

Coate Water Nature Reserve - Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Coate Water has been noted under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The status of a SSSI is awarded by English Nature and a public body to some of the country's very best wildlife and geological sites. These include large wetlands, chalk rivers, heath lands, meadows, beaches, moorlands and peat bogs along with many others.

There are over 4,000 SSSI's across England, which cover approximately 7-8% of the English landscape.

The Government has a Public Service Agreement that a target of 95% of SSSI land is to be deemed 'favourable' or in 'recovering' condition by 2010.

Due to the diverse breeding population connected with both the lakes at Coate Water along with the semi-natural vegetation, it is one of the most important sites in Wiltshire for breeding birds. The site also sustains and supports a broad range of dragonfly and damselfly species and has botanical interest too.

15 species of Dragonfly and 6 species of Damselfly have been recorded.

Below is a list of birds, dragon/damselflies and plants of importance;

| BIRDS | DRAGON/DAMSELFLIES | PLANTS |
|------------------|--|--|
| Blackcap | Emperor Dragonfly (Anax imperator) | Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) |
| Black Tern | Four species of Hawker (Aeshna spp.) | Brown Sedge (Carex disticha) |
| Canada Geese | Four-spotted Chaser (Libellula quadrimaculata) | Creeping Bent (Agrostis stolonifera) |
| Common Sandpiper | Red-eyed Damselfly (Erythromma najas) | Crested Dog's Tail (Cynosurus cristatus) |
| Common Tern | | Dog's Mercury (Mercurialis perennis) |
| Coot | | Enchanter's Nightshade (Circaea lutetiana) |
| Garden Warbler | | Forget-me-Not (Myosotis secunda) |

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Great-Crested Grebes | | Golden Dock (<i>Rumex maritimus</i>) |
| Great Spotted Woodpecker | | Meadow Foxtail (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>) |
| Hobby | | Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>) |
| House Martin | | Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) |
| Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | | Reed Sweet-Grass (<i>Glyceria maxima</i>) |
| Mallard | | Rushes (<i>Juncus</i> spp.) |
| Marsh Tit | | Sallow (<i>Salix</i> spp.) |
| Moorhen | | Sedges (<i>Carex</i> spp.) |
| Nightingale | | Tufted-Sedge (<i>C. acuta</i>) |
| Reed Bunting | | Wood Avens (<i>Geum urbanum</i>) |
| Reed Warblers | | Wood Sage (<i>Carex sylvatica</i>) |
| Sedge Warbler | | |
| Swallow | | |
| Tawny Owl | | |
| Treecreeper | | |
| Tufted Duck | | |
| Water Rail | | |
| Willow Tit | | |

Certain activities and operations have to be approved by English Nature before they can be carried out to avoid damage to the features of special interest. Details of operations listed in notifications can be found at www.englishnature.org.uk

Due to changes and pressure from pollution, development, climate change and unsustainable land management, SSSI's now have to be maintained and managed in order to preserve the conservation and condition that they have been able to reach naturally over 100's of years. If they aren't managed their condition will deteriorate causing features and wildlife to be lost forever.

It is an offense for anyone to intentionally or recklessly destroy, damage or disturb the special features and animals of any land that they know is an SSSI and noted as being of special interest.