

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

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name:	River Tweed
Unitary Authority/County:	Northumberland, Scottish Borders
SAC status:	English part designated on 1 April 2005 Scottish part designated on 17 March 2005
Grid reference:	NT503338
SAC EU code:	UK0012691
Area (ha):	3797.41
Component SSSI:	Abbey St Bathans Woodlands SSSI, Kirkhope Linns SSSI, Lennel, Charley's Brae SSSI, Riskinhope SSSI, River Tweed SSSI, Tweed Catchment Rivers – England: Lower Tweed and Whiteadder SSSI, Tweed Catchment Rivers – England: Till Catchment SSSI, Tweed River SSSI

Site description:

The River Tweed drains a large catchment on the east coast of the UK, with sub-catchments in both Scotland and England. It shows a strong nutrient gradient along its length, with oligotrophic (nutrient-poor) conditions in its headwaters, and nutrient-rich lowland conditions just before it enters the sea at Berwick. The river has a high ecological diversity which reflects the mixed geology of the catchment. Stream water-crowfoot *Ranunculus penicillatus* ssp. *pseudofluitans*, a species of southern rivers and streams, here occurs at its most northerly location as does fan-leaved water-crowfoot *R. circinatus*, along with river water-crowfoot *R. fluitans*, common water-crowfoot *R. aquatilis*, pond water-crowfoot *R. peltatus* and a range of hybrids.

The fish fauna of the river is one of the richest in Great Britain. The Tweed supports a very large, high-quality Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar* population with large seasonal migrations: one run in the spring and a larger one in the autumn. The high proportion of the River Tweed accessible to salmon, and the variety of habitat conditions in the river, has resulted in it supporting the full range of salmon life-history types, with sub-populations of spring, summer salmon and grilse all being present. Salmon require clean gravel beds for spawning. The presence of brook *Lampetra planeri*, river *Lampetra fluviatilis* and sea lampreys *Petromyzon marinus* throughout the catchment is also important. These species prefer the lower gradient, fast flowing rivers with boulders as spawning grounds and the juveniles show preference for silty areas in slower flowing waters.

The extensive water and riparian habitats of the Tweed provide conditions suitable for all necessary aspects of otters' *Lutra lutra* life cycles. The extensive tributary burns provide good feeding habitat.

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:

- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation. (Rivers with floating vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot)

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:

- Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*
- Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*
- Otter *Lutra lutra*
- River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*
- Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*

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

Register reference number: UK0012691

Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: *Trevor Salmon*

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