

## **East Dunbartonshire background information**

East Dunbartonshire is found to the north of the City of Glasgow and is bounded by the Campsie Fells and the Kilpatrick Hills to the west. It covers an area of 66.3 square miles, three-quarters of which is agricultural land. The population of East Dunbartonshire currently stands at around 110,000. The local authority area contains a number of key towns such as Bearsden, Milngavie, Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch and Lenzie along with the villages Twechar, Milton of Campsie, Lennoxton, Torrance and Balmore.

The natural landscape of East Dunbartonshire is composed of a rich mix of upland, peatland, wetland, and grassland areas with a modest number of woodland sites. Rolling farmlands are found around Bishopbriggs and extend eastwards, south and east of Kirkintilloch to Twechar, while lowland areas run through the valleys of the Glazert, Lower Allander and Kelvin. Rugged moorland hills are represented by the distinctive Campsie Fells and Kilpatrick Hills with the former designated in 1981 and then again in 1995 as an area of Regional Scenic Importance.

A substantial amount of land in East Dunbartonshire is represented by large swathes of open agricultural areas, used primarily for grazing livestock and cereal production. Although such sites can often be heavily managed there are ample opportunities for landowners and managers to improve biodiversity on their land through habitat enhancement projects along field boundaries (such as hedgerow management, woodland shelter belts, watercourse development and planting of buffer strips for wildlife).

### *Watercourses*

The area is well known for its series of lochs, marshes and floodplain areas that are often associated with the main watercourses running through the area, namely the Rivers Kelvin and Allander, Glazert Water, Luggie Water, Bothlin Burn, Pow Burn and the Forth & Clyde Canal. Such areas are very important wildlife corridors and are of prime importance for waders and wildfowl. Local Nature Conservation Sites include Antermony Loch, Mugdock Reservoir, Bardowie Loch, Balmore Haughs, Hayston Oxbows, Springfield Marsh, Broomhill, Fin Glen, Merklands, Millersneuk, Gadloch, Waterside & Barbeth Flood Pools and Twechar Marsh. Dougalston, Tannoch, Kilmardinny and St. Germain's lochs have some floral interest, and given their urban setting are regularly used for recreation.

### *Woodland*

Generally woodland habitat is poorly represented, but significant areas of broad-leaved woodland and/or conifer plantations can be found at Cadder Wilderness SSSI, Bar Hill, Cawder Golf Course Woods and Lennox Forest. Ancient and semi-natural woodland of note are represented at Mugdock Wood and Woodilee

Woods along with small remnants found along Fin Glen and Campsie Glen. Extensive deciduous woodland can also be found near Mugdock Reservoir, in particular Mugdock Wood SSSI and the southern woodland along Baldernock Road. The former is a relatively large undisturbed ancient deciduous woodland. Here a number of woodland habitats are represented, ranging from dry acidic oakwood to wet alderwood. The plant communities at Mugdock Wood are fairly distinct, with a number of locally rare vascular plants that support a rare invertebrate assemblage. Some areas edging the River Kelvin around Killermont Golf Course, along with parts of the woods at Auldmurroch Burn and along the Glazert and Allander Waters (near Milngavie Golf Club House and Dougalston) are shown on maps as woodland from 1750 onwards. Mains Plantation has an extensive and diverse ground flora and scrub layer, and holds modest areas of Oak and Birch woodland. In the gorges and valleys of Dunbartonshire, Alder, Willow, Holly, Birch and some Elm are commonly found. Upland areas support a number of small areas of native woodland, while commercial conifer plantations can often dominate.

The great mansion plantings of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century has added character to many areas such as Dougalston, Killermont, Kilmardinny, Lennox Castle, Kincaid, Glorat, Gartshore, Cadder estates, Woodilee Hospital, Shoenstatt at Haughhead, and much of Milngavie. Urban woodland sites such as Templehill Woods, Merkland Local Nature Reserve and Cairnhill Woods also hold a great variety of woodland species and offer a high quality recreational resource. Unfortunately, Rhododendron planted extensively in Policy woodlands and other alien species such as Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam, have grown to such an extent that it now dominates the shrub layer in many woodlands, thus suppressing the growth of native ground flora.

#### *Upland Areas*

The Campsie Fells and Kilpatrick Hills, comprise mainly of rough grazing for sheep with sections of conifer plantation, form a spectacular feature of the countryside. Native broadleaf woodland can be found in small patches in the foothills or confined to narrow glens. Both hill ranges are popular with walkers, the Campsies especially so with the main access points being via the conservation village of Clachan of Campsie and the Crow Road.

#### *Grasslands*

Neutral grassland is one of the most common habitat types in East Dunbartonshire. There are a number of species-rich grasslands to the south and east of Lennox Forest that have arisen from a combination of acid and base-rich soils, and low intensity grazing management. Examples of important grassland areas include South Braes SSSI, Sculliongour Limestone Quarry SSSI (calcareous grassland), South Brae Marsh, Barraston Quarry Grasslands, Fanniescroft and Redmoss Grasslands.

There are a number of marshy grasslands in East Dunbartonshire that range from species poor rush dominated pastures to floristically diverse marshes such as Balgrochan Marsh and Springfield Marsh, that have a colourful array of wildflowers, grasses, sedges, rushes, ferns and mosses. Current threats to marshy grassland include drainage and development.

