

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds

CITATION FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA)

**NORTH RONA & SULA SGEIR
(UK9001011)**

INCLUDING MARINE EXTENSION

Site description:

The uninhabited islands of North Rona and Sula Sgeir, together with several outlying rocky islets and adjacent waters, lie 65 km north of Lewis. The coastlines of both islands consist mainly of cliffs except for two low-lying peninsulars on North Rona. North Rona is well covered by peat or soil, and vegetated by sub-maritime grassland. Sula Sgeir lies about 15 km west of North Rona. It is much the smaller of the two islands and has little soil or vegetation.

The boundary of the Special Protection Area overlaps with the boundary of North Rona & Sula Sgeir SSSI, and the seaward extension extends approximately 2 km into the marine environment to include the seabed, water column and surface.

Qualifying interest (N.B. All figures relate to numbers at the time of classification except where amended by the 2001 SPA Review):

North Rona & Sula Sgeir qualifies under **Article 4.1** of the EU Birds Directive by regularly supporting populations of European importance of two Annex 1 species: **European storm-petrel** *Hydrobates pelagicus* (>1% of the GB breeding population) and **Leach's storm-petrel** *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* (>1% of GB breeding population).

The site qualifies under **Article 4.2** by regularly supporting populations of European importance of the migratory species **Northern gannet** *Morus bassanus* (10,400 pairs; 4% of the North Atlantic biogeographic population) and **common guillemot** *Uria aalge* (43,200 individuals; 1% of the biogeographic population of the sub-species *U. a. albionis* and *U. a. aalge*).

The site also qualifies under **Article 4.2** by regularly supporting **in excess of 20,000 individual seabirds**. It regularly supports 130,000 seabirds including nationally important populations of the following species: **Northern fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis* (11,500 pairs; 2% of the GB population), **great black-backed gull** *Larus marinus* (730 pairs, 4% of the GB population), **black-legged kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla* (5,000 pairs; 1% of the GB population), **razorbill** *Alca torda* (2,300 individuals; 2% of the GB population), and **Atlantic puffin** *Fratercula arctica* (5,300 apparently occupied sites, 1% of the GB population).

All counts are for 1986 except those for Northern fulmar (combined counts for Sula Sgeir, 1985 and North Rona, 1986) and Northern gannet (1994).

Area: 6,850.58 Ha

National Grid References: North Rona HW 810324, Sula Sgeir HW 620305
OS Sheet 1:50,000 - 8

Classified on 30th October 2001, with marine extension classified on 25th September 2009

Scottish Natural Heritage
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