

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

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Winterton – Horsey Dunes
Unitary Authority/County: Norfolk
SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference: TG491204
SAC EU code: UK0013043
Area (ha): 425.94
Component SSSI: Winterton – Horsey Dunes SSSI

Site description:

This site consists of an extensive dune system supporting acidic plant communities. It contains well-developed areas of dune heath, slacks and dune grassland merging into grazing marsh and downy birch *Betula pubescens* woodland.

The seaward edge of the dunes is well vegetated with marram *Ammophila arenaria* and lyme-grass *Leymus arenarius*. The older, grey dunes support a more diverse flora with frequent sand sedge *Carex arenaria*, sheep's-fescue *Festuca ovina*, common polypody *Polypodium vulgare* and narrow buckler-fern *Dryopteris carthusiana*. Three rare grasses are present in abundance; grey hair-grass *Corynephorus canescens*, rush-leaved fescue *Festuca juncifolia* and purple marram *X Calammophila baltica*. A notable assemblage of bryophytes and lichens occurs on these acidic dunes. Dune heath has developed on the landward side with heather *Calluna vulgaris*, bell heather *Erica cinerea*, cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix* and bog-moss *Sphagnum* spp in the damper hollows. Because of their acidic soils, the dune slacks support swamp and mire communities with notable species including royal fern *Osmunda regalis* and common wintergreen *Pyrola rotundifolia*. In addition to small areas of typical dune slack vegetation characterised by creeping willow *Salix repens* ssp. *argentea* with the moss *Calliergon cuspidatum* and Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*.

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:

- Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (*Calluno-Ulicetea*) (coastal dune heathland).*
- Embryonic shifting dunes.
- Humid dune slacks.
- Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) (shifting dunes with marram).

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: UK0013043
Date of registration: 14 June 2005
Signed: *Trevor Salmon*
On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs