

CITATION

INNER CLYDE SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Argyll and Bute / Renfrewshire / West Dunbartonshire / Inverclyde

Site code: 1701

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NS 312811 to NS 494698 (North shore)
NS 300766 to NS 492696 (South shore)

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 63 & 64
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 341, 342 & 347

AREA: 1,824.92 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Coastlands: Saltmarsh

Biological: Birds: Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (non-breeding)

Biological: Birds: Eider *Somateria mollissima* (non-breeding)

Biological: Birds: Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* (non-breeding)

Biological: Birds: Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* (non-breeding)

Biological: Birds: Red-breasted merganser *Mergus serrator* (non-breeding)

Biological: Birds: Red-throated diver *Gavia stellata* (non-breeding)

Biological: Birds: Redshank *Tringa totanus* (non-breeding)

DESCRIPTION

The Inner Clyde Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) contains the intertidal zone of the Clyde estuary from Clydebank in the east to a line between Helensburgh on the north shore and Greenock on the south shore. The seaward boundary of the site extends as far as Mean Low Water Springs. The site is the most northerly of Britain's large west coast estuaries used by migrating birds, and is of national importance for its populations of wintering wildfowl and waders and of European importance for its wintering population of redshank. The site also supports a variety of typical estuarine plant communities with good examples of transitions from saltmarshes to brackish swamps and grassland periodically inundated with sea water.

The site provides the largest example in west central Scotland of grazed and ungrazed upper saltmarsh with relatively uninterrupted transitions to swamp and grassland vegetation. These transitions are absent from many of the major British estuaries where historical land-claim has led to their disappearance. The most extensive areas of saltmarsh, covering approximately 76 hectares, are found on the north shore between Milton Island and Dumbarton, and on the south shore at Newshot Island and Longhaugh Point. There is also a small area at Ardmore Point. In these areas the low marsh (seaward) vegetation, which is covered at almost every tide, contains large areas of the nationally scarce dwarf eelgrass *Zostera noltei*.

The Inner Clyde regularly supports nationally important wintering populations of several species of waterfowl, including redshank, red-throated diver, cormorant, eider, goldeneye, red-breasted merganser and oystercatcher. Principal roosting sites are at Ardmore, Dumbarton, Cardross, Milton Island, Longhaugh Point to West Ferry, and Newshot Island.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

Part notified under the 1949 Act: Ardmore Point SSSI in 1955

Part notified under the 1949 Act: Erskine to Langbank SSSI in 1972 and 1975

Part re-notified under the 1981 Act: Ardmore Point SSSI on 22 March 1983

Part re-notified under the 1981 Act: Erskine to Langbank SSSI on 29 October 1984

Part notified under the 1981 Act: Dumbuck Foreshore to Pillar Bank SSSI on 11 November 1983

First notified under the 1981 Act as Inner Clyde SSSI: 21 June 1999

(At confirmation on 16 March 2000 there was a 6.74 ha decrease in area.)

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 3 August 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected from 1,826.02 ha (intertidal area).

Inner Clyde SSSI is designated as the Inner Clyde Special Protection Area (SPA) for the birds listed below:

Birds: redshank *Tringa totanus* (non-breeding)