

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

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Hartslock Wood
Unitary Authority/County: Oxfordshire
SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference: SU619789
SAC EU code: UK0030164
Area (ha): 34.24
Component SSSI: Hartslock SSSI

Site description:


The steep slopes of this site above the River Thames on the chalk of the Chilterns comprise a mosaic of chalk grassland, chalk scrub and broadleaved woodland, and one of the few examples of ancient yew *Taxus baccata* wood in the Chilterns. The chalk grassland consists mainly of close-grazed, species-rich turf dominated by sheep's-fescue *Festuca ovina* with areas of taller, coarser grass dominated by upright brome *Bromopsis erecta*, downy oat-grass *Helictotrichon pubescens* and tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum*. The site supports one of only three UK populations of monkey orchid *Orchis simia*.

Storms and landslips have resulted in a diverse age-structure for the yew population. Open patches show a rich flora including local species such as southern wood-rush *Luzula forsteri*, wood barley *Hordelymus europaeus* and narrow-lipped helleborine *Epipactis leptochila*.

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:

- Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*) (important orchid sites). (Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone, including important orchid sites)*
- *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: UK0030164
Date of registration: 14 June 2005
Signed: 
On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs