

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 that can be a metre high, followed by a train of undulations, and, 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/or the moon.

There are many places to see the bore along the river near Gloucester. Below I give information about four of them, including UK postcodes (good for Google maps directions) and the grid references (on the UK Ordnance survey map sheet 162: Gloucester and Forest of Dean)

Minsterworth Church GL2 8JJ, grid SO772169: on the north side; easy to park by the church and walk along the river (off Church Lane off A48); bore arrives 10 minutes before it passes Weir Green

Weir Green, GL2 3WG, grid SO792153: easy to park by the river, and walk away from people, formerly a fine view, but now somewhat obscured by trees overgrown on the bank; bore arrival times below

Over Bridge, GL2 8BZ, grid SO816195: park on the westbound side of A40, pulling in slightly west of the bridge, and walk up onto the bridge; it's the old Telford Bridge, with a fine view of the bore and the newer railway bridge; bore arrives 25 minutes after it passes Weir Green

Maisemore Bridge, GL2 8ES, grid SO816211: a fine view of the bore's arrival before it dies on the weir just upstream, park on Bridge Farm, off A419, or in the White Hart Inn and enjoy a drink and a Nepalese Curry; bore arrives 30 minutes after it passes Weir Green

Dates and times of Severn Bore 2024

These times are (to within 20 minutes) when the bore passes Weir Green. To be safe, leave plenty of time and arrive early; it's worth waiting.

Data based on Arrowsmith's Bristol Channel Tide Table, obtainable from www.arrowsmith.co.uk and bristolchanneltidetable@blueyonder.co.uk

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

	<p>February</p> <p>Saturday 10, 08.14, 20.40 Sunday 11, 08.58* 21.24 Monday 12, 09.41*, 22.04* Tuesday 13, 10.21*, 22.41 Wednesday 14, 10.59</p>	<p>March</p> <p>Sunday 10, 07.58*, 20.22* Monday 11, 08.41**, 21.04** Tuesday 12 09.21**, 21.42** Wednesday 13, 09:59**, 22.17* Thursday 14, 10:35*</p>
<p>April</p> <p>Sunday 7, 19.16 Monday 8, 07.36*, 19.59* Tuesday 9 08.18**, 20.39** Wednesday 10, 08.58**, 21.16* Thursday 11, 09.35*, 21.52 Friday, 12, 10.11</p>	<p>May</p> <p>Tuesday 7, 07.09, 19.32 Wednesday 8, 07.53, 20.13 Thursday 09, 08.34, 20.51</p>	<p>June</p>
<p>July</p> <p>Wednesday 24, 22.16</p>	<p>August</p> <p>Tuesday 20, 20.35 Wednesday 21, 09.00, 21.17* Thursday 22, 09.41, 21.57* Friday 23, 10.19, 22:36</p>	<p>September</p> <p>Tuesday 17, 19.32 Wednesday 18, 07.56, 20.15* Thursday 19 08.37*, 20.56** Friday 20, 09.17*, 21.35** Saturday 21, 09.54*, 22.12*</p>
<p>October</p> <p>Wednesday 16, 19.08 Thursday 17, 07.31, 19.51** Friday 18, 08.12*, 20.32** Saturday 19, 08.51*, 21.11* Sunday 20, 09.29, 21.50</p>	<p>November</p> <p>Friday 15, 07.05, 19.27 Saturday 16, 07.47, 20.10 Sunday 17, 08.28, 20.52 Monday 18, 09.08</p>	<p>December</p>