

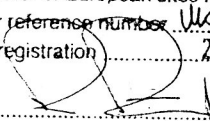
ASHDOWN FOREST (EAST SUSSEX)

The Ashdown Forest proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA) is an extensive area of common land on mainly sandy soils between East Grinstead and Crowborough in East Sussex. It comprises a mosaic of wet and dry heath, valley bog and woodland, and supports several uncommon plants, a rich invertebrate fauna and nationally important numbers of breeding nightjar and Dartford warbler. The boundary of the pSPA is coincident with that of the Ashdown Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The site qualifies for designation under Article 4.1 of the EU Birds Directive by regularly supporting nationally important breeding populations of two Annex 1 species. The site supports 35 pairs of nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* (1991-92 survey), representing 1.1% of the British population, and 20 pairs of Dartford warbler *Sylvia undata* (1994 survey), representing 2.1% of the British population. Other regularly occurring Annex 1 species include woodlark *Lullula arborea*, hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* and great grey shrike *Lanius excubitor*.

The diverse range of heathland and woodland habitats on the site supports an important assemblage of breeding species, some of which have declined in England over recent years. Notable species regularly breeding on the site include hobby *Falco subbuteo*, tree pipit *Anthus trivialis*, redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*, stonechat *Saxicola torquata* and wood warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*, in addition to nightjar and Dartford warbler.

SPA Citation
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