

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

Designated: 16 December 1993 / Updated: May 2005

3. Country:

UK (England)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Stodmarsh

5. Map of site included:**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):

51° 18' 18" N 01° 10' 19" E

7. General location:

Nearest town/city: Canterbury

The site lies along the flood plain of the Great Stour just to the east of Canterbury.

Administrative region: Kent

8. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **9. Area** (hectares): 481

Min. No information available

Max. No information available

Mean No information available

10. Overview:

Stodmarsh is a wetland site resulting in part from subsidence under the valley of the Great Stour in Kent and aggregate extraction but lies within the natural floodplain of the river. There are a range of wetland habitats including open water, reedbeds, grazing marsh and alder *Alnus glutinosa* carr. The site supports a number of uncommon wetland invertebrates and plants, and provides breeding and wintering habitats for important assemblages of wetland bird species, particularly waterfowl.

11. Ramsar Criteria:

2

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

Ramsar criterion 2

Six British Red Data Book wetland invertebrates. Two nationally rare plants, and five nationally scarce species. A diverse assemblage of rare wetland birds.

The flora of the site includes the rare sharp leaved pondweed (*Potamogeton acutifolius*), which is considered critically endangered by the GB Red Book, as well as the vulnerable whorled water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum verticillatum*), rootless duckweed (*Wolffia arrhiza*) and *Carex divisa*.

The site finds the presence of otter (*Lutra lutra*)

Secretariat Comment: Criterion 2 requires to specify the scientific names of those mentioned species considered vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered. This need to be included in the next update.

13. Biogeography:

a) biogeographic region:

Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Council Directive 92/43/EEC

14. Physical features of the site:

Soil & geology	neutral, sand, mud, clay, alluvium, peat, gravel
Geomorphology and landscape	lowland, valley, floodplain
Nutrient status	eutrophic
pH	circumneutral
Salinity	brackish / mixosaline, fresh
Soil	mainly mineral
Water permanence	usually permanent
Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Wye, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/wye.html) Max. daily temperature: 13.8° C Min. daily temperature: 6.3° C Days of air frost: 43.9 Rainfall: 727.9 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1603.2

General description of the Physical Features:

No information available

15. Physical features of the catchment area:

No information available

16. Hydrological values:

flood water storage / desynchronisation of flood peaks

17. Wetland types

Inland wetland, marine/coastal wetland

Code	Name	% Area
M	Rivers / streams / creeks: permanent	2.7
O	Freshwater lakes: permanent	25.6
Q	Saline / brackish lakes: permanent	3.5

Tp	Freshwater marshes / pools: permanent	12.7
U	Peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)	33.2
W	Shrub-dominated wetlands	2.9
Xf	Freshwater, tree-dominated wetlands	2.5
Other	Other	16.9

18. General ecological features:

Woodland: The most mature areas of woodland are patches of alder *Alnus glutinosa* carr growing over nettles *Urtica dioica*. There are also patches of osier *Salix viminalis* growing over nettles, yellow flag *Iris pseudacorus* ladies smock *Cardamine pratensis* and marsh marigold *Caltha palustris*. There are also patches of goat willow *Salix caprea* and crack willows *Salix fragilis* invading the reedbed. Overall these habitats are not the main reason for declaration of the site, although they add to the diversity, but in larger quantities would damage the interest of the site.

Reedbed: Extensive areas of reed occur, with varying quantities of scrub. When the reed is cut other species thrive including bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, greater spearwort *Ranunculus lingua*, and in the ditches that cross the reedbed greater bladderwort *Utricularia vulgaris*. Where the reedbeds are relatively dry the marsh sow thistle *Sonchus palustris* can be found. There are also stands of other emergent plants such as the great pond sedge *Carex riparia* and lesser pond sedge *Carex acutiformis*.

Grazing marsh: Small blocks of grazing marsh with a diverse flora that includes the rare sharp leaved pondweed *Potamogeton acutifolius*, flat-stalked pondweed *Potamogeton friesii*, frogbit *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*, the nationally scarce whorled water-milfoil *Myriophyllum verticillatum*, and rootless duckweed *Wolffia arrhiza*.

Tidal river and adjacent lakes: The tidal habitats support a much less diverse flora with species such as the pondweed *Potamogeton pectinatus* in the tidal lake. The banks of the river support the nationally scarce plant dittander *Lepidium latifolium*.

