

The Severn bore

One of the great sights of the Bristol area is the Severn bore. This is beginning of the tide coming in and forming a wave up to several metres high, pulled up-river by the moon's gravity. The more familiar tides at the seashore are less spectacular because their rise and fall occurs gradually, over several hours. What makes the Severn different is that it narrows over a long distance, so that the tide wave, whose top travels a bit faster than its bottom, can steepen and break into a fairly sharp front. My favourite moment - especially if the bore is disappointingly low, as can happen sometimes - is just after the bore has passed. Then the river rushes backwards, that is upstream towards Gloucester. It gets higher for about an hour as the rest of the tide comes in. I like to see the bore at night. As it approaches, the effect of the distant and then growing roar is magical - and there is plenty of light from Gloucester and the moon.

There are many places to see the bore along the river near Gloucester. My favourite is Weir Green, where it is possible to park by the riverside and walk away from people. An OS map is strongly recommended (Sheet 162: Gloucester and Forest of Dean) grid reference 792153.

For the brave and mapless: leave M5 north at junction 12 ; left, and again left (at petrol station) onto A38; after about 100m, right off A38 onto tiny road to Hardwicke; follow this for about 3km (including a sharp right after 1km) and then turn left; the road crosses the Sharpness and Gloucester canal; follow it for about 1.5km, ignoring a left turn to Longney/Epney and a right turn to Stonebench; then turn right at a tiny sign to Weir Green; park where the road stops.

Dates and times of **Severn Bore 2012** (*a big bore)

(data based on Arrowsmith's Bristol Channel Tide Table, obtainable from bristolchanneltidetable@blueyonder.co.uk)

Tuesday January 24, 08:33	Wednesday January 25, 09:13
Thursday January 26, 09:50	Thursday February 9, 08:52 & 21:17
Friday February 10, 09:30 & 21:53	Saturday February 11, 10:08 & 22:29
Sunday February 12, 10:44	Thursday February 23, 08:53
Friday February 24, 09:27	Thursday March 8, 07:51
Friday March 9, 08:32* & 20:56*	Saturday March 10, 09:11* & 21:33*
Sunday March 11, 09:50* & 22:10*	Monday March 12, 10:28
Friday April 6, 07:25 & 19:51	Saturday April 7, 08:08* & 20:32*
Sunday April 8, 08:50* & 21:12*	Monday April 9, 09:31* & 21:52*
Tuesday April 10, 10:11	Saturday May 5, 19:25
Sunday May 6, 07:45 & 20:09*	Monday May 7, 08:31* & 20:53*
Tuesday May 8, 09:15* & 21:35*	Wednesday May 9, 09:59
Monday June 4, 19:51	Tuesday June 5, 08:15 & 20:37
Wednesday June 6, 09:02 & 21:23	Wednesday July 4, 20:25
Thursday July 5, 21:10	Friday July 6, 21:53
Thursday August 2, 20:13	Friday August 3, 08:36 & 20:56*
Saturday August 4, 09:18 & 21:35	Monday August 20, 21:47
Friday August 31, 19:56	Saturday September 1, 08:16 & 20:35
Sunday September 2, 08:55 & 21:11	Sunday September 16, 20:10
Monday September 17, 08:33 & 20:49	Tuesday September 18, 09:11 & 21:28
Wednesday September 19, 09:48 & 22:05	Saturday September 29, 19:32
Sunday September 30, 20:09	Monday October 1, 20:43
Monday October 15, 07:27 & 19:45	Tuesday October 16, 08:08 & 20:27*
Wednesday October 17, 08:48* & 21:08*	Thursday October 18, 09:28 & 21:50
Friday October 19, 10:09	Tuesday November 13, 19:22
Wednesday November 14, 07:46 & 20:07*	Thursday November 15, 08:30* & 20:52*
Friday November 16, 09:13* & 21:37	Saturday November 17, 09:57
Thursday December 13, 07:28 & 19:53	Friday December 14, 08:15* & 20:40
Saturday December 15, 09:00* & 21:27	Sunday December 16, 09:46* & 22:11
Monday December 17, 10:30	

**** All times are GMT **In summer add 1 hour** to get British summer time****

These times are (to within 20 minutes) when the bore passes **Weir Green**. To be safe, leave Bristol one hour before the above times.

From the OS map sheet 162 (Gloucester and the Forest of Dean). Weir Green is at the grid point 792153

