

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

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Exmoor and Quantock Oakwoods
Unitary Authority/County: Devon, Somerset
SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference: SS894440
SAC EU code: UK0030148
Area (ha): 1895.17
Component SSSI: Barle Valley SSSI, North Exmoor SSSI, The Quantocks SSSI, Watersmeet SSSI, West Exmoor Coast and Woods SSSI

Site description:

This site supports extensive tracts of old sessile oak *Quercus petraea* with transitions to heathland. The oakwoods are rich in bryophytes, ferns (including *Dryopteris aemula*) and epiphytic lichens, the latter often associated with old trees, since parts are former wood-pasture rather than the oak coppice that is more common with this type. In the Barle Valley the woods also occur in mosaic with glades and small fields and the combination results in good populations of fritillary butterflies. Valley woodland dominated by alder *Alnus glutinosa* as well as ash *Fraxinus excelsior* which occurs in small areas alongside some of the streams.

A maternity colony of barbastelle bats *Barbastella barbastellus* utilises a range of tree roosts in the oak *Quercus* spp. woodland. The woods also hold Bechstein's bats *Myotis bechsteinii*, whilst rivers and streams flowing through the site support otters *Lutra lutra*.

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

- Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*). (Alder woodland on floodplains)*
- Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles. (Western acidic oak woodland)

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:

- Barbastelle bat *Barbastella barbastellus*
- Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*
- Otter *Lutra lutra*

Annex I priority habitats are denoted by an asterisk (*).

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for Great Britain.

Register reference number: UK0030148

Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: *Trevor Salmon*

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs