



Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 11 July 2024

Update version, previously published on : 15 November 1984

Ireland

Wexford Wildfowl Reserve



Designation date	15 November 1984
Site number	291
Coordinates	52°21'36"N 06°25'02"W
Area	116,00 ha

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary

Wexford Wildfowl Reserve is located close to Wexford harbour in the south east of Ireland. The site is comprised of flat farmland, mainly arable and pasture grassland, on an area known as the "North Slob". The area was walled off from Wexford Harbour in the 1840's and reclaimed from the sea for farmland. The main habitat types are farmland and a brackish channel. Much of the area lies two metres below sea level, therefore water levels in the channels must be controlled. 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.

Established in 1969, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve was extended in 1989 and now covers some 200 hectares, about a quarter of the North Slob. The Reserve is jointly owned by NPWS and Birdwatch Ireland and forms part of the larger Wexford Slob and Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA). The reserve lands are rented to farmers to farm the land in a way that is sympathetic to the foraging requirements of wintering geese. The Reserve and wider SPA support internationally important numbers of waterbirds (>20,000). The combination of nearby estuarine habitats (within the wider Wexford Harbour) and the farmland of the polders provide optimum feeding and roost areas for a range of species. The Reserve was established for the Greenland White-fronted Goose, which are the most numerous and important goose species which occur at this site. The Reserve is one of the two most important sites in the world for Greenland White-fronted Goose; 35% of the international population occur at the Reserve. The geese feed almost entirely within the Slob and roost at The Raven (a separate SPA and Ramsar Site). According to Birdwatch Ireland this vulnerable goose (world population about 20,000 in 2018), which nests in Greenland, stages in Iceland and winters in Ireland and the UK, is one of Europe's rarest geese. Internationally important numbers of the Whooper Swan, Light-bellied Brent Goose and Black-tailed Godwit also occur at the site along with nationally important numbers of Mute Swan, Wigeon, Teal, Mallard, Pintail, Golden Plover and Lapwing. The area is the most important and indeed one of the few sites in the country which supports a regular flock of Bewick's Swan (I-WeBs data from 2010-2015). The Reserve has a visitor centre and warden.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Responsible compiler

Institution/agency	National Parks and Wildlife Service Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Postal address	National Parks and Wildlife Service, 90 North King Street, Smithfield, Dublin, Ireland D07 N7CV

National Ramsar Administrative Authority

Institution/agency	National Parks and Wildlife Service Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Postal address	National Parks and Wildlife Service, 90 North King Street, Smithfield, Dublin, Ireland D07 N7CV

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year	<input type="text" value="2004"/>
To year	<input type="text" value="2019"/>

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)	<input type="text" value="Wexford Wildfowl Reserve"/>
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2.1.4 - Changes to the boundaries and area of the Site since its designation or earlier update

(Update) A. Changes to Site boundary	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>
(Update) B. Changes to Site area	No change to area
(Update) For secretariat only: This update is an extension	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological character of the Site

(Update) 6b i. Has the ecological character of the Ramsar Site (including applicable Criteria) changed since the previous RIS?	Not evaluated
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2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps	<input type="text" value="0"/>
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Boundaries description

The boundaries for this site were defined using the boundaries of Wexford Wildfowl Nature Reserve which was established in 1969 (the nature reserve was subsequently enlarged to 194Ha in 1989; the Ramsar site boundary reflects that of the original boundary). The Wexford Wildfowl Reserve Ramsar site is a small part of, and lies within, the Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA (004076) and is adjacent to the Slaney River Valley SAC (000781). The Ramsar site is an integral part of this wider wetland system. Details of the Wildfowl Reserve, the SPA and the SAC can be found on the NPWS website at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>.

A number of GIS data layers were used to define the Ramsar habitats within the site. These included:

- NPWS data (Site-Specific Conservation Objectives)
- CORINE (Co-Ordinated Information on the Environment) land cover data sets (2012).
- Bing Maps Aerial - © Harris Corp, Earthstar Geographics LLC © 2017 Intermap Earthstar Geographics SIO © 2017 Microsoft Corporation.
- Environmental Protection Agency of Ireland Rivers and Lakes layers data layers.

