

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

## Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

**Name:** Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons  
**Unitary Authority/County:** City of Portsmouth, Hampshire, Isle of Wight  
**SAC status:** Designated on 1 April 2005  
**Grid reference:** SZ608977  
**SAC EU code:** UK0017073  
**Area (ha):** 36.24  
**Component SSSI:** Brading Marshes to St Helens Ledges SSSI, Gilkicker Lagoon SSSI, Hurst Castle and Lymington River Estuary SSSI, Langstone Harbour SSSI


### Site description:

The Solent on the south coast of England encompasses a series of coastal lagoons, including percolation, isolated and sluiced lagoons. The site includes a number of lagoons in the marshes in the Keyhaven – Pennington area, at Farlington Marshes in Langstone Harbour, behind the sea-wall at Bembridge Harbour and at Gilkicker, near Gosport. The lagoons show a range of salinities and substrates, ranging from soft mud to muddy sand with a high proportion of shingle, which support a diverse fauna including large populations of three notable species: the nationally rare foxtail stonewort *Lamprothamnium papulosum*, the nationally scarce lagoon sand shrimp *Gammarus insensibilis*, and the nationally scarce starlet sea anemone *Nematostella vectensis*. The lagoons in Keyhaven – Pennington Marshes are part of a network of ditches and ponds within the saltmarsh behind a sea-wall. Farlington Marshes is an isolated lagoon in marsh pasture that, although separated from the sea by a sea-wall, receives sea water during spring tides. Gilkicker Lagoon is a sluiced lagoon with marked seasonal salinity fluctuation and supports a high species diversity. The lagoons at Bembridge Harbour have formed in a depression behind the sea-wall and sea water enters by percolation and by man-made culverts. Species diversity in these lagoons is high and the fauna includes very high densities of *N. vectensis* and the nationally rare Bembridge water beetle *Paracymus aeneus*.

**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:

- Coastal lagoons\*

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: UK0017073  
Date of registration: 14 June 2005  
Signed:   
On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs