

46. Rutland Water

Geographical Coordinates 52°39'N 0°39'W

Area 1,339ha

Location Approximately 30km east of the city of Leicester, in the county of Leicestershire, central eastern England.

Date of Ramsar Designation 4 October 1991.

Other International Designations Special Protection Area under EC Directive 79/409.

National Designations Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Principal Features A very large artificial, freshwater reservoir, fringed by a mosaic of wetland habitats which display succession from open water to semi-natural mature woodland. The most interesting semi-terrestrial habitats occur mainly at the western end of the lake and include lagoons, reed swamp, marsh and damp meadows. Stands of *Phragmites* and *Typha* have been planted in shallow parts of the lagoons, whilst deeper areas support *Potamogeton*, *Elodea* and *Myriophyllum*. Counts of wintering water birds regularly exceed 20,000 individuals (21,427*), including internationally important numbers* of *Anas strepera* (1,498) and *A. clypeata* (511) and nationally important numbers of several other Anatidae. The area is also of regional importance for breeding and passage birds. About 15km of shoreline at the western end of the lake are managed as a nature reserve by the Leicestershire and Rutland Trust for Nature Conservation. (3a,3b,3c)

*All figures are average peak counts for the fives winters 1987/88 to 1991/92.

Conservation Issues The implementation of a planned zonation policy to integrate nature conservation with recreational activities has proved extremely successful. However, there is pressure to increase recreational use of the reservoir and careful monitoring is required to ensure that no conflicts arise. In recent years, late-summer blooms of blue-green algae have been controlled with chemicals. The impact of such control measures on the reservoir's invertebrates (and hence water birds) is unknown but is the subject of ongoing research and monitoring.