The mapped layers were inspected by a site visit to confirm the accuracy of the mapped habitats.

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?	<input type="text" value="South East (NUTS 3)"/>
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b) What is the nearest town or population centre?

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes No

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes No

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha):

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW)	Atlantic
EU biogeographic regionalization	Atlantic

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

3 - Why is the Site important?

3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

Criterion 1: Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types

Hydrological services provided

The site comprises mainly of seasonally flooded agricultural land (reclaimed polders), with some estuarine waters (brackish channel through the grassland) and intertidal marsh. While a result of historical (1840's) estuarine reclamation (wall construction to reclaim estuarine habitat for farmland), the polders now play a key role in maintaining wet grassland habitat which is used by internationally important numbers of Greenland White-fronted Geese.

Other ecosystem services provided

The site is important for the diversity of wintering birds which occur here. Over 250 bird species have been recorded on the Reserve, many of them winter migrants from Greenland and Arctic Canada or from Scandinavia and Arctic Russia. Biological monitoring at this site informs local, national and global species conservation assessment, in particular with regards to Greenland White-fronted Geese. Waterbird monitoring and research provides data on long term population trends. The Reserve and its Visitor Centre provide a location for scientific and educational study and research and is also important for tourism and recreation.

Other reasons

Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

Optional text box to provide further information

Rare (high conservation concern) wintering bird species are defined as:
Regularly occurring species (occurring in at least 3 out of 10 seasons of monitoring or 30% of seasons; based on I-Webs data from 2006/07 to 2015/16) and that are:
- Red Listed in Ireland's national Red List (Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BoCC) published by Colhoun and Cummins (2013)
- Classified as VU in IUCN Global and/or European regional list
- Listed in Annex I of the European Union Birds Directive

Several additional species of high conservation concern nationally (amber list species) are part of the wintering waterbird assemblage at this site.

Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification

The assemblage of wintering birds including those of high (Red Listed in Ireland, Vulnerable in Europe and/or Globally) and medium (Amber Listed species in Ireland) conservation status contributes to biodiversity within the biogeographical region.

Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions

Optional text box to provide further information

Critical site for Greenland White-fronted Goose in winter - supports >30% of the flyway population
Wintering habitat for an assemblage of migratory birds including a number of international and national importance.

Criterion 5 : >20,000 waterbirds

Overall waterbird numbers

Start year

End year

Source of data:

Criterion 6 : >1% waterbird population

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
Birds																	
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Annex I listing
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas acuta</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	45	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Global & Europe region)	National (BoCCI) classification and IUCN classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	2011-2015			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification (IUCN Global & Europe region)	National (BoCCI) classification and IUCN classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas crecca</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	446	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity,
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas penelope</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1401	2011-2015			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Global & Europe region)	National (BoCCI) classification and IUCN classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas strepera</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9	2011-2015			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8522	2011-2015	36		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Annex I listing, part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity, supports > 1% pop - internationally important numbers of the Greenland White fronted Goose population (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>).
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2011-2015		VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification (IUCN Global & Europe region)	National (BoCCI) and IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Aythya marila</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification (IUCN Europe region)	IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage.

RIS for Site no. 291, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, Ireland

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence ¹⁾	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2011	2011-2015	5.03		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage, >1% pop - Internationally important numbers of the Branta bernicla hrota population of Brent Goose
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	21	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Global & Europe region)	National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Global & Europe region)	National (BoCCI) classification, IUCN classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annex I listing	Annex I listing, rapid declines in its European breeding range esp. in Russia
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Endangered classification IUCN Europe region)	Annex I listing, and National (BoCCI) and IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	269	2011-2015	0.99	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Annex I listing, part of wintering assemblage. >1% Icelandic breeding population Cygnus cygnus.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	90		1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annex I listed (EU Birds Directive)	Annex I listing
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12	2011-2015		NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification (IUCN Europe region)	IUCN classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	123	2011-2015		NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Annex I listing, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1266	2011/2015	2.08	NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification (IUCN Europe region)	IUCN classification, part of wintering assemblage, >1% pop - Limosa limosa islandica.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	277	2011-2015		NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification (IUCN Europe region)	National (BoCCI) and IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	2011-2015			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4821	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Annex I listing, and National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	16	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	103	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence ¹⁾	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	83	2011-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Global & Europe region)	National (BoCCI) and IUCN classification, part of wintering assemblage.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3188	2011-2015		NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification (IUCN Europe region)	National (BoCCI) and IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage.

