

## 96. Mersey Estuary

**Geographical Coordinates:** 53°20'N 2°50'W **Area:** 5,004ha

**Location:** The estuary divides the northern and southern portions of the Merseyside conurbation, which includes the city of Liverpool, in the counties of Cheshire and Merseyside, on the coast of northwest England.

**Date of Ramsar Designation:** 20 December 1995

**Other International Designations:** European Union Special Protection Area

**National Designations:** Site of special scientific interest

**Principal Features:** The estuary includes large areas of saltmarsh, and intertidal sand and mudflats, with limited areas of brackish marsh, boulder clay cliffs and rocky shore. Internationally important numbers of waterfowl feed and roost on the site in winter and nationally important numbers occur during passage periods. The latter include *Charadrius hiaticula*, *Tringa totanus*, *Calidris alpina*. The Mersey Estuary also regularly supports over 20,000 waterfowl in winter. The five year peak mean for the period 1987/88 to 1991/92 was 78,015 birds, comprising 47,714 waders and 30,301 wildfowl. These included internationally important numbers of the following species (figures are five year means for the period 1987/88 to 1991/92): *Tadorna tadorna* (4,510), *Anas crecca* (11,705), *A. acuta* (5,925), *Calidris alpina* (32,528), and *Tringa totanus* (4,080). The site also supports nationally important wintering numbers of *Anas penelope*, *Pluvialis squatarola*, *Limosa limosa*, and *Numenius arquata*. (Criteria 2c,3a,3c).

**Conservation Issues:** No information provided.