

27. Martin Mere

Geographical Coordinates 53°35'N 2°49'W

Area 119ha

Location About 20km north of the city of Liverpool, in the county of Lancashire, north-west England.

Date of Ramsar Designation 28 November 1985.

Other International Designations Special Protection Area under EC Directive 79/409.

National Designations Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Principal Features A low-lying complex of open water, marsh and grassland habitats overlying deep peat and occupying part of the former site of a large freshwater lake - the original Martin Mere - drained for agriculture in the nineteenth century. The present wetland has been created on an area of rough pasture acquired by the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) in 1974. Peak counts of wintering water birds regularly exceed 20,000 individuals (25,827*), including internationally important numbers* of *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* (747), *C. cygnus* (513), *Anser brachyrhynchus* (Martin Mere is within the range of the south-west Lancashire wintering population of this species, which averaged 32,967 birds during 1987/88-1991/92), *Anas penelope* (9,606) and *A. acuta* (1,344). A wintering/passage *Philomachus pugnax* (e.g. passage flock of 50 in spring 1992), and scarce or rare plant and invertebrate species are amongst features of national importance. WWT manages the area as a nature reserve, with a large visitors centre, trails and hides. (2a,3a,3b,3c)

*All figures are average peak counts for the five winters 1987/88 to 1991/92.

Conservation Issues No reports of any problems have been received.