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## Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

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## Salisbury Plain

### Site details

<b>Country</b>	England
<b>Unitary Authority</b>	Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Bristol/Bath area, Hampshire and Isle of Wight
<b>Centroid*</b>	SU077497
<b>Latitude</b>	51.24583333
<b>Longitude</b>	-1.889444444
<b>SAC EU code</b>	UK0012683
<b>Status</b>	Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
<b>Area (ha)</b>	21465.94

\* This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC.

### General site character

Heath, Scrub, Maquis and Garrigue, Phygrana (1.9%)  
 Dry grassland, Steppes (94.7%)  
 Humid grassland, Mesophile grassland (0.9%)  
 Improved grassland (0.9%)  
 Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (0.4%)  
 Coniferous woodland (0.4%)  
 Mixed woodland (0.4%)  
 Other land (including Towns, Villages, Roads, Waste places, Mines, Industrial sites) (0.4%)

[Natura 2000 standard data form](#) for this site as submitted to Europe (PDF, < 100kb).

[Interactive map](#) from MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside).

### Note:

When undertaking an appropriate assessment of impacts at a site, **all** features of European importance (both primary and non-primary) need to be considered.

### Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site

#### 5130 [Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands](#)

Salisbury Plain represents **Juniperus communis formations** near the southern edge of the habitat's range on chalk in southern England, where it is particularly rare. This site is the best remaining example in the UK of lowland juniper scrub on chalk. The juniper is juxtaposed with extensive **6210 semi-natural dry grassland** and chalk heath. In some cases the scrub has developed recently by invasion of open chalk grassland and contains few typical shrub species. However, most of the scrub is of the southern mixed scrub type and is enriched by roses *Rosa* spp., wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, wayfaring tree *Viburnum lantana* and other species characteristic of the type.

#### 6210 [Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates \(Festuco-Brometalia\) \(\\* important orchid sites\)](#)

This site hosts the priority habitat type "orchid rich sites". Salisbury Plain in central southern England is believed to be the largest surviving **semi-natural dry grassland** within the EU and is therefore the most important site for this habitat in the UK. It supports extensive examples of CG3 *Bromus erectus* grassland, which is the most widespread and abundant calcareous grassland found in the UK. It also contains extensive areas of the rare CG7 *Festuca ovina* – *Hieracium pilosella* – *Thymus praecox* grassland, and one of the largest examples of CG6 *Avenula pubescens* grassland.

### Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site

Not applicable.

### Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site

#### 1065 [Marsh fritillary butterfly](#) *Euphydryas* (*Eurodryas*, *Hypodryas*) *aurinia*

Salisbury Plain represents **marsh fritillary *Euphydryas aurinia*** in chalk grassland in central southern England, and contains a cluster of large sub-populations where the species breeds on dry calcareous grassland. The site extends the range of ecological variability included in the SAC series.

### Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection

Not applicable.



Location of Salisbury Plain SAC/SCI/cSAC

*Many designated sites are on private land: the listing of a site in these pages does not imply any right of public access.*