

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**

Monkstone House

City Road

Peterborough

Cambridgeshire PE1 1JY

UK

Telephone/Fax: +44 (0)1733 – 562 626 / +44 (0)1733 – 555 948

Email: RIS@JNCC.gov.uk

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

DD MM YY

--	--	--

Designation date

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

09 March 2006

3. Country:

UK (Scotland)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Westwater

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 45 30 N

03 24 30 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

Westwater is 3 km west of West Linton in the Pentland Hills, 26 km south-west of Edinburgh.

Administrative region: Scottish Borders

8. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **9. Area** (hectares): 49.77

Min. 310

Max. 329

Mean 323

10. Overview:

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

Westwater reservoir is located 320 m above sea level in the Pentland Hills. It is an artificial reservoir forming part of the Lothian region water supply. Westwater regularly provides a winter roost for large numbers of wildfowl. In winter it also supports in winter large numbers pink-footed geese *Anser brachyrhynchus*.

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).

6¹

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 spring/autumn:

Pink-footed goose , <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> , Greenland, Iceland/UK	18520 individuals, representing an average of 7.7% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
--	---

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.

Details of bird species occurring at levels of National importance are given in Section 20

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	neutral, clay, peat, basalt, sandstone
Geomorphology and landscape	upland, valley, hilly
Nutrient status	mesotrophic
pH	alkaline
Salinity	fresh

¹ The site had qualified for the application of criterion 5 at the time of the last update in 1999

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:

Westwater Reservoir is an artificial reservoir in the Pentland Hills, forming part of the Lothian water supply.

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).

Westwater Reservoir is an artificial reservoir in the Pentland Hills, forming part of the Lothian water supply.

16. Hydrological values:

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

Water supply

17. Wetland types

Human-made wetland, Inland wetland

Code	Name	% Area
O	Freshwater lakes: permanent	72
U	Peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)	24
6	Reservoirs / barrages / dams	2
Other	Other	2

18. General ecological features:

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

Most of the site is open water which can be affected by seasonal algal blooms. The surrounding land is largely species-poor unimproved rough grazing of varying wetness, dominated by *Juncus effusus*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Molinia caerulea* and *Nardus stricta*. Some ground is also dominated by *Calluna vulgaris* and *Pteridium aquilinum*.

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 currently occurring at levels of national importance:**

Species with peak counts in winter:

Mew gull , *Larus canus canus*, Europe to N Africa

6700 individuals, representing an average of 1.5% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

Assemblages of international importance: Species with peak counts in winter:

18759 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)

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
- Archaeological/historical site
- Sport fishing
- Sport hunting

22. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
Local authority, municipality etc.	+	
Private	+	+

23. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	
Recreation	+	
Fishing: recreational/sport	+	
Rough or shifting grazing	+	+
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	
Domestic water supply	+	

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.

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.

The Scottish Ornithological Club carry out regular bird counts.

Flora.

ESW are looking at the algal problems at this and other sites.

28. Current conservation education:

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

East of Scotland Water and Scottish Ornithological Club arrange one or two geese watch events a year at the site, during October and November.

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.

ESW and SOC arrange one or two geese watch events a year at the site, during October and November.

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

- Cranswick, PA, Waters, RJ, Musgrove, AJ & Pollitt, MS (1997) *The Wetland Bird Survey 1995–96: wildfowl and wader counts*. British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds & Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Slimbridge
- Lothian Regional Council (1994) *West Water Reservoir Management Plan*. Lothian Regional Council Department of Planning, Edinburgh
- Musgrove, AJ, Pollitt, MS, Hall, C, Hearn, RD, Holloway, SJ, Marshall, PE, Robinson, JA & Cranswick, PA (2001) *The Wetland Bird Survey 1999–2000: wildfowl and wader counts*. British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds & Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Slimbridge.
www.wwt.org.uk/publications/default.asp?PubID=14
- Scottish Natural Heritage (1997) *West Water Reservoir SSSI Management Plan*. Scottish Natural Heritage, Galashiels
- 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

Please return to: **Ramsar Secretariat, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland**
Telephone: +41 22 999 0170 • Fax: +41 22 999 0169 • email: ramsar@ramsar.org