

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

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Great Yews
Unitary Authority/County: Wiltshire
SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference: SU119232
SAC EU code: UK0012770
Area (ha): 28.71
Component SSSI: Great Yews SSSI

Site description:

This site includes an extensive area of almost pure yew *Taxus baccata* and contains many large individual trees. It is situated on the Upper Chalk south of Salisbury. It is unusual in lying on gently sloping ground – most yew woods being on steep slopes – and also in having a long history as an area of yew. The site is important for the presence of about 300 old trees. It probably originated as yew wood following beech *Fagus sylvatica* or ash *Fraxinus excelsior*. It has some regeneration and so has the full structural and functional range expected of yew stands.

Scattered amongst the yews are isolated mature ash and pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* with the occasional whitebeam *Sorbus aria* and patches of ash regeneration. Shrubs are very sparse under the yews but dense, species-rich scrub occurs on the edges of the wood. Few herbaceous plants exist beneath the yews but a number occur under the broadleaved trees and alongside the rides. These include nettle-leaved bellflower *Campanula trachelium*, woodruff *Galium odoratum* and early purple orchid *Orchis mascula*. Ferns are well represented.

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:

- *Taxus baccata* woods of the British Isles (yew-dominated woodland).*

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: UK0012770

Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: *Trevor Salmon*

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