

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

## Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

**Name:** Tweed Estuary  
**Unitary Authority/County:** Northumberland  
**SAC status:** Designated on 1 April 2005  
**Grid reference:** NT993531  
**SAC EU code:** UK0030292  
**Area (ha):** 155.93  
**Component SSSI:** Tweed Estuary SSSI

### Site description:

The Tweed Estuary is a complex estuary, which discharges into the North Sea. It is a long narrow estuary, which is still largely natural and undisturbed, with excellent water quality throughout. At its mouth there are substantial sandbanks and some areas of rocky shore. Further upstream, large areas of estuarine boulders and cobbles overlies sediment flats and extend into subtidal areas of the channel. Sheltered estuarine mud and sandflats occur away from the fast-flowing river channel. A wide range of intertidal sediments occurs within the estuary. These range from exposed east-facing sandy shores at the estuary mouth, including its sheltering sand-spit, to muddy gravels where the river is actively eroding the banks. The most exposed sandy shores are subject both to wave action and, in places, the scouring action of the out-flowing river; their mobile infauna (mainly crustaceans such as *Eurydice pulchra* and *Bathyporeia* spp. and a few polychaetes) and ephemeral algae reflect these conditions. Species and habitat diversity rises with increasing shelter, until increasingly low-salinity estuarine conditions upstream lead to naturally low infaunal diversity, dominated by characteristic species that are tolerant of brackish-water conditions. Fish species include migratory Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*, river lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis* and sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*.

**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:

- Estuaries
- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide. (Intertidal mudflats and sandflats)

**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:

- River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*
- Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for Great Britain.

Register reference number: UK0030292

Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: *Trew Salmon*

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