

EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds
CITATION FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA)

**HERMANESS, SAXA VORD AND VALLA FIELD
(UK9002011)**

INCLUDING MARINE EXTENSION

Site description:

Hermaness, Saxa Vord and Valla Field Special Protection Area lies in the north-west corner of the island of Unst, Shetland, at the northernmost tip of Britain. It consists of 100-200 m high sea cliffs and adjoining areas of grassland, heath and blanket bog.

The boundary of the SPA is coincident with that of the Hermaness SSSI, Saxa Vord SSSI, and Valla Field SSSI. The seaward extension extends approximately 2 km into the marine environment to include the seabed, water column and surface.

Part of the site (Hermaness SSSI and Saxa Vord SSSI) was previously classified as Hermaness and Saxa Vord SPA on 29 March 1994 for Northern fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*, Northern gannet *Morus bassana*, great skua *Catharacta skua*, common guillemot *Uria aalge* and Atlantic puffin *Fratercula arctica*.

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

Hermaness, Saxa Vord and Valla Field SPA qualifies under **Article 4.1** by regularly supporting populations of European importance of the **Annex I** species **red-throated diver** *Gavia stellata* (average of 26 proven breeding pairs for 1994 - 1999, 3% of the British breeding population).

Hermaness, Saxa Vord and Valla Field SPA also qualifies under **Article 4.2** by regularly supporting populations of European importance of the **migratory** species; **Northern gannet** *Morus bassana* (16,400 pairs in 1999, 8% of the British and 6% of the world population), **great skua** *Catharacta skua* (788 pairs in 1997, 9% of the British and 6% of the world population) and **Atlantic puffin** *Fratercula arctica* (55,000 individuals in 1999, 6% of the British and 3% of the total population of the sub-species *F. a. grabae*).

Hermaness, Saxa Vord and Valla Field SPA qualifies further under **Article 4.2** by regularly supporting **in excess of 20,000 individual seabirds**. It regularly support 157,500 seabirds including nationally important populations of the following species: **Northern fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis* (19,539 pairs in 1999; 4% of the GB population), **European shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* (450 pairs in censuses in 1995 and 1999; 1% of the GB population), **common guillemot** *Uria aalge* (25,000 individuals over two surveys carried out in 1996 and 1999; 2% of the GB population) and **black-legged kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla* (922 pairs in 1999; 0.2% of the GB population).

Area: 6,833.04 ha

National Grid References: HP 590135 and HP 628173

OS 1:50,000 Sheet: 1

Classified on 31st December 2001, including marine extension classified on 25th September 2009

Scottish Natural Heritage
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