Richmond Park SAC :

EC Directive 92/43 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name:	Richmond Park
Unitary Authority/County:	Greater London
SAC status:	Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference:	TQ199728
SAC EU code:	UK0030246
Area (ha):	846.68
Component SSSI:	Richmond Park SSSI

Site description:
Richmond Park has been managed as a royal deer park since the seventeenth century, producing a range of habitats of value to wildlife. In particular, Richmond Park is of importance for its diverse deadwood beetle fauna associated with the ancient trees found throughout the parkland. Many of these beetles are indicative of ancient forest areas where there has been a long continuous presence of over-mature timber. The site is at the heart of the south London centre of distribution for stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*.

Qualifying species: The site is designated under **article 4(4)** of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following species listed in Annex II:

- Stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for Great Britain.
Register reference number: UK0030246
Date of registration: 14 June 2005
Signed: Trevor Salmon
On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

COUNTY: GREATER LONDON SITE NAME: RICHMOND PARK

BOROUGHS: RICHMOND UPON THAMES; KINGSTON UPON THAMES; AND WANDSWORTH

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the wildlife and countryside Act 1981.

Local Planning Authorities: London Boroughs of Kingston upon Thames; Richmond upon Thames; and Wandsworth

National Grid Reference: TQ 200730 (approx centre of site) Area: 856.0 (ha.) 2115.1 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheets 1:50,000: 176 1:10,000: TQ 27 SW; TQ 17 SE

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1992

Other Information:
A new site. Richmond Park is a Royal Park and is managed by the Department of the Environment.

Reasons for Notification:
Richmond Park has been managed as a royal deer park since the seventeenth century, producing a range of habitats of value to wildlife. In particular, Richmond Park is of importance for its diverse deadwood beetle fauna associated with the ancient trees found throughout the parkland. In addition the Park supports the most extensive area of dry acid grassland in Greater London.

London Clay underlies the Park with superficial deposits of Glacial and River Terrace Gravels forming higher ground, and Flood Plain Gravels and Alluvium covering part of the lower ground. This varied geology combined with long established grazing by deer has produced a mosaic of dry acid grassland, marshy and unimproved neutral grassland. These important communities grade into more improved grasslands and into areas dominated by bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*. Broadleaved woodlands, ponds and ditches add to the diversity of habitats present and ancient trees are present throughout.

Acid grassland communities occur in extensive parts of the park and the presence of ant hills in these areas is considered indicative of a lack of disturbance over many years. The dominant grasses are brown bent *Agrostis canina var, montana*; sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* and wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*. Heath-grass *Danthonia decumbens*, a species of dry grassy heaths, is also present, as is mat grass *Nardus stricta* which, although locally abundant within the park, is uncommon in London as a whole. Several typical herbs of this habitat occur including tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and heath bedstraw *Galium saxatile*. There is, in addition, a significant population of the upright chickweed *Moenchia erecta*, a nationally uncommon species.

Near to ponds and in damper areas, wet grassy heath species predominate such as purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* and heath rush *Juncus squarrosus*. As water-logging within the soil increases rushes *Juncus spp* become dominant often in conjunction with tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* and sedges *Carex spp.* Additional interest is provided by the flora of the ditches and ponds where two species, scarce within Greater London, have been recorded, namely, alternate-flowered water-milfoil *Myriophyllum alterniflorum* within a man-made pond, and lesser skullcap *Scutellaria minor* in damp places near several ponds.

The ancient parkland and its associated trees supports a nationally significant assemblage of invertebrates. It is one of the prime sites in Britain for beetles associated