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

Wintering bird species listed under 3.3 have been selected based on an assessment of Irish Wetland Bird Survey data from the period 2006/07 to 2015/16. Wexford Wildfowl Reserve is part of a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds, however not all species listed for the SPA may be listed under 3.3 (or vice versa) as the SPA designation is based on other data and criteria and the SPA covers a much more extensive area than the Reserve.

I-WeBS data (2010-2015) (subsite 00499 North Slob which covers Wexford Wildfowl Reserve) recorded internationally important populations of the Whooper Swan, Light - bellied Brent Goose, Black-tailed Godwit and Greenland White-fronted Goose at the site. The Whooper Swan is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. According to Birdwatch Ireland (Birdwatch.ie) the Light - bellied Brent Goose is Amber-listed as the majority winter at less than ten sites and the Irish population is internationally significant; the European population has been evaluated as Vulnerable as several important populations have declined. According to the IUCN the Black-tailed godwit is deemed Vulnerable in Europe and Near threatened globally, the species has undergone rapid declines in Europe and globally due to changes in agricultural practices.

The site is of world importance for the Greenland White-fronted Geese, these are the most numerous and important goose species on the reserve. The site forms part of the world's most important wintering site for this vulnerable goose (world population about 20,000), which nests in Greenland, stages in Iceland and winters in Ireland and the UK. I-WeBS data (2010-2015) lists an internationally important population (8522) of this species wintering at this site, which is 35% of the world population. Almost 50% of the population spend their winters in Ireland, and most of these on the Wexford Slob in the southeast. The population is of high conservation concern because it has declined by more than 30% over the past ten years, attributed to the continuing decline in annual recruitment, while perhaps climate-related changes and increased competition for nest sites with the expanding population of breeding Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) throughout the "white-fronts" breeding range, are also factors (NPWS 2011). In Ireland, there have been large-scale declines in some of the smaller flocks that were formerly scattered in reasonably healthy numbers throughout Ireland (Birdwatch.ie). The species is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

I-WeBS data (2010-2015) lists nationally important populations of Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*), Wigeon, Teal, Mallard, Pintail, Golden Plover and Lapwing. The Golden Plover is of particular note as this species is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. According to IUCN the Lapwing is deemed Near threatened within Europe and Vulnerable globally, and is suspected to be decreasing at a moderately rapid rate.

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

[Optional text box to provide further information](#)

This site is reclaimed estuarine habitat to create farmed grassland polders.

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

This site is characterised by a polderland agri-ecosystem created by reclamation from the sea. It is currently dominated by areas of low-lying improved agricultural grassland managed sustainably for the conservation of the wildfowl that utilise the site and principally for Greenland White-fronted Geese. The majority of the area is two meters below sea level and the habitat is maintained by control of water levels through mechanised drainage. A network of channels flow into two central channels which drain the area. Water from the channels is pumped into the sea with electric pumps. The channels often support swamp vegetation and a number of small ponds occur near the southern perimeter of the site. The Wildfowl Reserve is part the North Slob and is an integral part of a much larger estuarine complex which includes the natural estuarine habitats of Wexford Harbour along with another flat area of reclaimed farmland known as the South Slob. Both the north and south slobs were empoldered behind 19th century seawalls. Wexford Harbour which sits between the North and South slob is the lowermost part of the estuary of the River Slaney, a major river that drains much of the south-east region. The estuarine habitats of Wexford Harbour support shallow marine waters, but at low tide extensive areas of intertidal flats are exposed. Salt marshes fringe the intertidal flats. This extensive wetland complex, of which the Wexford Wildfowl Reserve is an integral part, is one of the most important ornithological sites in Ireland.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Marine or coastal wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
F: Estuarine waters	Estuarine waters	1	3.5	Representative
H: Intertidal marshes	Saltmarsh	2	1	Representative

