

Eemoor Marsh SPA :

File ref:

**County:** Hampshire

**Site Name:** Eelmoor Marsh SSSI

**Status:** Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981

**Local Planning Authority:** Hampshire County Council, Rushmoor Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** SU 841533

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 186

**1:10,000:** SU 85 SW

**Area:** 65.94 (ha) 162.9 (ac)

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1978

**Date of Last Revision:** -

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 20 October 1984  
**Revision:** 29 January 1993

**Date of Last**

**Date confirmed:** 9 July 1993

**Other Information:**

#### **Reasons for Notification:**

Eelmoor Marsh is part of the formerly extensive heathland area near Aldershot, on the Tertiary deposits of the Thames Basin. The SSSI comprises a range of habitat types including an area of deep peat with structural affinities to a raised bog; the bog surface supports a vegetation dominated by purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, heather *Calluna vulgaris*, cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix*, deer grass *Scirpus cespitosus* and cottongrass *Eriophorum angustifolium*, with an extensive shrub layer of bog myrtle *Myrica gale*. Other habitats present within the SSSI include a network of ditches, areas of Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris* and birch *Betula* species and an area of species-rich grass heath.

The exceptionally rich acid bog flora supports at least 250 species of flowering plants and grasses and is of interest for its large populations of insectivorous plants such as common butterwort *Pinguicula vulgaris*, pale butterwort *P. lusitanica*, small bladderwort *Utricularia minor*, common sundew *Drosera rotundifolia* and long-leaved sundew *D. intermedia*.

The species-rich grass heath within the SSSI is of a type found in the New Forest but rare elsewhere in Hampshire. It is characterised by the presence of red fescue *Festuca rubra*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella*, heather *Calluna vulgaris* and dwarf gorse *Ulex minor*. A number of species considered indicative of agriculturally-unimproved grasslands have been recorded in this area including mat-grass *Nardus stricta*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*, meadow thistle *Cirsium dissectum*, purple moor-grass, lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica*, sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica*, carnation sedge *Carex panicea*, petty whin *Genista anglica*, heath grass *Danthonia decumbens*, pill sedge *Carex pilulifera*, saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*, green-winged orchid *Orchis morio* and adder's-tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*. Of particular interest is the large population of pale dog violet *Viola lactea*, a notable species, found here in its largest North Hampshire station. The occurrence of several species usually associated with calcareous soils is also of interest, for example, burnet saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga*.

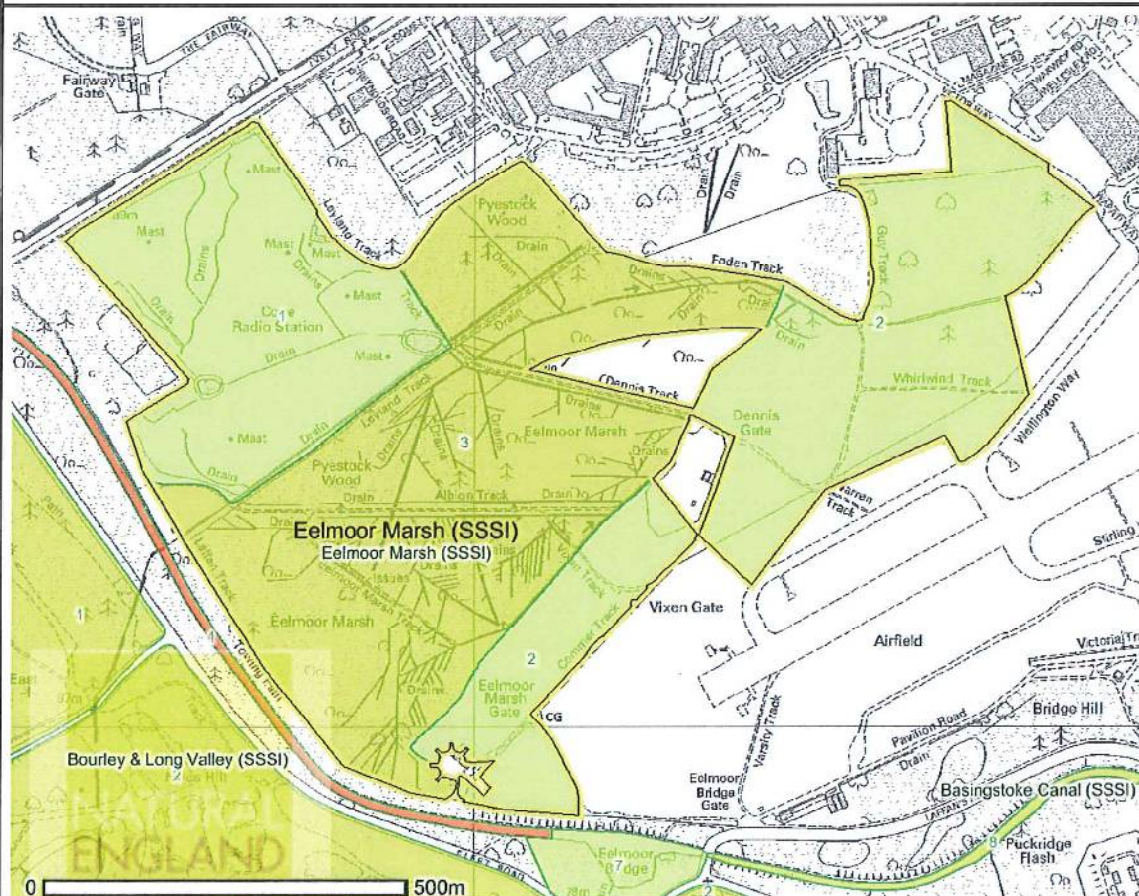
The variety of habitat types present within the SSSI is reflected by a correspondingly diverse invertebrate fauna. The boggy ditches within the SSSI support a number of breeding Odonata including the notable small red damselfly *Ceriagrion tenellum*. Eelmoor Marsh is also important as a feeding ground for the exceptionally rich dragonfly fauna of Eelmoor Flash, part of the adjacent Basingstoke Canal (Eelmoor) SSSI. The population of devil's-bit scabious within Eelmoor Marsh SSSI supports a colony of the marsh fritillary butterfly *Eurodryas aurinia* which is one of Britain's most rapidly declining butterfly species, due to drainage of its former habitats. Eelmoor Marsh SSSI is also important for its population of the silver-studded blue butterfly *Plebejus argus*.





