

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:

9 March 2006

3. Country:

UK (Scotland)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Loch Ruthven

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):

57 19 54 N

04 16 48 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: Inverness

Loch Ruthven is 18 km south of Inverness, close to Loch Ness in north-east Scotland

Administrative region: Highland

8. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres):

Min. 218

Max. 218

Mean 218

9. Area (hectares): 201.15

(no boundary change, new calculation 2005)

10. Overview:

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

Loch Ruthven is a mesotrophic loch with rocky margins, and stands of bottle sedge *Carex rostrata* around much of the perimeter. A marshy zone is found at the west end of the loch where there is a transition from open water, through swamp and fen, to sedge-rich acidic grassland. This site is largely surrounded by birch woodland and the catchment supports a range of other habitats such as upland heath and grassland, upland mire, swamp/fen/carr, wet lowland, grassland, rivers and streams.

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).

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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 3

On this site there are two nationally scarce species of orchid growing in boggy areas surrounding Loch Ruthven, coralroot orchid *Corallorhiza trifida*, and bog orchid *Hammarbya paludosa*.

The site forms a core part of the breeding range, and one of the most productive breeding populations in Britain, of Slavonian grebe *Podiceps auritus*

See Sections 19/20 for details of noteworthy species

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, metamorphic
Geomorphology and landscape	upland, valley, hilly, crags/ledges
Nutrient status	mesotrophic
pH	acidic
Salinity	fresh
Soil	mainly mineral
Water permanence	usually permanent

Summary of main climatic features	<p>Annual averages (Braemar, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/braemar.html) Max. daily temperature: 10.5° C Min. daily temperature: 2.8° C Days of air frost: 103.3 Rainfall: 912.7 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1210.3</p>
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General description of the Physical Features:

Loch Ruthven is a mesotrophic loch with rocky margins and extensive stands of bottle sedge *Carex rostrata* around much of the perimeter. A marshy zone is found at the west end of the loch where there is a transition from open water, through swamp and fen, to sedge-rich acidic grassland.

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).

Loch Ruthven is a mesotrophic loch with rocky margins and extensive stands of bottle sedge *Carex rostrata* around much of the perimeter. A marshy zone is found at the west end of the loch where there is a transition from open water, through swamp and fen, to sedge-rich acidic grassland. The site is largely surrounded by birch *Betula* spp. woods, and the catchment comprises habitats such as upland heath and grassland, upland mire, swamp/fen/carr, wet lowland, grassland, rivers and streams.

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
M	Rivers / streams / creeks: permanent	2.5
O	Freshwater lakes: permanent	65
Other	Other	32.5

18. General ecological features:

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

Mesotrophic loch with large beds of emergent bottle sedge *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.*

Assemblage.

The site is internationally important because it contains the following Habitats Directive Annex I feature:

H3130 Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or of the *Isoëto-Nanojuncetea*

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Higher Plants.*Hammarbya paludosa, Corallorhiza trifida***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.*

Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:**Species regularly supported during the breeding season:**

Slavonian grebe , *Podiceps auritus auritus*, NW 16 pairs, representing an average of 38% of the Europe GB population (1999-2002)

Species Information**Internationally important species occurring on the site.****Mammals.**

S1355 *Lutra lutra* Otter (Habitats Directive Annex II species)

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
Environmental education/ interpretation
Non-consumptive recreation
Scientific research
Sport fishing
Tourism

22. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	+	
Private	+	+

23. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	+
Tourism	+	+
Recreation	+	+
Current scientific research	+	
Commercial forestry		+
Fishing: recreational/sport	+	+
Arable agriculture (unspecified)		+
Grazing (unspecified)	+	+

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)	+	
Land owned by a non-governmental organisation for nature conservation	+	+
Management agreement	+	+
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	+	

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.

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) study into the habitat characteristics of the loch in relation to the presence and breeding success of Slavonian grebe *Podiceps auritus*.

Observation hide maintained by the RSPB.

28. Current conservation education:

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

The Royal Society Protection of Birds provides interpretative facilities on its reserve and organises educational visits for local schools and visiting groups

29. Current recreation and tourism:

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

Activities.

Swimming, birdwatching, picnicking, trout angling.

Facilities provided.

14 boats are available for trout angling.

Seasonality.

Birdwatching, fishing and general recreational activities in summer.

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

Anon. (1995) *Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report. Volume 2: Action plans*. HMSO, London

Benn, S (2003) Conserving Scotland's Slavonian grebes. *British Wildlife*, **15**(1), 25-30

Chandler, TJ & Gregory, S (eds.) (1976) *The climate of the British Isles*. Longman, London

Pollard, M & MacLennan, A (1996) *Loch Ruthven management plan*. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Edinburgh

Stewart, A, Pearman, DA & Preston, CD (eds.) (1994) *Scarce plants in Britain*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough

Summers, RW & Mavor, RA (1995) Occupation patterns of lochs by Slavonian grebes in Scotland. *Scottish Birds*, **18**(1), 65-70

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