#### *Lowland Bogs*

Lenzie Moss, Low Moss, High Moss, Barbeth Moss and Gartshore Moss represent a significant amount of lowland bog habitat in central western Scotland. Unfortunately, these areas are constantly threatened from dangers such as drainage, agricultural improvements, peat removal and development pressure. Specific plants linked to such areas include Cotton Grass, Cross-leaved Heath, Sun Dew, Spagnum mosses and the carnivorous Common Butterwort. Plantations on sites such as Low Moss, High Moss and Easterton Moss have negatively impacted on the quality of the peatland sites and require positive management.

#### *Wildlife corridors*

The key wildlife corridors include disused railway lines that have been left to develop a semi-natural flora, and areas associated with watercourses such as the Forth & Clyde Canal, River Kelvin, Glazert Water, Allander Water, Bothlin Burn and Luggie Water, that run through both agricultural land and urban areas. Such corridors often support a range of grassland, marsh and tall herb communities along with (in some cases) substantial strips of woodland and wetland. To ensure the protection of such corridors, it is especially important for these areas to be recognised as being valuable entities in themselves, and either left untouched or enhanced in the Planning process. On a smaller scale road verges and hedgerows can also act as wildlife corridors, if properly managed.

#### *SSSI*

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are nationally important sites for their fauna, flora or features of geological interest. They are afforded special legal protection under Section 28 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, and represent areas of highest national conservation importance. Scottish Natural Heritage is responsible for the management of SSSI's, further information on which can be found through the weblink [www.snh.gov.uk/SNH](http://www.snh.gov.uk/SNH). East Dunbartonshire has five SSSIs.

#### *Local Nature Reserves*

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are areas that have been declared under section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 on grounds of their nature conservation interest, along with relevance to education and use of the community for the enjoyment of local wildlife. East Dunbartonshire has one LNR (Merklands) and one proposed LNR (Lenzie Moss).

## East Dunbartonshire SSSIs and LNRs

<b>Name of site</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Merkland	Local Nature Reserve
Cadder Wilderness	Site of Special Scientific Interest
Manse Burn	Site of Special Scientific Interest*
Mugdock Wood	Site of Special Scientific Interest
Sculliongour Limestone Quarry	Site of Special Scientific Interest
South Braes	Site of Special Scientific Interest

\*Noted for its geological interest

## LNCS

Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS, previously known as SINCS) are non-designated sites that are recognised on account of certain local important features of habitat, plant or animal communities or geology.

## East Dunbartonshire LNCS

Site Name
Allander Toll & Langbank
Alloch Dam & Mount Dam
Antermony Loch and Grasslands
Ashen Well Dams
Auchenstarry Marsh
Auldmurroch Burn and Woods
Balgrochan Marsh
Balmore Haughs
Bar Hill/Bar Hill pond
Barbeth Moss (N.B. this site extends into North Lanarkshire)
Bardowie Loch and Wetland
Bardowie Woodland
Barraston Quarry Grasslands
Birdston Meadows
Blairskaith Quarry
Bridgend Marshes
Broomhill Ox-Bow Lake & Broomhill Hospital Marsh
Buchley Farm Pools
Buchley Sand Pit
Cadder Moss Plantation
Cadder Yard
Campsie Glen
Castlehill Grasslands
Carbeth Wood
Cawder Golf Course Woods
Clober Dam
Craigbarnet Heronry Wood
Craigdhu Wedge

Craigmaddie and Mugdock Reservoirs  
Craigmaddie Plantation  
Craigmaddie Muir/Craigend Muir/Blairskaith Muir  
Craigmore Mire  
Craigton Woods  
Douglas Muir  
Dougalston Estate and Loch  
Easterton Moss Plantation  
Easterton Woods Complex  
Fin Glen  
Finniescroft  
Gartshore Moss and Grayshill Woods  
Gartshore Woods, Kennel & Heronryhill Plantation  
Glazert Wood  
Glen Orchard/Blairnile Wood  
Hayston Oxbows  
High Moss Plantation  
Hilton Park Golf Course  
Hutcheson Hill  
Kenmure House Grounds (part)  
Kenmure Marsh (North eastern part)  
Kilmardinny Loch  
Lennox Forest  
Lenzie Moss  
Low Moss Plantation  
Mains Plantation  
Manse Burn  
Meikle Reive  
Merklands  
Millersneuk Wetland  
Milngavie Golf Course  
Mugdock Woods and Drumclog Muir (excluding area contained with the SSSI)  
Oxgang (Woodilee Hospital Woods)  
Red Cleuch Burn  
Redmoss Grasslands  
Rookery Plantation, Old Ammunition Dump & Railway Woodland  
St. Flannans grasslands  
St. Germain's Loch  
South Brae Marsh  
Springfield Marsh  
Tannoch Loch  
Templehill Wood  
Torrance Marsh  
Twechar Marshes  
Waterside Bing  
Waterside Flood Pool & Barbeth Pool  
Whitefield Pond  
Woodburn Glen Woods  
Woodburn Reservoir

In addition to the above sites, special mention should also be made of the numerous wildlife corridors found in Dunbartonshire that play host to, and allow the movement of, wildlife throughout the region. Such corridors are of considerable importance, especially when they are located in highly populated areas with development pressure. Wildlife corridors often come in the form of watercourses, woodland strips and hedgerows and can be vital for harbouring and protecting wildlife when managed in the correct way.

Major Wildlife corridors in East Dunbartonshire:

Forth & Clyde Canal and embankments

River Kelvin and its tributary burns

Glazert Water

Allander Water

Luggie Water

Railway lines and embankments