



NATURA 2000 - STANDARD DATA FORM

For Special Protection Areas (SPA),
Proposed Sites for Community Importance (pSCI),
Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and
for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

SITE IE0004076
SITENAME Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA

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1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.1 Type A | 1.2 Site code IE0004076 | Back to top |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|

1.3 Site name

Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1.4 First Compilation date 2003-11 | 1.5 Update date 2020-10 |
|--|-----------------------------------|

1.6 Respondent:

Name/Organisation: National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Address: 90 King Street North, Dublin 7, D07 N7CV, Ireland
Email: datadelivery@chg.gov.ie

1.7 Site indication and designation / classification dates

| | |
|--|---------|
| Date site classified as SPA: | 1985-08 |
| National legal reference of SPA designation | No data |

2. SITE LOCATION

2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|-------|-------|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | A161 | erythropus | | | c | 5 | 10 | i | | G | C | B | C | B |
| B | A166 | Tringa glareola | | | c | 1 | 5 | i | | G | B | B | C | C |
| B | A164 | Tringa nebularia | | | w | 12 | 12 | i | | G | C | A | C | C |
| B | A165 | Tringa ochropus | | | w | 1 | 5 | i | | G | C | B | C | B |
| B | A165 | Tringa ochropus | | | c | 5 | 10 | i | | G | C | B | C | B |
| B | A162 | Tringa totanus | | | w | 249 | 249 | i | | G | C | A | C | C |
| B | A142 | Vanellus vanellus | | | w | 10387 | 10387 | i | | G | B | A | C | A |

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, I = Invertebrates, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles
- **S:** in case that the data on species are sensitive and therefore have to be blocked for any public access enter: yes
- **NP:** in case that a species is no longer present in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Type:** p = permanent, r = reproducing, c = concentration, w = wintering (for plant and non-migratory species use permanent)
- **Unit:** i = individuals, p = pairs or other units according to the Standard list of population units and codes in accordance with Article 12 and 17 reporting (see [reference portal](#))
- **Abundance categories (Cat.):** C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present - to fill if data are deficient (DD) or in addition to population size information
- **Data quality:** G = 'Good' (e.g. based on surveys); M = 'Moderate' (e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation); P = 'Poor' (e.g. rough estimation); VP = 'Very poor' (use this category only, if not even a rough estimation of the population size can be made, in this case the fields for population size can remain empty, but the field "Abundance categories" has to be filled in)

3.3 Other important species of flora and fauna (optional)

| Species | | | Population in the site | | | | | Motivation | | | | | | |
|---------|------|--|------------------------|----|------|-----|------|------------|---------------|---|------------------|---|---|---|
| Group | CODE | Scientific Name | S | NP | Size | | Unit | Cat. | Species Annex | | Other categories | | | |
| | | | | | Min | Max | | C R V P | IV | V | A | B | C | D |
| B | | Cygnus olor | | | 334 | 334 | i | | | | | | X | |
| M | | Lepus timidus hibernicus | | | | | | | | | X | | | |
| M | | Lepus timidus hibernicus | | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| M | | Lepus timidus hibernicus | | | | | | | | | | X | | |
| B | | Passer montanus | | | 10 | 10 | i | | | | X | | | |
| B | | Passer montanus | | | 10 | 10 | i | | | | | | X | |
| P | | Puccinellia fasciculata | | | | | | | | | X | | | |
| B | | Tachybaptus ruficollis | | | 76 | 76 | i | | | | | | X | |

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, Fu = Fungi, I = Invertebrates, L = Lichens, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles

- **CODE:** for Birds, Annex IV and V species the code as provided in the reference portal should be used in addition to the scientific name
- **S:** in case that the data on species are sensitive and therefore have to be blocked for any public access enter: yes
- **NP:** in case that a species is no longer present in the site enter: x (optional)
- **Unit:** i = individuals, p = pairs or other units according to the standard list of population units and codes in accordance with Article 12 and 17 reporting, (see [reference portal](#))
- **Cat.:** Abundance categories: C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present
- **Motivation categories:** **IV, V:** Annex Species (Habitats Directive), **A:** National Red List data; **B:** Endemics; **C:** International Conventions; **D:** other reasons