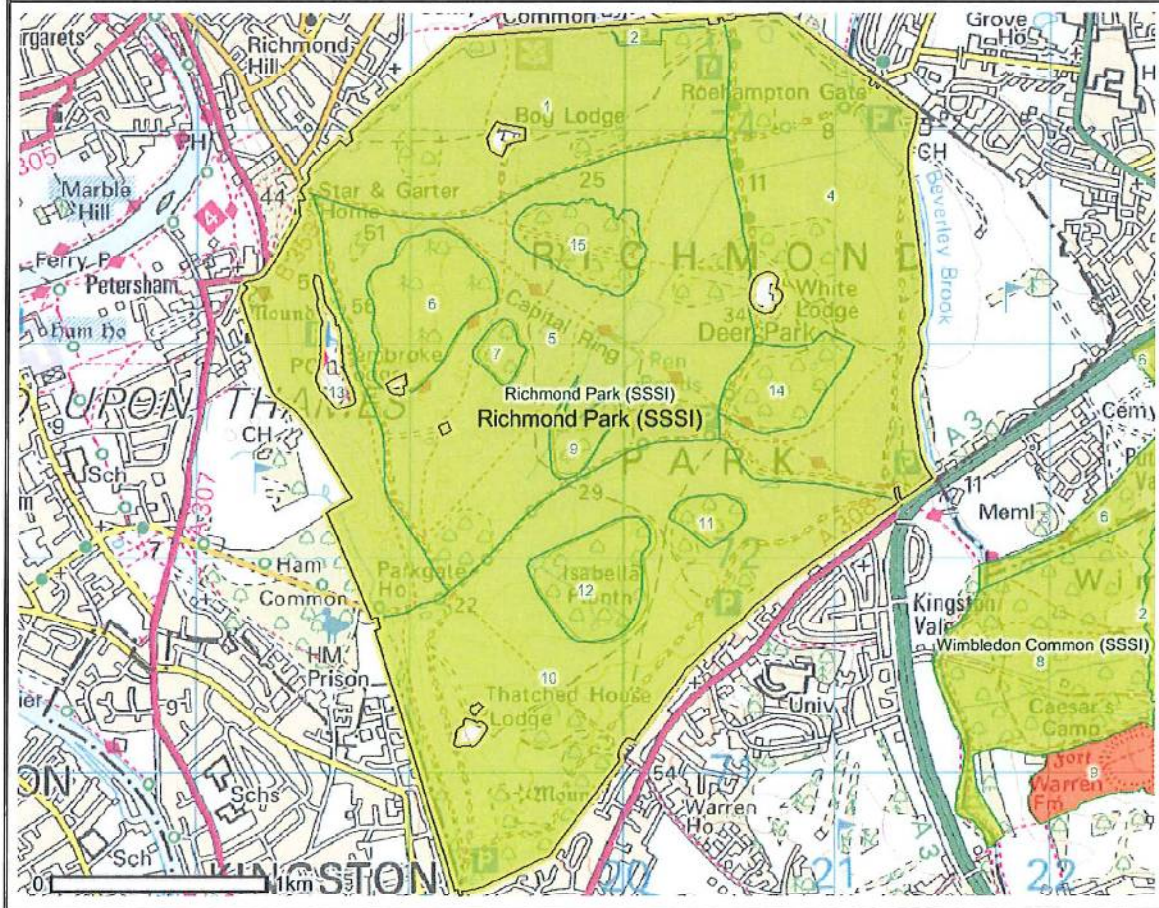
with dead and decaying wood (lignicolous coleoptera) with over 200 species recorded. Many of these beetles are indicative of ancient forest areas where there has been a long continuous presence of overmature timber. The decline in ancient wood and parkland habitats has led to the restriction of many of these lignicolous species to just a few localities in Britain.

Two nationally restricted species occurring in Richmond Park are the click beetles *Ampedus cardinalis* and *Procraerus tibialis*, listed as Red Data Book Species. Both species live in rotting oak trunks and boughs, with Richmond Park the only British locality where *A. cardinalis* is clearly well-established. Other RDB listed beetles found in Richmond Park include *Lymexylon navale*, recorded from dead standing oaks, and *Uleiota planata* and *Tomoxia biguttata* more usually associated with beech. The larvae of *Agrilus sinuatus* live beneath the bark of old hawthorn trees and *Trinodes hirtus* is generally recorded from old oaks where it feeds on spiders' webs. In addition to the beetles, the yellow legged clearwing moth *Synanthedon vespiformis* which bores into oak stumps has been recorded from the park.

