

Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild birds (this is the codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended)

CITATION FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA)

FIRTH OF TAY AND EDEN ESTUARY (UK9004121)

Site Description:

The Firth of Tay and Eden Estuary SPA is a complex of estuarine and coastal habitats in eastern Scotland from the mouth of the River Earn in the inner Firth of Tay, east to Barry Sands on the Angus coast and St Andrews on the Fife coast. For much of its length the main channel of the estuary lies close to the southern shore and the most extensive intertidal flats are on the north side, west of Dundee. In Monifieth Bay, to the east of Dundee, the substrate becomes sandier and there are also mussel beds. The south shore consists of fairly steeply shelving mud and shingle. The Inner Tay Estuary is particularly noted for the continuous dense stands of common reed along its northern shore. These reedbeds, inundated during high tides, are amongst the largest in Britain. Eastwards, as conditions become more saline, there are areas of saltmarsh, a relatively scarce habitat in eastern Scotland.

The boundary of the SPA is contained within the following Sites of Special Scientific Interest: Inner Tay Estuary, Monifieth Bay, Barry Links, Tayport -Tentsmuir Coast and Eden Estuary.

Qualifying Interest N.B All figures relate to numbers at the time of classification:

The Firth of Tay and Eden Estuary SPA qualifies under **Article 4.1** by regularly supporting populations of European importance of the **Annex I** species: **marsh harrier** *Circus aeruginosus* (1992 to 1996, an average of 4 females, 3% of the GB population); **little tern** *Sternula albifrons* (1993 to 1997, an average of 25 pairs, 1% of the GB population) and **bar-tailed godwit** *Limosa lapponica* (1990/91 to 1994/95, a winter peak mean of 2,400 individuals, 5% of the GB population).

The Firth of Tay and Eden Estuary SPA further qualifies under **Article 4.2** by regularly supporting populations of European importance of the **migratory** species: **redshank** *Tringa totanus* (1990/91 to 1994/95, a winter peak mean of 1,800 individuals, 1% of the Eastern Atlantic biogeographic population); **greylag goose** *Anser anser* (1990/91 to 1994/95 a winter peak mean of 1,200 individuals, 1% of the Iceland/UK/Ireland biogeographic population) and **pink-footed goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus* (1990/91 to 1994/95 a winter peak mean of 2,800 individuals, 1% of the Eastern Greenland/Iceland/UK biogeographic population).

The Firth of Tay and Eden Estuary SPA also qualifies under **Article 4.2** by regularly supporting **in excess of 20,000 individual waterfowl**. During the period 1990/91 to 1994/95 a winter peak mean of 48,000 individual waterfowl was recorded, comprising 28,000 wildfowl and 20,000 waders, including nationally important populations of the following species: **velvet scoter** *Melanitta fusca* (730 individuals,

24% of the GB population); **pink-footed goose** (2,800 individuals, 1% of the GB population); **greylag goose** (1,200 individuals, 1% of the GB population); **redshank** (1,800 individuals, 2% of the GB population); **cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo* (230 individuals, 2% of the GB population); **shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna* (1,200 individuals, 2% of the GB population); **eider** *Somateria mollissima* (13,800 individuals, 18% of the GB population); **bar-tailed godwit** (2,400 individuals); **common scoter** *Melanitta nigra* (3,100 individuals, 9% of the GB population); **black-tailed godwit** *Limosa limosa islandica* (150 individuals, 2% of the GB population); **goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula* (230 individuals, 1% of the GB population); **red-breasted merganser** *Mergus serrator* (470 individuals, 5% of the GB population); **goosander** *Mergus merganser* (220 individuals, 2% of the GB population); **oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus* (5,100 individuals, 1% of the GB population); **grey plover** *Pluvialis squatarola* (920 individuals, 2% of the GB population); **sanderling** *Calidris alba* (220 individuals, 1% of the GB population); **dunlin** *Calidris alpina alpina* (5,200 individuals, 1% of the GB population) and **long-tailed duck** *Clangula hyemalis* (560 individuals, 2% of the GB population).

Area: 6947.62 ha

National Grid Reference: NO295247

OS Sheets 1:50 000 – 53, 54, 58, 59

Classified on 2 February 2000

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