19. Noteworthy flora:

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Higher Plants.– nationally scarce unless otherwise stated.

Potamogeton acutifolius, *Taraxacum hygrophilum*, *Myriophyllum verticillatum*, *Wolffia arrhiza*, *Carex divisa*, *Lepidium latifolium*, *Sonchus palustris*.

20. Noteworthy fauna:

Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:

Species with peak counts in winter:

Ruff , <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> , Europe/W Africa	19 individuals, representing an average of 2.7% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Water rail , <i>Rallus aquaticus</i> , Europe	28 individuals, representing an average of 6.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species regularly supported during the breeding season:

Gadwall , <i>Anas strepera strepera</i> , NW Europe	6 pairs, representing an average of 1% of the GB population (1988-92)
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Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

Gadwall , <i>Anas strepera strepera</i> , NW Europe	267 individuals, representing an average of 1.5% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
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Species with peak counts in winter:

Great bittern , <i>Botaurus stellaris stellaris</i> , W Europe, NW Africa	2 individuals, representing an average of 2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-
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Hen harrier, <i>Circus cyaneus</i> , Europe	2002/3) 9 individuals, representing an average of 1.2% of the GB population (5 winter period peak count 1987/8-1991/2)
Northern shoveler, <i>Anas clypeata</i> , NW & C Europe	274 individuals, representing an average of 1.8% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Species Information

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Invertebrates.

8 British Red Data Book species of wetland invertebrates have been recorded on the site: *Segmentina nitida*, *Grammotaulius nitidus*, *Deltote banksianna*, *Polistichus connexus*, *Cercyon granarius*, *Haliphus mucronatus*, *Hydrophilus piceus* and *Vertigo moulinsiana* (RDB3).

21. Social and cultural values:

- Conservation education
- Current scientific research
- Livestock grazing
- Non-consumptive recreation
- Sport fishing
- Sport hunting

22. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
National/Crown estate	+	
Private	+	
Public/communal	+	

23. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	
Recreation	+	
Research	+	
Fishing: (unspecified)	+	
Fishing: recreational/sport	+	
Freshwater aquaculture		+
Arable agriculture (unspecified)		+
Permanent arable agriculture		+
Grazing (unspecified)	+	
Permanent pastoral agriculture	+	
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	
Sewage treatment/disposal		+
Irrigation (inc agricultural water supply)		+
Mineral exploration	+	
Non-urbanised settlements		+

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	(Agriculture and mineral exploration can have at least “potential” impacts)			

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:

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
SSSI / ASSI	+	
NNR	+	+
SPA	+	
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	
SAC	+	

26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

No information available

27. Current scientific research and facilities:

Fauna.

Numbers of migratory and wintering wildfowl and waders are monitored annually as part of the national Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS) organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Other wintering birds: Numbers of wintering hen harrier and bearded tit are recorded each year by EN.

Bird ringing: A BTO constant effort site is maintained by volunteers at the Westbere reedbed with additional ringing activities undertaken elsewhere within the site.

Breeding birds: These are monitored by English Nature as a CBC recent surveys have been undertaken as part of national schemes for water rail and nightingale. Key species such as Cetti’s warbler are monitored.

The site is surveyed regularly for *otter (Lutra lutra)* and water vole.

Molluscs: The site has been surveyed for molluscs under English Nature's recovery programme for the rare snail *Segmentina nitida*. Survey work has recently been carried out for *Vertigo moulinsiana*.
Lepidoptera: Some monitoring is undertaken by volunteers.

Flora.

Aquatic plants have been surveyed by English Nature to establish a baseline for future monitoring of the site.

28. Current conservation education:

English Nature provides regular guided walks. There are interpretation boards on the National Nature Reserve, and reserve leaflets available. There is a small amount of use by schools and universities.

29. Current recreation and tourism:

Activities, Facilities provided and Seasonality.

Shooting: part of the site is used for wildfowling.

Fishing: A number of lakes within the site are used for coarse fishing.

Bird watching: a very popular activity on the National Nature Reserve with nature trails and facilities for the disabled.

30. Jurisdiction:

Head, Natura 2000 and Ramsar Team, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, European Wildlife Division, Zone 1/07, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EB

31. Management authority:

Site Designations Manager, English Nature, Sites and Surveillance Team, Northminster House, Northminster Road, Peterborough, PE1 1UA, UK

32. Bibliographical references:

Site-relevant references

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