

**NEDDERN BROOK WETLANDS,**  
**CALDICOT SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC**  
**INTEREST**



Aerial photo of Neddern Brook Wetlands, Caldicot

## **YOUR SPECIAL SITE AND ITS FUTURE**

Your Special Site and its Future' is part of our commitment to improve the way we work with SSSI owners and occupiers. In it, we try to explain what is special about the wildlife on your site, and what care is needed to look after it into the future.

All SSSIs are considered to be of national importance and we recognise the crucial role that owners and occupiers play in their management and protection. We need you to share your views and knowledge of this site with us, to help safeguard it.

We hope that you will find 'Your Special Site and its Future' interesting and helpful. Please contact us if there is anything about the site and its management that you would like to discuss.

## **What is ‘special’ about the wildlife at Neddern Brook Wetlands, Caldicot SSSI?**

Neddern Brook Wetlands, Caldicot has 1 special feature.

This site is important for its **important wet grassland, which supports wintering bird species**. The area is regularly flooded during the winter months; the birds take advantage of the mild winters in Wales, and return to their breeding grounds in spring.

The area is important for birds such as the Bewick swan’s, redshanks and wigeon. Neddern Brook Wetlands also supports breeding birds such as lapwing, mute swan and reed bunting.

This type of habitat is now very rare in Wales; sites have been lost or modified through a combination of drainage and excessive grazing.

As well as the features listed above, Neddern Brook Wetlands, Caldicot has other habitats that contribute to the special wildlife interest. These include running water, marginal and inundation vegetation. This diversity of habitats supports a wide range of species and are a key part of the special interest of the site.

## **What do we want Neddern Brook Wetlands, Caldicot to look like?**

*The following is a description of how we would like to see the features at Neddern Brook Wetlands, Caldicot*

During the winter months Neddern Brook wetlands is a flooded haven for wildfowl. Wigeon can be seen around the shallow edges of the water bobbing up and down feeding on submerged plants. Wigeon numbers reach well over 2000.

Large flocks of redshank are present, with numbers in the region of 750. They are also found in the shallow waters feeding on worms and snails.

The Bewick’s swan prefers the slightly deeper waters upending and feeding on grasses, grains and roots. At Neddern Brook wetlands there are around fifty individuals.

These species are present each winter through the period of December to February or longer. There is sufficient habitat to support these populations in the long term.

## **What management is needed on Neddern Brook Wetlands, Caldicot SSSI and why?**

Although Neddern Brook Wetlands is an excellent place for wildlife it does require some management to ensure that there is sufficient habitat for wintering birds. CCW’s priority is to work with you to achieve this. We place a great importance on our relationships with owners and occupiers, because without your help, it will be impossible for us to safeguard the special features on your land.

## **What does this mean in practice?**

There are a number of different factors that could damage the special features at Neddern Brook Wetlands, Caldicot if they are not properly managed. These are the ones we regard as most important:

**Grazing** There should be a range of habitats through the winter months that will allow successful use of the site by redshank, wigeon, and the Bewick's swan. The land will be grazed by cattle or sheep between May to September. This grazing will produce short grass on the margins of the flooded meadows that will provide suitable feeding ground for the wildfowl. Without grazing the grassland will become overgrown and unsuitable for these birds to feed from.

**Hydrology** The continuation of the special feature is dependent on enough water filling up the site over the winter period. However, Neddern Brook Wetlands is water table dependant this means we have little control over the site filling up. CCW should however be consulted about any abstractions that occur within a defined zone around this site.

**Chemical run-off from adjacent land** The site is susceptible to nutrient enrichment arising from run-off from adjoining agricultural land. This should be monitored and appropriate action taken if seen to be having a detrimental effect on the wetland.

**Disturbance** The area is a popular location for local people walking their dogs; usually this is well away from the water. Our aim is to balance people's enjoyment of the reservoir with the needs of wintering birds

### **Finally**

Our knowledge of wildlife is far from complete. It is possible that new issues may arise in the future, whilst other issues may disappear. This statement is written with the best information we have now, but may have to change in the future as our understanding improves. Any information you can provide on the wildlife of your site and its conservation would be much appreciated.

**If you would like to discuss any aspect of your SSSI, or have any concerns about your SSSI, please contact your local CCW office.**

**Your local office is;**

**Unit 7, Castleton Court, Fortran Road, St Mellons, Cardiff, CF3 0LT**

**Telephone: 02920 772400 /Fax: 02920 772412**