Richmond Park also supports nationally scarce species associated with dung and wetlands although these are generally not as threatened by habitat loss as the deadwood fauna. Approximately 135 beetle species have so far been recorded from wetland habitats and 75 species from dung, including the nationally restricted *Aphodius zenkeri*, rarely found outside deer parks due to its specific association with deer dung.

Nature on the Map

My Map

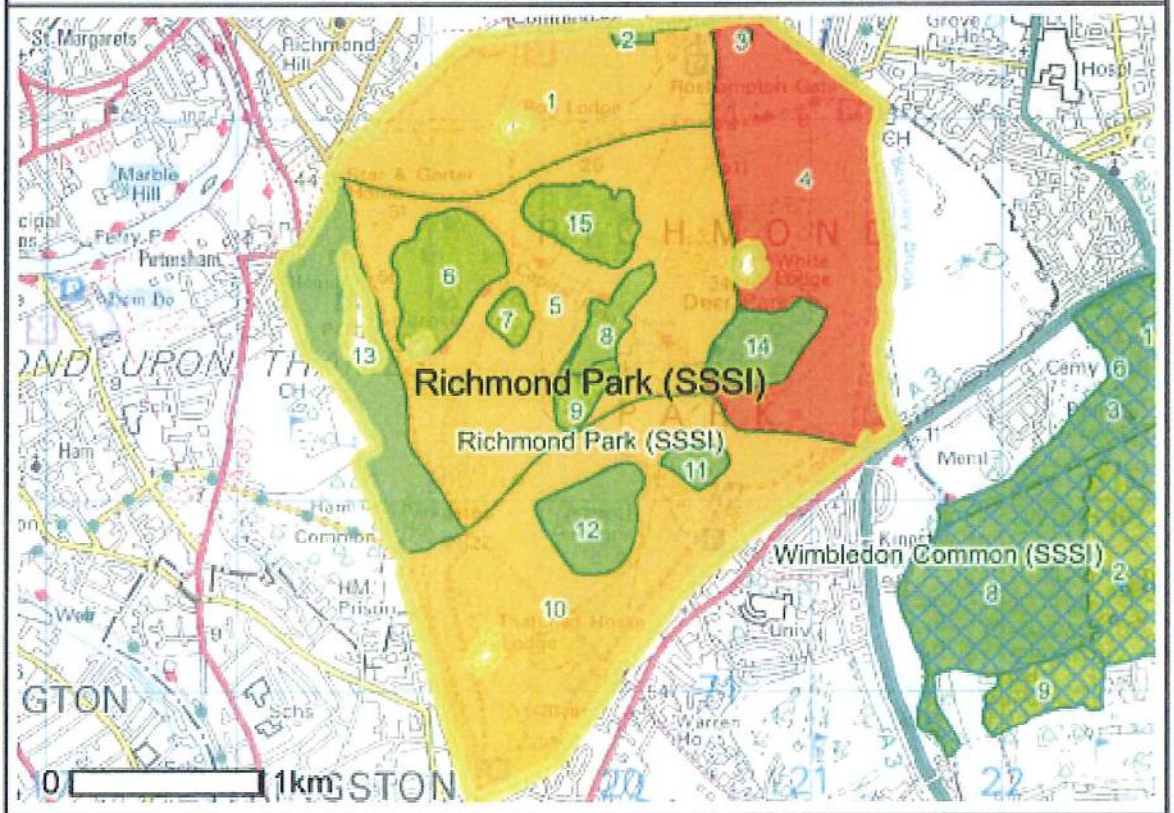


- Natural England Offices
- Selected Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- SSSI Live Management Agreements
- SSSI Unit condition - last updated 17 Mar 2011
  - Favourable Condition
  - Unfavourable Recovering
  - Unfavourable no change
  - Unfavourable Declining
  - Part Destroyed
  - Destroyed
  - Not Assessed
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Natural England Regions
- Natural England Area Teams
- Scotland, Wales and Ireland
- Ordnance Survey background mapping
- England

ENGLISH NATURE

nature *on the* map

My Map



- English Nature Offices
- Selected Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- SSSI Live Management Agreements

SSSI Unit condition - last updated 21 June 2006

- Favourable Condition
- Unfavourable Recovering
- Unfavourable no change
- Unfavourable Declining
- Part Destroyed