

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 Northumberland Dunes
Unitary Authority/County:	Northumberland
SAC status:	Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference:	NU126435
SAC EU code:	UK0017097
Area (ha):	1147.56
Component SSSI:	Alnmouth Saltmarsh and Dunes SSSI, Bamburgh Coast and Hills SSSI, Bamburgh Dunes SSSI, Lindisfarne SSSI, Newton Links SSSI, Warkworth Dunes and Saltmarsh SSSI

Site description:

This site consists of a number of dune systems on the north-east coast of England. The embryonic shifting dune vegetation is both extensive and varied, with examples of all the main embryonic dune types. Lyme-grass *Leymus arenarius* communities are particularly strongly represented, but sand couch *Elytrigia juncea* communities and strandline species are also present. Most of the dune systems are accreting and forming suitable conditions for the development of shifting dunes with marram. Climbing dunes can occur on steep rocky coasts, as found at Bamburgh.

The site also includes extensive calcareous fixed dunes locally grading into more acidic fixed dune vegetation and dune heath. Bloody crane's-bill *Geranium sanguineum* is prominent in this habitat. Creeping willow *Salix repens* ssp. *argentea* dominates the more mature dune slacks on Holy Island and at Ross Links, and a number of rare plant species are associated with this type of vegetation. Holy Island also contains a number of calcareous, species-rich dune slacks, which support rare species, such as coralroot *Corallorhiza trifida*, Lindisfarne helleborine *Epipactis sancta* and seaside centaury *Centaureum littorale*. Active slack formation is continuing at this site and a range of successional stages are present. The humid dune slacks of nearby Ross Links contain vegetation typical of more acidic conditions. The site as a whole contains an exceptional range of humid dune slack vegetation types. Petalwort *Petalophyllum ralfsii* has been recorded from Holy Island and from two locations on the mainland.

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)
- Embryonic shifting dunes
- Humid dune slacks
- 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: UK0017097

Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: *Trew Salmon*

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