

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

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Braunton Burrows
Unitary Authority/County: Devon
SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference: SS451348
SAC EU code: UK0012570
Area (ha): 1346.64
Component SSSI: Braunton Burrows SSSI

Site description:

Braunton Burrows is one of the largest dune systems in Britain, about 5 km long and 1.5 km wide, with lime-rich dunes up to 30 m high, and an extensive system of variably-flooded slacks, grassland and scrub, inland of a wide sandy foreshore. The foreshore consists mainly of sandy flats, rich in lime from broken seashells, with some intertidal shingle grading to silt in the adjacent estuary. The fore and mid dunes are classic “yellow” dunes, colonised and stabilised mainly by marram grass *Ammophila arenaria*. Inland of these are fixed “grey” dunes, on which the marram tends to be replaced by other grasses, including dune fescue *Vulpia membranacea*. Between the dunes are slacks which flood according to rainfall and support a large population of petalwort *Petalophyllum ralfsii*. Grassland, or ‘dune pasture’, carries a rich mixture of grasses, sedges and herbs. It tends to be invaded by scrub of native willows *Salix spp*, privet *Ligustrum vulgare* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., and introduced sea buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides*.

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:

- Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes). (Dune grassland)*
- Dunes with *Salix repens* ssp. *argentea* (*Salicion arenariae*). (Dunes with creeping willow)
- Humid dune slacks
- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide. (Intertidal mudflats and sandflats)
- Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes). (Shifting dunes with marram)

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:

- Petalwort *Petalophyllum ralfsii*

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: UK0012570
Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: *Trevor Salmon*

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