

CITATION

LOCHS CLUNIE AND MARLEE SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Perth and Kinross

Site code: 1080

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NO 114442

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 53
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 379, 381

AREA: 170.9 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Freshwater habitats: Mesotrophic loch
Freshwater habitats: Mesotrophic river/stream
Fens: Open water transition fen
Birds: Greylag goose *Anser anser*, non-breeding

DESCRIPTION:

Lochs Clunie and Marlee are situated 5 km to the west of Blairgowrie. The lochs form part of a chain of five kettle hole lochs along the Lunan Burn as it flows between Dunkeld and Blairgowrie before joining the River Isla. The lochs are of particular importance as examples of moderately nutrient rich, naturally mesotrophic lochs, a rare and decreasing habitat type in Britain. The site is also important for significant areas of transition fen, the Lunan Burn, which connects the two lochs, and a wintering population of greylag geese,

The aquatic flora of the lochs is exceptionally diverse. Several rare species of pondweed have been recorded, including slender-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton filiformis* and reddish pondweed *Potamogeton alpinus*. Of particular note is the internationally rare slender naiad *Najas flexilis*, which is found at only a limited number of lochs on the Scottish mainland.

The fen areas fringing the lochs are of considerable botanical interest, in particular an area to the north-west end of Loch Marlee where the influence of calcareous groundwater gives rise to very diverse intermediate fen vegetation. The fen vegetation includes a wide range of habitats from the marginal vegetation in the lochs and Lunan Burn through to wet woodland.

The Lunan Burn, linking the two lochs, is of national importance and is the best example of a lowland river in Perth and Kinross. It is particularly notable because of its lack of management disturbance and the diversity of its plant community.

Greylag geese roost on the lochs over winter, with most being on Loch Clunie.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949: 1955 and 1972.

Re-notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981: 19 April 1985

Notification reviewed under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004: 25 March 2011

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 178.3 ha).

Lochs Clunie and Marlee SSSI is part of the Dunkeld - Blairgowrie Lochs Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Most of Lochs Clunie and Marlee SSSI also overlaps part of the River Tay SAC. These SACs are designated for the European habitats and species listed below:

Dunkeld - Blairgowrie Lochs SAC

Habitats: Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels
Very wet mires often identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface

Species: Slender naiad *Najas flexilis*
Otter *Lutra lutra*

River Tay SAC

Habitats: Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels

Species: Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*
Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*
River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*
Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*
Otter *Lutra lutra*