Human-made wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type
2: Ponds	Ponds	2	1.2
4: Seasonally flooded agricultural land	Seasonally flooded agricultural land	1	98

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

<no data available>

4.3.2 - Animal species

Other noteworthy animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Pop. size	Period of pop. est.	% occurrence	Position in range /endemism/other
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	768	2011-2015		Occurs in nationally important numbers

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
C: Moist Mid-Latitude climate with mild winters	Cfb: Marine west coast (Mild with no dry season, warm summer)

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

Entire river basin

Upper part of river basin

Middle part of river basin

Lower part of river basin

More than one river basin

Not in river basin

Coastal

Please name the river basin or basins. If the site lies in a sub-basin, please also name the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.

The site is part of the Lower Slaney Estuary and North Slob channels transitional waterbody (EPAmaps.ie).

4.4.3 - Soil

Mineral

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

No available information

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes No

4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Usually permanent water present	
Usually seasonal, ephemeral or intermittent water present	

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update
Water inputs from surface water	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Marine water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water destination

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Marine	No change

Stability of water regime

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Water levels fluctuating (including tidal)	unknown

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Significant erosion of sediments occurs on the site

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Significant accretion or deposition of sediments occurs on the site

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Significant transportation of sediments occurs on or through the site

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Sediment regime is highly variable, either seasonally or inter-annually

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Sediment regime unknown

4.4.6 - Water pH

Alkaline (pH>7.4)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Fresh (<0.5 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Mixohaline (brackish)/Mixosaline (0.5-30 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Eutrophic

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Mesotrophic

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Oligotrophic

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Dystrophic

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the site itself: i) broadly similar ii) significantly different

Surrounding area has greater urbanisation or development

Surrounding area has higher human population density

Surrounding area has more intensive agricultural use

Surrounding area has significantly different land cover or habitat types

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Erosion protection	Soil, sediment and nutrient retention	Medium
Pollution control and detoxification	Water purification/waste treatment or dilution	Low
Climate regulation	Local climate regulation/buffering of change	Low
Climate regulation	Regulation of greenhouse gases, temperature, precipitation and other climactic processes	Low
Hazard reduction	Flood control, flood storage	High
Hazard reduction	Coastal shoreline and river bank stabilization and storm protection	High

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Picnics, outings, touring	High
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	High
Scientific and educational	Educational activities and opportunities	High
Scientific and educational	Long-term monitoring site	High

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Biodiversity	Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part	Low
Soil formation	Accumulation of organic matter	Low
Soil formation	Sediment retention	Low
Nutrient cycling	Storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients	Low
Nutrient cycling	Carbon storage/sequestration	Low

Within the site:

Outside the site:

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes No Unknown

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

- i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland
- ii) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland
- iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples

Description if applicable

This site has been created through land reclamation from the sea. The habitat is currently maintained by seawalls, a network of drainage channels and the mechanised pumping of these channels out to sea. The resulting reclaimed polderland now forms an agri-ecosystem farmed in such a way that is sympathetic to the foraging requirements of wintering geese. The management of the hydrology of the site combined with sustainable agricultural carried out by the local farmers ensures that the structure and function of this, largely man-made, ecosystem is maintained and provides suitable habitat for the bird species that utilise it.

- iv) relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
National/Federal government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Foundation/non-governmental organization/trust	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional):

Wexford Wildfowl Reserve is jointly owned and managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Birdwatch Ireland. NPWS is an Irish government agency whose main aim is to secure the conservation of a representative range of ecosystems to maintain and enhance populations of flora and fauna in Ireland. Birdwatch Ireland, a national voluntary organisation is Ireland's largest conservation charity and is dedicated to the protection of Ireland's wild birds and their habitats.

