

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7, as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Note for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers are strongly urged to provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:**Joint Nature Conservation Committee**

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

Designated: 25 April 1990; updated 15 May 2005

3. Country:

UK (Scotland)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Fala Flow

5. Map of site included:Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps.**a) hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): *yes* ✓ -or- *no***b) digital (electronic) format** (optional): Yes

6. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

55 49 00 N

02 54 20 W

7. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

Nearest town/city: Edinburgh

On the edge of the Lammermuir Hills, 20 km south-east of Edinburgh

Administrative region: Midlothian

8. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **9. Area** (hectares): 318.04

Min. 315

Max. 325

Mean 320

10. Overview:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Fala Flow is in the Lammermuir Hills to the south-east of Edinburgh. It is a blanket mire, with some pools, developed at a lower altitude than most blanket mires in Midlothian. The vegetation comprises heather *Calluna vulgaris*/cottongrass *Eriophorum* spp., with other characteristic species including cowberry *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* and *Sphagnum* bog-mosses. Such mires are scarce and declining in Midlothian and this example is relatively undisturbed. The mire and pools support an internationally important goose roost.

11. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

6

Secretariat comment: The RIS provides information requiring the application of Criterion 4. This needs to be included in the next update.

12. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 11. above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):

Species with peak counts in winter:

Pink-footed goose , <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> , Greenland, Iceland/UK	6719 individuals, representing an average of 2.7% of the population (5 year peak mean 1991/92-1995/96)
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Contemporary data and information on waterbird trends at this site and their regional (sub-national) and national contexts can be found in the Wetland Bird Survey report, which is updated annually. See www.bto.org/survey/webs/webs-alerts-index.htm.

13. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Council Directive 92/43/EEC

14. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Soil & geology	acidic, peat, nutrient-poor, sedimentary
Geomorphology and landscape	upland
Nutrient status	oligotrophic
pH	strongly acidic
Salinity	fresh
Soil	mainly organic

Water permanence	usually permanent
Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Edinburgh, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/edinburgh.html) Max. daily temperature: 12.2° C Min. daily temperature: 5.1° C Days of air frost: 54.5 Rainfall: 676.2 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1405.8

General description of the Physical Features:

Fala Flow is located in the Lammermuir Hills. It is blanket mire, with some pools, developed at a lower altitude than most blanket mires in Midlothian. Such mires are scarce and declining in Midlothian, and this example is relatively undisturbed.

15. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

Fala Flow is blanket mire, with some pools, developed at a lower altitude than most blanket mires in Midlothian.

16. Hydrological values:

Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

No special values known

17. Wetland types

Inland wetland

Code	Name	% Area
O	Freshwater lakes: permanent	0.4
U	Peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)	92.6
Other	Other	7

18. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site.

This site is a marginal upland blanket bog, dominated by *Calluna/Eriophorum* with significant *Sphagnum* cover. The periphery of the site is minerotrophic acid grassland. The site is relatively undisturbed and the lowest intact blanket bog in the Lothians. Open-water areas mostly dystrophic with fringing *Carex nigra* and *Carex rostrata*.

19. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

None reported

20. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g. which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Birds

Species Information

None reported

21. Social and cultural values:

e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

- Aesthetic
- Livestock grazing
- Non-consumptive recreation
- Sport hunting

22. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
Private	+	+

23. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	
Recreation	+	
Current scientific research	+	
Commercial forestry		+
Permanent arable agriculture		+
Rough or shifting grazing	+	
Permanent pastoral agriculture		+
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	+

24. Factors adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

Explanation of reporting category:

1. Those factors that are still operating, but it is unclear if they are under control, as there is a lag in showing the management or regulatory regime to be successful.
2. Those factors that are not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far.

NA = Not Applicable because no factors have been reported.

Adverse Factor Category	Reporting Category	Description of the problem (Newly reported Factors only)	On-Site	Off-Site	Major Impact?
No factors reported	NA				

For category 2 factors only.

What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors?

Is the site subject to adverse ecological change? NO

25. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
Site/ Area of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI/ASSI)	+	
Special Protection Area (SPA)	+	
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	

26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

No information available

27. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g. details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

None reported

28. Current conservation education:

e.g. visitor centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

None reported

29. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Activities, Facilities provided and Seasonality.

A footpath runs through site and is used throughout the year, although mainly in the summer months.

30. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept. of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

Scottish Executive, Environment and Rural Affairs Department

31. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

Scottish Natural Heritage, 2 Anderson Place, Edinburgh, EH6 5NP

32. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 13 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Site-relevant references

Ratcliffe, DA (ed.) (1977) *A Nature Conservation Review. The selection of biological sites of national importance to nature conservation in Britain*. Cambridge University Press (for the Natural Environment Research Council and the Nature Conservancy Council), Cambridge (2 vols.)

Stroud, DA, Chambers, D, Cook, S, Buxton, N, Fraser, B, Clement, P, Lewis, P, McLean, I, Baker, H & Whitehead, S (eds.) (2001) *The UK SPA network: its scope and content*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough (3 vols.) www.jncc.gov.uk/UKSPA/default.htm

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