

## Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds Special Protection Area (SPA)

**Name:** Crouch and Roach Estuaries (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3)

**Unitary Authority/County:** Essex

**Boundary of the SPA:** The SPA boundary is coincident with the boundaries of Crouch and Roach Estuaries Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

**Site description:** The Crouch and Roach Estuaries are located on the coast of south Essex in eastern England. The River Crouch occupies a shallow valley between two ridges of London Clay, whilst the River Roach is set predominantly between areas of brick earth and loams with patches of sand and gravel. The intertidal zone along the Rivers Crouch and Roach is 'squeezed' between the sea walls along both banks and the river channel. Unlike more extensive estuaries elsewhere in Essex, this leaves a relatively narrow strip of tidal mud which, nonetheless, is used by significant numbers of birds. The site is of importance for wintering waterbirds, especially dark-bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*.

The Crouch and Roach Estuaries is an integral component of the phased Mid-Essex Coast SPAs (see overleaf).

**Size of SPA:** 1,847.87 ha.

### Qualifying species:

The site qualifies under **Article 4.2** of the Directive (2009/147/EC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the biogeographical populations of the following regularly occurring migratory species (other than those listed in Annex I) in any season:

Waterbird species	Season	5-yr peak mean (1989/90-1993/94)
Dark-bellied brent goose <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>	Winter	5,509 individuals (2.2% World)

### Assemblage qualification:

The site qualifies under **Article 4.2** of the Directive (2009/147/EC) as it is used regularly by over 20,000 waterbirds (waterbirds as defined by the Ramsar Convention) in any season:

- The area is regularly used by 27,021 individual waterbirds over winter (5 year peak mean 1990/91 – 1994/95).

### Bird counts from:

CRANSWICK, P.A., WALTERS, R.J., EVANS, J. & POLLITT, M.S. 1995. The Wetland Bird Survey 1993-94: Wildfowl and Wader Counts. BTO/WWT/RSPB/JNCC, Slimbridge

### Status of SPA:

- 1) River Crouch Marshes SPA was classified under Directive 79/409/EEC on 24 March 1995;
- 2) Extensions to the River Crouch Marshes SPA were classified under Directive 79/409/EEC on 29 June 1998 and the site was re-named Crouch and Roach Estuaries (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3) SPA.
- 3) Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA was classified under Directive 2009/147/EC with further extensions on 11 July 2018.



The Crouch and Roach Estuaries (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3) SPA is one of the linked series of Mid-Essex Coast SPAs. These are:

SPA site	Date Classified	Component SSSI	Area (ha)
Dengie (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 1)	24 March 1994	Dengie	3,0127.22
Colne Estuary (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 2)	28 July 1994	Colne Estuary	2,701.37
Crouch and Roach Estuaries (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3)	29 June 1998 (extended 11 July 2018)	Crouch & Roach Estuaries	1,847.87
Blackwater Estuary (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 4)	12 May 1995	Blackwater Estuary	3,657.10
Foulness (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 5)	4 October 1996	Foulness	10,968.97

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for England.  
**Register reference number: UK9009244**  
 Date of registration: 11 July 2018

*Clive Porro*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of the Secretary of State for  
 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

