


Baie d'Audierne

## Services provided by wetlands

The ancient agropastoral uses of the wetlands of the Audierne bay, their landscapes, theaters of recent activities related to tourism, nature sports and naturalist activities, constitute an important heritage of the territory.

These natural environments continue to provide numerous services to mankind - natural water purification, winter flood control, carbon storage, groundwater recharge and low-water support - which are all important in the current context of climate change.



## Adverse factors

The increasing frequentation of the Audierne bay threatens the conservation of the natural habitats of the site and forces the fauna to adapt. The abandonment of certain agricultural practices in areas that are difficult to exploit causes the progressive closure of the environment.

The presence of invasive species, especially aquatic ones, is also a concern.

Finally, certain agricultural practices and urban discharges have a negative impact on the quality of the site's wetlands.



## Four species representative of the site



**KENTISH PLOVER**  
(*Charadrius alexandrinus*)

The Baie d'Audierne is the 3rd Breton breeding site of this small protected limicole, threatened with extinction in Brittany, France and Europe.

Known as an umbrella species, it is an indicator of the good health of the beaches and its protection is beneficial to the entire coastal ecosystem.

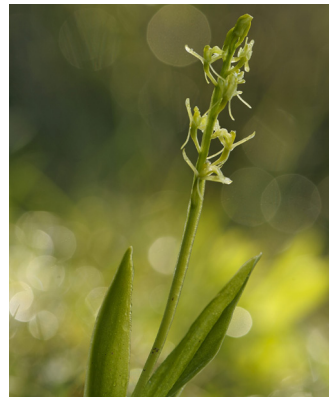
In the bay, the reproduction of the plover is monitored and the public is made aware of conservation stakes.



**AQUATIC WARBLER**  
(*Acrocephalus paludicola*)

Aquatic warbler is the most endangered passerine in continental Europe. It benefits from a National Action Plan to restore and maintain habitats favorable to its feeding during its migratory stopover.

The site, located on the migration route of this bird, is involved in the action plan and welcomes the species every year in the reed beds and wet meadows of the territory.



**FEN ORCHID**  
(*Liparis Loselii*)

Fen orchid is a rare species and in regression in Europe and in France.

Small orchid protected at the national level, it is present on several stations in the Audierne bay. The best known are the former sand quarries of Kerharo and Kerboulven, which form back-dunar wet depressions favorable to the development of the species.



**NATTERJACK TOAD**  
(*Epidalea calamita*)

In very strong regression in several regions of Europe and protected in France, the Natterjack toad is present in the Audierne bay and can be easily heard during the mating season.

When back-dunar topographic depressions become waterlogged in winter and spring, they are prime breeding areas for this amphibian.



## Biodiversity

The site presents a mosaic of original and diversified habitats, including about twenty natural habitats of community interest (grey dunes, pebble beach, foreshore, reed beds, wet meadows, brackish ponds, etc.).

The presence of the otter, the southwestern water vole, a remarkable range of Characeae algae (16 species), 320 species of birds, more than 700 plant taxa including some protected species (26), considered rare and/or threatened on a regional or national scale (58), endemic (Sheep fescue) or at the limit of its distribution, make the Audierne bay a biodiversity 'hotspot'.

## Management and conservation



The Conservatoire du Littoral owns 650 ha and the Departmental Council owns 55 ha, ensuring long-term land protection and appropriate management.

Several regulatory measures apply on the site to preserve heritage species and their natural habitats (Prefectural Biotopie Protection Orders); to set up a coherent management plan for the site and to regulate certain activities, works or projects (Natura 2000 system) and to regulate the reception of the public within the natural sites (Municipal Orders).

Various management actions are carried out by the two communities of communes in charge of the site, such as the protection of natural habitats, management by pastoralism, the regulation of invasive species, or the monitoring of certain species such as the Kentish plover or the Marsh Orchid.

Public can discover the natural heritage of the site all year long thanks to nature organizers and the Maison de la Baie d'Audierne. A reception place for visitors, located in the heart of the palud which suggests exhibitions, video projections and conferences.



### The Ramsar Convention

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, commonly known as the Ramsar Convention, is a global inter-governmental treaty that provides the frame-work for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. It is the only global treaty to focus on one single ecosystem.