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

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4.1 General site character

| Habitat class | % Cover |
|----------------------------|---------|
| N02 | 62.0 |
| N14 | 15.0 |
| N07 | 1.0 |
| N06 | 2.0 |
| N20 | 2.0 |
| N23 | 1.0 |
| N03 | 1.0 |
| N04 | 1.0 |
| N15 | 5.0 |
| N12 | 10.0 |
| Total Habitat Cover | 100 |

Other Site Characteristics

Wexford Harbour is the lowermost part of the estuary of the River Slaney, a major river that drains much of the south-east region. The site is divided between the natural estuarine habitats of Wexford Harbour and the reclaimed polders known as the north and south 'slobs'. The seaward boundary extends from the Rosslare peninsula in the south to the area just west of The Raven Point in the north, while the inner boundaries of the site extend to Ferrycarrig bridge and towards Castlebridge. Shallow marine water is a principal habitat, but at low tide extensive areas of intertidal flats are exposed. These vary from rippled sands in exposed areas to sandy-muds in the more sheltered areas, especially at Hopeland and the inner estuary to the west of Wexford bridge. Salt marshes fringe the intertidal flats, especially in the sheltered areas. The slobs are two flat areas of farmland, mainly arable and pasture grassland, empoldered behind 19th century sea-walls. The lands are drained by a network of channels which flow into two central channels, in parts several hundred metres in width. Water from the channels is pumped into the sea with electric pumps. The channels often support swamp vegetation. Several conifer plantations are included, especially on the south slob.

4.2 Quality and importance

This site is of international importance for several species of waterfowl but also because it regularly supports well in excess of 20,000 waterfowl. It is one of the top three sites in the country for numbers and diversity of wintering birds. Of particular importance is that it is one of the two most important sites in the world for *Anser albifrons flavirostris*. It also has internationally important populations of *Branta bernicla hrota*, *Cygnus columbarius bewickii* and *Limosa lapponica*, and is now one of the few sites in the country which supports a regular flock of *Cygnus columbarius bewickii*. There is at least a further 22 species of wintering waterfowl which occur in numbers of national importance. Several of these represent substantial proportions of the national totals, especially *Anas penelope* (3.1%), *Anas platyrhynchos* (3.6%), *Anas acuta* (3.3%), *Aythya marila* (4.9%), *Mergus serrator* (4.1%), *Pluvialis apricaria* (3.7%), *Pluvialis squatarola* (11.3%), *Vanellus vanellus* (5.1%) and *Limosa limosa* (3.6%). Numbers of wintering birds are often swelled by hard-weather movements from Europe, notably *Pluvialis apricaria* and *Vanellus vanellus*. The site is a regular location for *Philomachus pugnax* during passage and in winter, and is regularly visited by a range of other passage

waders, most notably *Tringa glareola*, *Tringa erythropus* and *Tringa ochropus*. *Asio flammeus* is a regular visitor in small numbers to the slob during winter. A nesting colony of *Egretta garzetta* has recently become established within the site and birds are present in the area throughout the year. *Passer montanus*, a Red Data Book species, breeds. Part of the North Slob is a Nature Reserve and much of the slob is managed for the benefit of the wintering geese. Monitoring of the wintering birds of the slob extends back to the 1960s and nowadays there is an ongoing monitoring and research programme. The North Slob has a wildfowl collection and an interpretative centre. The site supports *Puccinellia fasciculata*, a Red Data Book species, and has a good population of *Lepus timidus hibernicus*.

4.3 Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the site

The most important impacts and activities with high effect on the site

| Negative Impacts | | | |
|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Rank | Threats and pressures [code] | Pollution (optional) [code] | inside/outside [i o b] |
| M | G01.02 | | i |
| M | B | | o |
| M | D01.02 | | o |
| H | A08 | | o |
| H | F03.01 | | i |
| M | E01 | | o |
| H | F01 | | i |
| H | A08 | | i |
| H | A04 | | i |
| M | A04 | | i |

| Positive Impacts | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Rank | Activities, management [code] | Pollution (optional) [code] | inside/outside [i o b] |
| M | E01 | | o |
| H | F01 | | i |
| H | A01 | | i |
| H | A08 | | i |
| M | B | | o |
| H | J02.12 | | i |
| M | A04 | | i |
| M | F03.01 | | i |
| M | J02.01.01 | | i |
| M | A08 | | i |
| M | G03 | | i |
| M | D01.02 | | o |
| H | A04 | | i |

