

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild

**SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA) CITATION  
FOR PUBLIC ISSUE**

**NORTH SUTHERLAND COASTAL ISLANDS, HIGHLAND (UK9001211)**

**Site Description:**

North Sutherland Coastal Islands Special Protection Area (SPA) comprises two small islands off the north coast of Sutherland; Eilean nan Ron off the Kyle of Tongue and Eilean Hoan at the mouth of Loch Eriboll. These islands have a rocky coastline and are covered by maritime heath and grassland. The boundary of the SPA follows those of Eilean nan Ron SSSI and Eilean Hoan SSSI.

**Qualifying Interest:**

North Sutherland Coastal Islands SPA qualifies under Article 4.1 by regularly supporting an internationally important wintering population of Greenland barnacle geese *Branta leucopsis* (1992/93-96/97 winter peak mean of 631 individuals, 2% of GB & total world breeding populations). These two islands have supported an internationally important population of barnacle geese since the 1950s. The birds roost and feed on both islands. They also feed on other small islands and on improved agricultural land on the mainland.

**Non-Qualifying Interest:**

North Sutherland Coastal Islands SPA supports a diverse assemblage of breeding seabirds (14 species), including a nationally important breeding population of great black-backed gull *Larus marinus* (470 pairs, 3% of GB).

Area: 219.6 ha

Grid Ref.: NC 445675, 638655

Latitude and Longitude: 58°34'07, 4°40'23; 58°33'25, 4°20'25

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Scottish Natural Heritage