

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

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Birklands and Bilhaugh
Unitary Authority/County: Nottinghamshire
SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference: SK618679
SAC EU code: UK0012740
Area (ha): 271.84
Component SSSI: Birklands and Bilhaugh SSSI

Site description:

This site is a remnant of the historic Sherwood Forest on freely-draining, acidic, sandy soils and contains the best remaining examples of oak-birch woodland in Nottinghamshire. Birklands and Bilhaugh is notable for its rich invertebrate fauna, particularly spiders, and for a diverse fungal assemblage, including *Grifoa sulphurea* and *Fistulina hepatica*. The oak population consists of approximately equal numbers of the pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* and the sessile oak *Q. petraea* covering a wide range of size and age, including an exceptional population of ancient standing oaks. Although birch (mainly *Betula verrucosa*) forms groves between the oaks the canopy is, over large areas, still rather open allowing a dense bracken field layer to develop. A wide variety of fungi are present. Within the woodland occur glades of acid grassland dominated by the tussock-forming wavy-hair grass *Deschampsia flexuosa* and which contain such characteristic herbs as heath bedstraw *Galium saxatile* and tormentil *Potentilla erecta*.

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:

- Old acidophilous oak woods with *Quercus robur* on sandy plains. (Dry oak-dominated woodland)

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

Register reference number: UK0012740

Date of registration: 14 June 2005

Signed: *Trevor Salmon*

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