

# SITES OF IMPORTANCE FOR WILDLIFE IN GWYNEDD (INCLUDING STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY SITES)

Importance	Designation	Explanation
International (more than one designation could be relevant to each site)	RAMSAR sites	Sites that are internationally important such as wetlands, special because of the wildfowl migrating or overwintering there.
	Special Protection Areas (SPA)	Habitats of international importance to birds. Designated to ensure the survival and reproduction of rare breeding and migratory birds.  These form part of an international network of important sites in the European Union (EU) called "Natura 2000"
	Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	Internationally important sites such as natural habitats. Designated in order to protect habitats or species under threat or rare within the European Union. Sites that include habitats or species under specific threat hold a 'priority' status. These sites form part of the 'Natura 2000' network (see above).
National	National Nature Reserves (NNR)	Sites of national and international importance, biological or geological, managed mainly for nature conservation. The NNR is owned or leased by the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), or by organisations approved by CCW. In some cases they are managed under Nature Conservation Agreements by landowners or the land user
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Collectively the SSSI's form a collection of sites of biological or geological interest. They are designated by CCW in keeping with public guidelines. Some SSSI's have been noted by CCW as Nature Conservation Review Sites or Geological Conservation Review Sites which are individual key sites of national importance.  Note: Every RAMSR site, SAC and SPA has been designated as a SSSI.
Regional or local	Wildlife Sites (WS)	WS are not statutory wildlife sites, but are important on a local level. WS have evolved in partnership with the regional Wildlife Trust, and are similar to the Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation. In Gwynedd these sites have been carefully selected in accordance with specific criteria. The criteria are similar to the criteria used for selecting SSSI's, although the threshold is lower and specifically relevant to Gwynedd. These WS are of substantial local nature conservation value, and in some cases the quality of habitat is equal to a SSSI.

	<p>Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and Non-statutory Nature Reserves (NsNR)</p>	<p>LNR's are of local value, at least in terms of nature conservation. Usually they are designated and managed by the local authority. The quality of some LNR's are equal to a SSSI.</p> <p>In Gwynedd many NsNR's are noted by the North Wales Wildlife Trust. Many of these are SSSI's.</p>
	<p>Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)</p>	<p>RIGS are important non-statutory sites for identifying geological, geomorphological and earth science features outside of the SSSI's and statutory nature reserves. These are static sites that don't evolve. They are noted by local geologists (members of Gwynedd &amp; Anglesey RIGS Group), in consultation with landowners, in accordance with specific criteria.</p>

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