

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds: Special Protection Area

SOUTH PENNINE MOORS
(SOUTH PENNINE MOORS, PHASE 2)

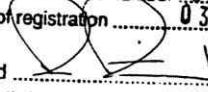
The South Pennine Moors proposed Special Protection Area is an upland of international importance. It provides habitat for an important assemblage of breeding moorland and moorland fringe birds.

The South Pennine Moors (phase 2) qualifies under Article 4.1 of the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409) by supporting nationally important breeding populations of two species listed in Annex 1. The most recent count is of 28 pairs of merlin *Falco columbarius* (4.3% of the British breeding population) and 292 pairs of golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* (1.2%). The density of breeding golden plover is high compared to other regional populations in northern England and Scotland.

The site qualifies under Article 4.2 by supporting, in summer, a diverse assemblage of breeding migratory birds of moorland and moorland fringe habitats including: golden plover, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, dunlin *Calidris alpina*, snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, curlew, redshank *Tringa totanus*, common sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*, short-eared owl *Asio flammeus*, whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*, wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*, ring ouzel *Turdus torquatus* and twite *Carduelis flavirostris*. The population of twite in the South Pennines is geographically distinct and isolated from others in northern Britain, Ireland and Europe.

The South Pennine Moors support the southernmost assemblage in Britain of breeding merlin, red grouse *Lagopus lagopus*, golden plover, dunlin, short-eared owl and twite. These species are either extremely local, rare or absent further south. Together with the scattered populations of merlin, golden plover, dunlin and twite in Ireland these are the most southwestern breeding populations in the world. The South Pennine Moors thus have an important role in maintaining the breeding range of these species.

CAR
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Signed 
on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment