

SD

33/3

**County:** Lancashire  
**Marton Mere**

**Site Name:**

**Blackpool**

**District:** Blackpool

**Status:** Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)  
notified under Section  
28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act,  
1981.

**Local Planning Authority:** Blackpool Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** SD 343354                      **Area:**  
38.5 (ha)      95.1 (ac)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50 000 102                      1:10**  
**000      SD 33 NW**

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1979

**Date of Last Revision:** –

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1984

**Date of Last Revision:** –

## **Other Information:**

1. Boundary corrected to follow lake margin.

## **Reasons for Notification:**

Marton Mere is a freshwater lake situated some two miles to the east of the centre of Blackpool. The Mere is believed to occupy a kettle-hole, formed during the last glaciation over 14,000 years ago, and is thus one of only two remaining water bodies in Lancashire of natural origin, the other being Hawes Water at Silverdale which is also a SSSI. The water level has, however, been subject to much alteration by man, and in 1976 the water surface was enlarged from about 15 acres to its present 44 acres, with loss of some marginal habitat. Much of the formerly extensive reedbed surrounding the Mere was submerged at this time, but many small patches of reed still exist around the lake margin along with other emergent plant species such as reed-grass, yellow flag, bur-reed, glaucous bulrush and lesser reedmace (an uncommon plant in north-west England) which together provide an attractive habitat for water birds. In spite of the high level of pressure from recreational developments on surrounding land and from its proximity to a large centre of population, the open water and fringing habitats of Marton Mere support a wide range of waterfowl and wetland birds.

The breeding community of the site is of particular note: approximately 35 different species are known to use the Mere as a breeding site, and the community is an especially rich example of its kind. Marton Mere is the most important

breeding site in Lancashire for little grebe (up to 10 pairs), and is also of county importance for its population of great crested grebe, coot (second only to Leighton Moss), mallard, pochard and shoveler. The scarcity of similar habitat in the area, and its position along a major migration route between breeding grounds in the far north and wintering grounds further south, make Marton Mere an important resting place for a wide variety of birds on passage. Over 140 species of passage migrant have been recorded with approximately 100 of annual occurrence.

The site is also attractive as a wintering ground for over 65 species of bird and is of county importance for its wintering population of coot, mallard, shoveler and tufted duck.

The muddy margins of the lake – a rare habitat in Lancashire – provide important feeding areas for a variety of waders, including ruff, redshank, greenshank, curlew and oystercatcher, while the surrounding scattered scrub and vegetated areas provide attractive nesting and feeding habitat for several small passerine bird species.

The scientific importance of the site is further enhanced by the availability of accurate, detailed ornithological records documenting the history of Marton Mere over a period of many years.