Rank: H = high, M = medium, L = low

Pollution: N = Nitrogen input, P = Phosphor/Phosphate input, A = Acid input/acidification,

T = toxic inorganic chemicals, O = toxic organic chemicals, X = Mixed pollutions

i = inside, o = outside, b = both

4.5 Documentation

Colhoun, K. (2001). I-WeBS Report 1998-99. BirdWatch Ireland, Dublin. Cummins, S., O'Halloran, J., Wilson, C. and Norriss, D. (2000). An assessment of the diet of nestling Tree Sparrows *Passer montanus* in southeast Ireland. *Irish Birds* 6: 507-512. Curtis, T.G.F. and Sheehy Skeffington, M.J. (1998). The salt marshes of Ireland: an inventory and account of their geographical variation. *Biology and Environment, Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 98B: 87-104. Falvey, J.P., Costello, M.J. and Dempsey, S. (1997). Survey of Intertidal Biotopes in Estuaries in Ireland. Unpublished report to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin. Fox, A.D., Norriss, D.W., Stroud, D.A. and Wilson, H.J. (1994). Greenland White-fronted Geese in Ireland and Britain 1982/83 - 1993/94. Greenland White-fronted Goose Study research report no. 8. Greenland White-fronted Goose Study, Wales and National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin. Hunt, J., Derwin, J., Coveney, J. and Newton, S. (2000). Republic of Ireland. Pp. 365-416 in Heath, M.F. and Evans, M.I. (eds). *Important Bird Areas in Europe: Priority Sites for Conservation 1: Northern Europe*. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 8). Irish Wetland Birds Survey (I-WeBS) Database, 1994/95-2000/01. BirdWatch Ireland, Dublin. McGarrigle, M.L., Bowman, J.J., Clabby, K.J., Lucey, J., Cunningham, P., MacCarthaigh, M., Keegan, M., Cantrell, B., Lehane, M., Clenaghan, C. and Toner, P.F. (2002). *Water Quality in Ireland 1998-2000*. Environmental Protection Agency, Wexford. Merne, O.J. (1989). *Important bird areas in the Republic of Ireland*. In: Grimmett, R.F.A. and Jones, T.A. (eds). *Important Bird Areas in Europe*. ICBP Technical Publication No. 9. Cambridge. Rowe, D. and Wilson, C.J. (eds) (1996). *High Skies - Low Lands. An Anthology of the Wexford Slob and Harbour*. Duffry Press, Wexford. Rutledge, R.F. and Ogilvie, M.A. (1979). *The past and current status of the Greenland White-fronted Goose in Ireland and Britain*. *Irish Birds* 1: 293-363. Sheppard, R. (1993). *Ireland's Wetland Wealth*. IWC, Dublin.

5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

| Code | Cover [%] | Code | Cover [%] | Code | Cover [%] |
|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|
| IE05 | 1.0 | IE01 | 6.0 | | |

5.2 Relation of the described site with other sites:

designated at national or regional level:

| Type code | Site name | Type | Cover [%] |
|-----------|---|------|-----------|
| IE05 | Tern Island Wildfowl Sanctuary | + | 1.0 |
| IE05 | Rosslare Point Wildfowl Sanctuary | / | |
| IE01 | Wexford Wildfowl Reserve Nature Reserve | + | 6.0 |
| IE01 | The Raven Nature Reserve | / | |

designated at international level:

| Type | Site name | Type | Cover [%] |
|-------|---|------|-----------|
| Other | The Raven Nature Reserve | / | |
| | Wexford Wildfowl Reserve Nature Reserve | + | 1.0 |

6. SITE MANAGEMENT

6.2 Management Plan(s):

An actual management plan does exist:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No, but in preparation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No |

7. MAP OF THE SITES

INSPIRE ID:

IE.NPWS.PS.NATURA2000.SPA.IE0004076

Map delivered as PDF in electronic format (optional)

Yes No

Reference(s) to the original map used for the digitalisation of the electronic boundaries (optional).

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