

COUNTY: HAMPSHIRE **SITE NAME:** LYMINGTON RIVER REEDBEDS SSSI

Local Planning Authorities: Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council

National Grid Reference: SZ 323969

Ordnance Survey Sheets 1:50,000: 196 **1:25,000:** SZ 39

Hectares/Acres: 41.1/101.56

Date Notified (1949 Act): 1978

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (1981 Act): 1984

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

The Lymington River reedbeds occupy the former upper section of the Lymington River estuary, from which salt water was excluded by a one-way tide flap in the nineteenth century. There are c. 30ha of reed *Phragmites australis*, grading upstream into wet, unimproved meadowland with a moderately rich neutral grassland flora. Reedbeds of this size are local in distribution and are particularly important; (a) as breeding sites for passerine birds specialised to this habitat; (b) as autumn roosts for migrant birds, notably yellow wagtails *Motacilla flava*, swallows *Hirundo rustica*, house martins *Delichon urbica* and sand martins *Riparia riparia*; and (c) as sites where migrant passerine birds assemble the at reserves necessary for successful southward autumnal migration by exploiting the large aphid populations characteristic of wet reedbeds. In the latter context reed beds on the south coast are of special importance. The present site is one of about 12 coastal reedbeds of more than 20ha on the central south coast.