
RAMSAR INFORMATION SHEET

FOR WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Site reference number 7UK100
1 Compilation date Feb 2000
2 Country UK (England)
3 Name of wetland Breydon Water
4 Site centre location: Latitude: 52 35 03 N Longitude: 01 37 18 E
5 Altitude 0.0m
6 Area (ha) 1202.94

7 Overview

This site is an inland tidal estuary at the mouth of the River Yare and its confluence with the Rivers Bure and Waveney. It has extensive areas of mud flats that are exposed at low tide and these form the only tidal flats on the east coast of Norfolk. Breydon Water is internationally important for wintering waterfowl.

8 Wetland type Inland wetland, Marine/coastal wetland

Code	Name	% Area
F	Estuarine waters	4
G	Tidal flats	38
H	Salt marshes	3
J	Coastal brackish / saline lagoons	5
Sp	Saline / brackish marshes: permanent	50

9 Ramsar Criteria 5, 6
10 Map of the site ✓
11 Compiler Joint Nature Conservation Committee
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12 Justification of criteria

Ramsar criterion 5

Internationally important waterfowl assemblage (greater than 20,000 birds)

Ramsar criterion 6

Over winter the site regularly supports internationally important numbers of: Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* and Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

13 General location

Nearest town/city: Great Yarmouth

The estuary is located adjacent to and west of Great Yarmouth on the east coast of Norfolk.

Administrative Region: Norfolk

14 Physical Features

Soil & Geology	alluvium, basic, clay, mud, nutrient-rich, sedimentary
Geomorphology and Landscape	coastal, estuary, floodplain, intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat),

	lowland, valley
Nutrient status	highly eutrophic
pH	no information
Salinity	brackish / mixosaline
Soil	mainly mineral
Water permanence	usually permanent
Summary of main climatic features	Rainy, temperate climate with a mild winter and periodic frost. Mean minimum temperature approximately 7.8°C. Mean maximum temperature approximately 14.7°C. Mean annual precipitation approximately 548.7mm, with a winter maximum.

15 Hydrological values

Sediment trapping, Flood water storage / desynchronisation of flood peaks

16 Ecological features

The main habitat types of Breydon water are intertidal mud, saltmarsh, flood embankments, brackish and improved grasslands and saline ditches.

The site is largely an intertidal estuary with transition from beds of eel grass *Zostera spp*, mudflats, lower, mid, and upper saltmarsh. This transition is interrupted by earth flood embankments.

Behind the flood embankments are examples of brackish grassland and ditches.

17 Noteworthy flora

Nationally important species occurring on the site

Higher Plants:

Alopecurus bulbosus, *Althaea officinalis*, *Bupleurum tenuissimum*, *Carex divisa*, *Hordeum marinum*, *Puccinellia fasciculata*, *Puccinellia rupestris*, *Zostera marina*, *Zostera noltii*.

18 Noteworthy fauna

Birds

Species occurring at levels of international importance (as identified at designation):

Over winter the area regularly supports:

Bewick's Swan, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* 391 individuals, representing an average of 2.3% of the population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)
(Western Siberia/Northeastern & Northwestern Europe)

Lapwing, *Vanellus vanellus* 24940 individuals, representing an average of 1.2% of the GB population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)
(Europe (breeding))

Assemblage of international importance:

Over winter the area regularly supports:

43225 waterfowl (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

Species currently occurring at levels of national importance:

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

Common Tern, *Sterna hirundo* 155 pairs, representing an average of 1.3% of the GB population (Four year mean 1992-1994 & 1996)
(Northern/Eastern Europe (breeding))

On passage the area regularly supports:

Ruff, *Philomachus pugnax*
(Western Africa (wintering))

54 individuals, representing an average of 7.7% of the Great Britain passage population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

Over winter the area regularly supports:

Avocet, *Recurvirostra avosetta*
(Western Europe/Western Mediterranean
(breeding))

33 individuals, representing an average of 3.3% of the GB population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

Black-tailed Godwit, *Limosa limosa islandica*
(Iceland (breeding))

