

## Notable invertebrate species found in the Avalon Marshes

Amongst the aquatic species of note there are three Red Data Book listed snails:

- Shining Rams-horn Snail (*Segmentina nitida*)
- Large-mouthed Valve Snail (*Valvata macrostoma*)
- Depressed River Mussel (*Pseudanodonta complanata*)

Indeed, the larger waterways of the Avalon Marshes are reported to be the only place where England's five species of river mussel are found living side-by-side; the other species being:

- Swan Mussel (*Anodonta cygnea*)
- Duck Mussel (*Anodonta anatina*)
- Painter's Mussel (*Unio pictorum*)
- Swollen River Mussel (*Unio tumidus*)

However, the importance of the rhynes is best exemplified by the aquatic beetle fauna.

There is an astonishing number nationally important beetle populations known from the area.

It is likely that other groups are similarly well represented, but there simply hasn't been the study effort and expertise available for the identification of other groups. The rarest beetle species recorded from the area include:

- Lesser silver diving beetle     *Hydrochara caraboides*
- Flowering rush weevil         *Bagous nodulosus*
- A water beetle                   *Hydaticus transversalis*
- A great diving beetle          *Dytiscus dimidiatus*
- Greater silver diving beetle   *Hydrophilus piceus*
- A water beetle                   *Limnebius aluta*
- A water beetle                   *Laccornis oblongus*

Butterflies like the Purple Hairstreak (*Neozephyrus quercus*) and Silver washed Fritillary (*Argynnis paphia*), dragonflies such as the Hairy Dragonfly or Scarce Chaser (*Libellula fulva*) and moths such as the Scarlet Tiger (*Callimorpha dominula*) are also unusual species to be found and that cause excitement in the area.

However, conservation effort for invertebrate species is urgently needed. Since the mid 1990s three charismatic species – Marsh Fritillary (*Euphydryas aurinia*), Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk Moth and Large Marsh Grasshopper – seem to have disappeared from the Avalon Marshes. We don't know how many less obvious species have also disappeared.