

Whitesands Quarry

Location	East Lothian
EcoCo Management Zone	Whitesands Quarry
Lead Partner	RSPB



Site Description

Whitesands is on the site of a limestone quarry, and consists of an open water body created as a result of the quarrying, as well as a large area of neutral grassland and patches of scrub. It is adjacent to the coastal Barns Ness SSSI.

What are we going to do?

RSPB have developed a management plan which sets out a vision to restore the site to maximise its value for biodiversity. The deep, steep-sided water body will be reprofiled to enhance its value for breeding and wintering birds, creating sheltered areas and areas with emergent vegetation. Islands will be created to allow birds to breed away from disturbance by predators. In addition, tern rafts will be built to hopefully establish a new tern breeding colony. The grassland will be managed to enhance its species richness, and new areas of scrub will be planted.

What will this achieve?

This work will enhance **ecological coherence** along the East Lothian coast. The functionality and biodiversity of the site will increase, as will its ability to function as an element within a wider matrix of sites along the coastline. It will operate as valuable additional habitat adjacent to the SSSI.

Links

www.rspb.org.uk
<http://gateway.snh.gov.uk/sitelink>
www.ecocolife.org.uk

What is ecological coherence?

The project has adopted an adapted version of a definition proposed by R. Catchpole (2013).

At the scale of the whole network, coherence is achieved when: the full range of variation in valued features is represented; replication of specific features occurs at different sites over a wide geographic area; dispersal, migration and genetic exchange of individuals is possible between relevant sites; all critical areas for rare, highly threatened and endemic species are included; and the network is resilient to disturbance or damage caused by natural and anthropogenic factors.

In order to determine ecological coherence for the project sites the main measurable parameters being considered are; patch size, biological diversity, habitat structural and functional connectivity, ecological functionality and presence of endangered, rare or endemic species.

In essence this can be summarised for habitats as **'more, bigger, better, and better connected'**.

Learn more at "Ecological Coherence Definitions in Policy and Practice - Final Report". R. Catchpole, Aspen International. Contract report to Scottish Natural Heritage, No. 41102