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS).
Birdwatch Ireland (BWI)

Provide the name and/or title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Maurice Eakin

Postal address:

National Parks and Wildlife Service,
90 North King Street,
Smithfield, Dublin,
Ireland
D07 N7CV

E-mail address:

maurice.eakin@housing.gov.ie

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Please describe any other threats (optional):

Threats to this site are minimal as the Reserve is jointly owned by NPWS and Birdwatch Ireland and these lands are rented to farmers to farm the land in such a way that is sympathetic to the foraging requirements of wintering geese.

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

Regional (international) legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
EU Natura 2000	Wexford Harbour & Slob Special Protection Area. Site Code:004027	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004076	whole
Other international designation	Wexford Wildfowl Reserve	http://www.conserveireland.com/biogenetic.php	whole

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
nature reserve			whole

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

Ia Strict Nature Reserve

Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection

II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation

III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features

IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention

V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation

VI Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

Measures	Status
Legal protection	Implemented

Habitat

Measures	Status
Catchment management initiatives/controls	Implemented
Land conversion controls	Implemented

Species

Measures	Status
Threatened/rare species management programmes	Implemented

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Harvest controls/poaching enforcement	Implemented
Research	Implemented
Regulation/management of wastes	Implemented
Regulation/management of recreational activities	Implemented

Other:

The Wexford Wildfowl Reserve Ramsar site lies within the Wexford Harbour & North Slobs SPA (004076). Under European and national legislation, Ireland must maintain at favourable conservation status areas designated as Special Protection Areas. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites. Conservation objectives of this site have been set for the SPA and are listed below; these can be accessed on NPWS.ie.

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA; and Wetlands [A999].

Legislation in the Republic of Ireland affords protection to bird species outside of designated sites e.g. all wild bird species are afforded protection by The Wildlife Act 1976. Waterfowl shooting is under license only, managed by the National Parks & Wildlife Service. Wexford Wildfowl Reserve is routinely surveyed as part of I-WeBS which provides comprehensive counts of the bird species using the site.

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? No

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes No

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes No

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site:

Wexford Wildfowl Reserve has a visitor centre with a range of research, educational and monitoring activities and a Reserve warden.

URL of site-related webpage (if relevant): <https://www.wexfordwildfowlreserve.ie/>

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? No need identified

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Water regime monitoring	Implemented
Water quality	Implemented
Birds	Implemented
Animal community	Implemented

A requirement of the Water Framework Directive is that benthic macro-invertebrates must be sampled from coastal and transitional waters at least twice within a river basin cycle (6 years) in order to classify these water bodies. The site is sampled and monitored under this programme. As a EU Natura 2000 site, it is required under Article 12 and 17 of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives respectively, that the status and trends of the conservation objectives within the site are monitored and reported on every 6 years. The site is monitored under the I-WEBS scheme.

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

Colhoun, K. and Cummins, S. 2013. Birds of conservation concern in Ireland 2014-2019. Irish Birds 9: 523-544

Lewis, L. J., Burke, B., Fitzgerald, N., Tierney, T. D. & Kelly, S. (2019) Irish Wetland Bird Survey: Waterbird Status and Distribution 2009/10-2015/16. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 106. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Ireland

NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA 004076. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2015) Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA 004076 Natura 2000 Form. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2014) Site Synopsis for Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA 004076. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2011) Conservation objectives supporting document for Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA 004076 and The Raven SPA (Site Code 4019). Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

<http://www.wexfordwildfowlreserve.ie/>

<http://www.iucnredlist.org/>

[Birdwatchireland.ie](http://www.birdwatchireland.ie)

<http://www.ramsar.org>

<http://eunis.eea.europa.eu>

The Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS).

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

<no file available>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

<no file available>

vi. other published literature

<no file available>

<no data available>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



Wexford Wildfowl reserve (NPWS, 19/9/2017)



Wexford Wildfowl reserve (NPWS, 19/9/2017)



Wexford Wildfowl reserve (NPWS, 19/9/2017)



Wexford Wildfowl reserve (NPWS, 19/9/2017)



Wexford Wildfowl reserve (NPWS, 19/9/2017)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation 1984-11-15