240 individuals, representing an average of 3.4% of the GB population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax carbo*
(Northwestern Europe)

139 individuals, representing an average of 1.1% of the GB population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

Golden Plover, *Pluvialis apricaria*
(Northwestern Europe (breeding))

5040 individuals, representing an average of 2% of the GB population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

Shoveler, *Anas clypeata*
(Northwestern/Central Europe)

140 individuals, representing an average of 1.4% of the GB population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

White-fronted Goose, *Anser albifrons albifrons*
(Northwestern Siberia/Northeastern &
Northwestern Europe)

164 individuals, representing an average of 2.7% of the GB population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

Wigeon, *Anas penelope*
(Western Siberia/Northwestern/Northeastern
Europe)

4320 individuals, representing an average of 1.5% of the GB population (Five year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

19 Social and Cultural Values

Aesthetic

Conservation education

Livestock grazing

Sport hunting

Tourism

Transportation/navigation

20 Land tenure/ownership

Ownership category	On-Site	Off-Site
Non-governmental organisation	+	+
Local authority, municipality etc.	+	
National/Crown estate	+	
Private	+	+

21 Current land use

Activity	On-Site	Off-Site	Scale
Nature conservation	+	+	Large-Scale
Tourism	+	+	Small-Scale

Recreation	+	+	Small-Scale
Research		+	Small-Scale
Fishing: recreational/sport		+	Small-Scale
Bait collection	+		Small-Scale
Permanent arable agriculture		+	Large-Scale
Livestock watering hole/pond	+		Small-Scale
Permanent pastoral agriculture	+	+	Small-Scale
Hay meadows		+	Small-Scale
Hunting: recreational/sport	+	+	Large-Scale
Industry	+	+	Small-Scale
Sewage treatment/disposal		+	Large-Scale
Harbour/port		+	Small-Scale
Flood control	+	+	Large-Scale
Transport route		+	Small-Scale

22 Adverse factors affecting the ecological character of the site

Activity	On-Site	Off-Site	Scale
Unspecified development: industry		+	Large-Scale

23 Conservation measures taken

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
SSSI	+	+
SPA	+	+
Candidate SAC		+
Land owned by a NGO for nature conservation	+	+
Management agreement	+	+
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	+
Other	+	+

24 Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented

see below

Site vulnerability and management statement

The Breydon Water estuary is a robust ecosystem, the most sensitive feature being the high tide roost at its northern end. However efficient drainage, recent droughts and poor water management systems have adversely affected the wet grassland part of the site (Halvergate Marshes). A Water Level Management Plan and a feasibility study to overcome the water resource problems have been completed, and it is hoped that a scheme will commence shortly with MAFF support. The Environmentally Sensitive Area scheme has helped to raise water levels and encouraged sensitive management, particularly of the ditches. Appropriate standards of flood defence are required for the wet grassland part of the site, works are currently underway via the Environment Agency Broads Strategy. Breydon Water and its hinterland lie within the Broads, one of the family of National Parks. As such, it is largely free from development pressures. Future pressure for development may arise around the site, associated with Great Yarmouth, but regulation of such plans is covered by the Habitats Regulations 1994.

25 Current scientific research/survey/monitoring and facilities

Fauna:

Numbers of migratory and wintering wildfowl and waders are monitored annually as part of the national Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS) organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Flora:

Botanical survey of the vegetation of the surrounding embankments and ditches.

26 Current conservation education

Two hides are located at the site. Located adjacent to the public footpath is an information board explaining the conservation and wildlife interest of the site.

27 Current recreation and tourism**Activities:**

Walking, birdwatching, wildfowling, boating sailing and water-skiing.

Facilities provided:

Two public bird hides.

Seasonality:

Wildfowling takes place only during a specified season during the winter. All other activities take place throughout the year.

28 Functional jurisdiction

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions

29 Management authority

English Nature

Norfolk Team

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30 Bibliography

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- Reference should also be made to Country Agencies Management Plans for sites that are within National Nature Reserves.