

CITATION**CASTLE SEMPLE AND BARR LOCHS
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**
Renfrewshire

Site code: 346

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NS 360585

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 63
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 341

AREA: 267.61 hectares (ha)

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES**Biological: Freshwater habitats: Eutrophic loch**
Biological: Birds: Breeding bird assemblage**DESCRIPTION**

Barr Loch and Castle Semple Loch lie immediately adjacent to Lochwinnoch - to the south and east of the village respectively. These water bodies form one of only two semi-natural eutrophic loch systems in west central Scotland and together with their surrounding habitats they support an important wetland breeding bird assemblage.

The eutrophic lochs support extensive aquatic and semi-aquatic plant communities dominated by water sedge *Carex aquatilis*, reed canary-grass *Phalaris arundinacea*, water horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile* and tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*. Wetland communities also extend into Aird Meadow where a number of uncommon plant species occur including the Nationally Scarce tufted loosestrife *Lysimachia thysiflora* and the threatened lesser butterfly orchid *Platanthera bifolia*. The Nationally Scarce eight-stamened waterwort *Elatine hydropiper* occurs in both lochs.

The lochs are separated by the marshland vegetation of Aird Meadow and are surrounded by a number of fringing woodland and willow carr areas – all of which provide nesting habitat for a wide range of breeding bird species including great-crested grebe, teal, shoveler, tufted duck and water rail.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1953

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 28 June 1985, with a 3 hectare net increase in area.

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 1 April 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected from 272.9 hectares.