

# EC Directive 92/43 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora

## Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name:	North Pennine Moors
Unitary Authority/County:	Cumbria, Durham, Northumberland, North Yorkshire
SAC status:	Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference:	SE137749
SAC EU code:	UK0030033
Area (ha):	103109.42
Component SSSI:	Allendale Moors SSSI, Arkengarthdale, Gunnerside and Reeth Moors SSSI, Bollihope, Pikestone, Eggleston and Woodland Fells SSSI, Bowes Moor SSSI, Cotherstone Moor SSSI, East Nidderdale Moors (Flamstone Pin - High Ruckles) SSSI, Geltsdale and Glendue Fells SSSI, Hexhamshire Moors SSSI, Lovely Seat - Stainton Moor SSSI, Lune Forest SSSI, Mallerstang - Swaledale Head SSSI, Muggleswick, Stanhope, Edmundbyers Commons and Blanchland Moor SSSI, West Nidderdale, Barden and Blubberhouses Moors SSSSI, Whitfield Moor, Plenmeller and Ashholme Common SSSI

### Site description:

The North Pennine Moors hold much of the upland heathland of northern England. The most abundant heath communities are heather – wavy hair-grass *Calluna vulgaris* – *Deschampsia flexuosa* heath and heather – bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* heath. At higher altitudes and to the wetter west and north of the site complex, the heaths grade into extensive areas of blanket bog. A significant proportion of the bog remains active with accumulating peat. The main type is heather – hare’s-tail cottongrass *Eriophorum vaginatum* blanket mire. The site contains other wetland habitats including wet heaths and calcium-rich fens, which support populations of yellow marsh saxifrage *Saxifraga hirculus*. Tufa-forming springs are localised in occurrence, but where the habitat does occur it is species-rich with abundant bryophytes, sedges and herbs including bird’s-eye primrose *Primula farinosa* and marsh valerian *Valeriana dioica*.

Acidic rock outcrops and scree are well-scattered across the North Pennine Moors and support a range of lichens and bryophytes, such as *Racomitrium lanuginosum*, and species like stiff sedge *Carex bigelowii* and fir clubmoss *Huperzia selago*. The site also contains base-rich rocks that support calcicole crevice vegetation communities.

Birk Gill Wood (within East Nidderdale SSSI) is an example of western acidic oak woodland in a sheltered river valley. It supports rich bryophyte and lichen communities under a canopy of sessile oak *Quercus petraea*, birch *Betula* sp. and rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*. The slopes are boulder-strewn, with mixtures of heather, bilberry and moss carpets in the ground flora. The North Pennine Moors includes one major stand of juniper *Juniperus communis* scrub in Swaledale as well as a number of small and isolated localities. The Swaledale site grades into heathland and bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* but there is a core area of juniper woodland with scattered rowan and birch.

In addition, the North Pennine Moors contain important areas of calcareous grassland, montane acid grassland and grasslands on soils rich in heavy metals, such as old lead mines.

**Qualifying habitats:** The site is designated under **article 4(4)** of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Alkaline fens. (Calcium-rich springwater-fed fens)
- Blanket bogs\*
- Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae*. (Grasslands on soils rich in heavy metals)
- Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation. (Plants in crevices in base-rich rocks)
- European dry heaths
- *Juniperus communis* formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands. (Juniper on heaths or calcareous grasslands)
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*. (Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath)
- Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles. (Western acidic oak woodland)
- Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*). (Hard-water springs depositing lime)\*
- Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*). (Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone)
- Siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands. (Montane acid grasslands)
- Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation. (Plants in crevices on acid rocks)
- Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*). (Acidic scree)

**Qualifying species:** The site is designated under **article 4(4)** of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:

- Marsh saxifrage *Saxifraga hirculus*

Annex I priority habitats are denoted by an asterisk (\*).

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for Great Britain.

Register reference number: UK0030033

Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: 

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs