



Wattwanderzentrum Ostfriesland

## Tracing the OUV

Experiencing the Diversity of the Wadden Sea World  
Heritage Site with the IWSS Roll-out Guide

## *Publisher*

WWF Germany  
International Wadden Sea School  
Hafenstraße 3, D-25813 Husum  
[www.iwss.org](http://www.iwss.org)



EDUCATION &  
INTERPRETATION  
FOR THE  
WADDEN SEA  
WORLD HERITAGE



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1. edition, 2025

The IWSS role-out guide was developed as part of the BINGO!-funded project “*What Makes the Wadden Sea So Valuable – Understanding and Communicating Its Outstanding Universal Value.*”.



# Introduction

The Wadden Sea World Heritage Site is a unique nature area of Outstanding Universal Value – particularly due to its exceptional biological diversity. To help communicate this value in a vivid and tangible way, the IWSS roll-out guide offers a hands-on and interactive tool for engaging groups of all ages with the fascinating animal and plant life of the Wadden Sea and the North Sea.

The 300 x 60 cm mat features 54 selected species from various groups such as mussels, snails, crustaceans, algae, and other organisms. With its multilingual labelling (German, English, Danish, and Dutch), it not only supports the identification of beach finds but also promotes cross-border environmental education throughout the Wadden Sea region.

We warmly invite you to use the role-out guide in diverse and creative ways during your mudflat walks, beach excursions, and strandline explorations, guided by the ideas presented here. These methods come from practical experience in environmental education and have been field-tested – with heartfelt thanks to all practitioners who contributed.

We wish you much joy and success in communicating the richness and conservation value of this extraordinary natural heritage in an interactive way!



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# Ideas

## 1. Beach Find Identification Station

- The mat serves as a central identification station where participants can independently match found objects (e.g., shells, snail houses, seaweed) to the species shown.
  - Ideal at the end of a walk for a shared “sorting & learning” experience.
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## 2. Species Search Game (“Find Me on the Beach!”)

- Participants search specifically for species illustrated on the mat.
  - Who will be the first to find a cockle shell, a mussel, or a snail shell? → Use as a competition or bingo-style game.
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## 3. Discovering Animal Groups

- Use the mat as a visual introduction before the walk: What kinds of animals can we expect? How do snails differ from mussels, for example?
  - Divide into small groups, each with a research focus (e.g., crustaceans).
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## 4. Nature Art & Comparison

- Beach finds are not only identified but also sorted by shape and colour → Compare with the images on the mat.
  - Creative method: “Make an artwork from natural materials that resembles a specific species!”
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## 5. Traces and Habitat Quiz

- Use the mat to guess: Which animal leaves which traces in the mudflats? (e.g., lugworm casts)
  - Set up small knowledge stations near the mat with questions like: “Where does this species live?” or “What does it eat?”
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## 6. Group Rally: “Who Belongs Where?”

- Children/young people receive specimens and must not only identify them, but also assign them to the correct group (“mussels,” “crustaceans,” etc.).
  - Can be used as a competitive or cooperative activity.
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## **7. Species Memory or “What’s Missing?”**

- Cover parts of the mat – groups guess which species is missing.
  - Alternatively, create a living memory game using real finds placed face-down like cards.
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## **8. Explorer Backpack or Station-Based Learning**

- The mat becomes part of a “research station” on the beach: groups walk between stations, document finds, compare them with the mat, and take notes.
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## **9. Barefoot Path with Identification Mat**

- Combine with sensory activities: walk barefoot through mud or sand – then use the mat to identify the materials felt (e.g., mussel shell, seaweed).
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## **10. Photo Challenge: “Find & Match”**

- Each group takes a photo of their most beautiful find next to the matching image on the mat.
  - Use the results to create a gallery or digital documentation later.
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## **11. Storytelling with Species**

- The group invents a story that includes at least five species shown on the mat.
  - Encourages creativity and deepens knowledge in a playful way.
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## **12. Multilingual Species Learning**

- Use the mat’s four-language labels actively: groups learn animal and plant names in different languages – for example, in a memory or matching game.
  - Ask: In which language is the species name most accurate, beautiful, or poetic?
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## **13. Identification Table in the Visitor Center**

- Instead of placing the mat on the floor it is laid out on a long exhibition table.
- This way, it serves as both a “reading table” and an interactive “identification table,” easily accessible from both sides – ideal for spontaneous species identification and exploring biodiversity at one’s own pace.