

**CITATION****WICK RIVER MARSHES  
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST  
Highland (Caithness)**

Site code: 1639

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: ND 309525

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 12  
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 450

AREA: 69.24 hectares

**NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES****Biological: Fens: Flood-plain fen****DESCRIPTION**

Wick River Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is situated on the south bank of the Wick River approximately 5km inland from the town of Wick. The site has a nationally important area of natural wetland vegetation and is one of the best examples of this type of vegetation in Caithness.

This land adjacent to the Wick River is a low-lying, wet, flood plain, frequently affected by flooding during the winter. The fen and swamp communities form one of the most important wetland sites in Caithness due to the extent of the wetland and the species that it supports. The low-lying ground, pools, ditches and meanders of the Wick River support fen and swamp dominated by sedges and rushes. Good stands of water sedge *Carex aquatilis*, which is locally uncommon, and the rare estuarine sedge *Carex recta*, a species recorded at only two other places in Britain, occur on the wetter ground. At the edge of the river and pools there are areas of branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum* and reed-canary grass *Phalaris arundinacea*. Other parts of the fen are dominated by meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and globe flower *Trollius europaeus*. There are also large areas of marshy grassland with rushes *Juncus spp.* and tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*.

**NOTIFICATION HISTORY**

First notified under the 1981 Act: 10 April 1984

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 4 February 2010

**REMARKS**

Measured area of site corrected (from 67 ha).