



UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat Descriptions

Reedbeds

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Please note: this document was uploaded in November 2016, and replaces an earlier version, in order to correct a broken web-link. No other changes have been made. The earlier version can be viewed and downloaded from The National Archives:
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Reedbeds

The definition of this habitat remains unchanged from the pre-existing Habitat Action Plan (<http://tna.europarchive.org/20110303145238/http://www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=19>), a summary of which appears below.

Reedbeds are wetlands dominated by stands of the common reed *Phragmites australis*, wherein the water table is at or above ground level for most of the year. They tend to incorporate areas of open water and ditches, and small areas of wet grassland and carr woodland may be associated with them. There are about 5,000ha of reedbeds in the UK, but of the 900 or so sites contributing to this total, only about 50 are greater than 20ha, and these make a large contribution to the total area. Reedbeds are amongst the most important habitats for birds in the UK. They support a distinctive breeding bird assemblage including six nationally rare Red Data Birds: the bittern *Botaurus stellaris*, marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, crane *Grus grus*, Cetti's warbler *Cettia cetti*, Savi's warbler *Locustella luscinioides*, and bearded tit *Panurus biarmicus*, provide roosting and feeding sites for migratory species (including the globally threatened aquatic warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*), and are used as roost sites for several raptor species in winter. Five GB Red Data Book invertebrates are also closely associated with reedbeds, including red leopard moth *Phragmataecia castanaea* and a rove beetle *Lathrobium rufipenne*.