

## EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds: Citation for Special Protection Area (SPA)

**Name:** North Pennine Moors

**Unitary Authority/County:** Cumbria, Durham, North Yorkshire and Northumberland.

**Consultation proposal:** The 17 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) listed below have been recommended as a Special Protection Area because of their European ornithological importance. The SPA supports breeding populations of three birds of prey and one wading bird in numbers of European significance. The boundary of the SPA includes all or parts of the following SSSIs: Allendale Moors SSSI; Appleby Fells SSSI; Arkengarthdale, Gunnerside and Reeth Moors SSSI; Bollihope, Pikestone, Eggleston and Woodland Fells SSSI; Bowes Moor SSSI; Cotherstone Moor SSSI; East Nidderdale Moors (Flamstone Pin - High Ruckles) SSSI; Geltsdale and Glendue Fells SSSI; Hexhamshire Moors SSSI; Lovely Seat - Stainton Moor SSSI; Lune Forest SSSI; Mallerstang - Swaledale Head SSSI; Moorhouse and Cross Fell SSSI; Muggleswick, Stanhope and Edmundbyers Commons and Blanchland Moor SSSI; Upper Teesdale SSSI; West Nidderdale, Barden and Blubberhouses Moors SSSI; Whitfield Moor, Plenmeller and Ashholme Commons SSSI. See SPA map for further detail of boundary.

**Site description:** The North Pennine Moors SPA includes parts of the Pennine moorland massif between the Tyne Gap (Hexham) and the Ribble-Aire corridor (Skipton). It encompasses extensive tracts of semi-natural moorland habitats including upland heath and blanket bog. The southern end of the North Pennine Moors SPA is within 10 km of the South Pennine Moors SPA, which supports a similar assemblage of upland breeding species. The North Pennine Moors includes Moor House SPA, a site that was subject to separate classification. The latter site has been subsumed within the North Pennine Moors SPA for reporting purposes.

**Size of SPA:** The SPA covers an area of 147,246.41 ha.

### Qualifying species:

The site qualifies under **article 4.1** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain populations of the following species listed in Annex I, in any season:

Annex I species	Count and Season	Period	% of GB population
Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>	11 pairs - breeding	Count as at 1993 and 1994	2.3%
Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>	136 pairs - breeding	Estimated population during 1993 and 1994	10.5%
Peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	15 pairs - breeding	Count as at 1991	1.3%
Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	1,400 pairs - breeding	Minimum based on densities recorded 1960 - 1993	6.2%

Hen Harrier figures from: Nattress, M. & Clement, P. 1996. *Summary of the analysis of English Nature licences issued in 1994 for Schedule 1 birds*. English Nature unpublished report, Peterborough.

Merlin figures from: Rebecca, G. & Bainbridge, I.P. 1998. The status of breeding merlin *Falco columbarius* in Britain in 1993-94. *Bird Study* **45**: 172-187.

Peregrine figures from: Crick, H.Q.P. & Ratcliffe, D.A. 1995. The peregrine *Falco peregrinus* breeding populations of the United Kingdom. *Bird Study* **42**: 1-19.

Golden Plover figures represent a minimum (assuming 1.0 pair/km<sup>2</sup>), with no full census available. Based on a range of recorded densities from 1.0 pair/km<sup>2</sup> within East Nidderdale Moors SSSI to 5.0-5.2 pairs/km<sup>2</sup> within Upper Teesdale SSSI. Density figures from:

Ratcliffe, D.A. 1976. Observations on the breeding of the Golden Plover in Britain. *Bird Study* **23**: 63-116.

Percival, S. & Smith, C. 1992. *Habitat requirements of Golden Plover: A pilot study*. English Nature Research Report No. 1, Peterborough.

Winder, F. 1992-94. *Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee Moorland Bird Surveys 1992-1994*. Unpublished.

### **Non-qualifying species of interest**

Within the North Pennine Moors SPA, two pairs of Montagu's Harriers *Circus pygargus* are known to have bred, while numbers of breeding Short-eared Owls *Asio flammeus* have still to be ascertained. Both species are listed in Annex I.

### **Status of SPA:**

- i) Moor House was classified as a Special Protection Area on 31 August 1982.
- ii) North Pennine Moors (including the subsumed site at Moor House) was classified as a Special Protection Area on 9 February 2001.