# Nature on the Map

## My Map



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| ★ Natural England Offices                       | □ Sites of Special Scientific Interest |
| □ Selected Sites of Special Scientific Interest | □ Natural England Regions              |
| □ SSSI Live Management Agreements               | □ Natural England Area Teams           |
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|   | □ England                              |
| ■ Favourable Condition                          |  |
| ■ Unfavourable Recovering                       |  |
| ■ Unfavourable no change                        |  |
| ■ Unfavourable Declining                        |  |
| ■ Part Destroyed                                |  |
| ■ Destroyed                                     |  |
| ■ Not Assessed                                  |  |



## EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds Special Protection Area (SPA)

**Name:** Thames Basin Heaths

**Unitary Authority/County:** Bracknell Forest; Hampshire; Surrey; Windsor and Maidenhead.

**Site description:** The Thames Basin Heaths SPA is a composite site that is located across the counties of Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire in southern England. It encompasses all or parts of Ash to Brookwood Heaths Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Bourley and Long Valley SSSI, Bramshill SSSI, Broadmoor to Bagshot Woods and Heaths SSSI, Castle Bottom to Yateley and Hawley Commons SSSI, Chobham Common SSSI, Colony Bog and Bagshot Heaths SSSI, Eelmoor Marsh SSSI, Hazeley Heath SSSI, Horsell Common SSSI, Ockham and Wisley Commons SSSI, Sandhurst to Owlsmoor Bogs and Heaths SSSI and Whitmoor Common SSSI.

The open heathland habitats overlie sand and gravel sediments which give rise to sandy or peaty acidic soils, supporting dry heathy vegetation on well-drained slopes, wet heath on low-lying shallow slopes and bogs in valleys. The site consists of tracts of heathland, scrub and woodland, once almost continuous, but now fragmented into separate blocks by roads, urban development and farmland. Less open habitats of scrub, acidic woodland and conifer plantations dominate, within which are scattered areas of open heath and mire. The site supports important breeding populations of a number of birds of lowland heathland, especially nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* and woodlark *Lullula arborea*, both of which nest on the ground, often at the woodland/heathland edge, and Dartford warbler *Sylvia undata*, which often nests in gorse *Ulex* sp. Scattered trees and scrub are used for roosting.

Together with the nearby Ashdown Forest and Wealden Heaths SPAs, the Thames Basin Heaths form part of a complex of heathlands in southern England that support important breeding bird populations.

**Size of SPA:** The SPA covers an area of 8274.72 ha.

### Qualifying species:

The site qualifies under article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain populations of the following species listed in Annex I in any season:

Annex I species	Count and season	Period	% of GB population
Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	264 churring males – breeding	1998/99	7.8%
Woodlark <i>Lullula arborea</i>	149 pairs – breeding	1997	9.9%
Dartford warbler <i>Sylvia undata</i>	445 pairs – breeding	1999	27.8%

**Non-qualifying species of interest:** Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*, merlin *Falco columbarius*, short-eared owl *Asio flammeus* and kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* (all Annex I species) occur in non-breeding numbers of less than European importance (less than 1% of the GB population).

### Status of SPA:

Thames Basin Heaths was classified as a Special Protection Area on 9 March 2005.

This citation/map relates to a site entered in the Register of European sites for Great Britain.	
Register reference number.....	UK
Date of registration.....	9 March 2005
Signed.....	
On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	