

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds Special Protection Area (SPA)

Name: Porton Down

Unitary Authority/County: Wiltshire, Hampshire.

Site description: Porton Down is situated on the Hampshire/Wiltshire border in the Test Valley and Salisbury districts of southern England. The SPA is coincident with the Porton Down Site of Special Scientific Interest. It consists of an extensive area of chalk grassland with scrub and woodland, and is one of the largest uninterrupted tracts of semi-natural chalk grassland in the UK. It is important for downland breeding birds and supports important numbers of Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicanus*.

Size of SPA: The SPA covers an area of 1,562.32 ha.

Qualifying species:

The site qualifies under **article 4.1** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain population of the following species listed in Annex I in any season:

Annex I species	Count and season	Period	% of GB population
Stone Curlew <i>Burhinus oedicanus</i>	20 pairs - breeding	5 year mean 1995 - 1999	10.6%

Bird counts from: Stone Curlew Species Recovery Project Reports


Non-qualifying species of interest

The SPA is used by non-breeding hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*, merlin *Falco columbarius* and short-eared owl *Asio flammeus* (all species listed in Annex I to the EC Birds Directive) in numbers of less than European importance (less than 1% of the GB population).

Status of SPA:

- 1) Porton Down was classified as a Special Protection Area on 3 July 1992.
- 2) An extension to the Porton Down SPA was classified on 3 December 2007.

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for Great Britain.
Register reference number: UK9011101
Date of registration: 3 December 2007

Signed: 

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