

Marais et tourbières des vallées de la Somme et de l'Avre //



RAMSAR SITE
NUMBER
2322



Area :
13 100 ha

Date of designation :
Decembre 18th 2017

Coordinates :
49° 56' N 02° 20' E

Summary

Somme and Avre valleys' marshes and peat bogs form one of the largest alkaline peat complexes in northwestern Europe.

This wetland is essentially fed by the water table of the chalk and that of the alluvial deposits at the bottom of the valley. It has the originality to shelter, on a linear of nearly 200 kilometers, a continuum of peaty marshes with diversified habitats hosting a particularly rich fauna and flora. In these spaces used since prehistoric times, many uses are practiced today. In order to preserve this heritage with its wealth and multiple functions, an active and multi-partner management is implemented.

International importance

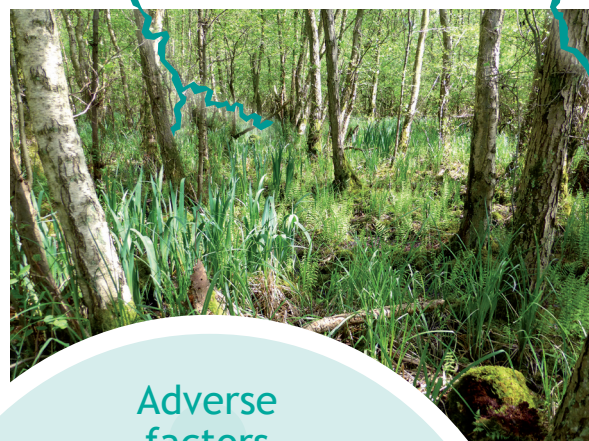
This site is the nesting and staging ground for many paludicolous birds, part of whose life cycle depends on the quality and preservation of these areas. The plant communities are typical of alkaline, terrestrial, aquatic or amphibious bog vegetation. Cradle of prehistoric archaeology (Acheulean...), scene of the two great world conflicts of the twentieth century (Battle of the Somme...) and inspiring setting for artists of all nationalities, these peat bogs are unique in their physical, ecological, landscape, historical and cultural qualities.

General location

This Ramsar site is located in the Hauts-de-France region, in the Somme department. Following the main axis formed by the river Somme, it extends from East to West from the limit of the department of Aisne, to the junction with the Ramsar site of the Bay of the Somme.



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Services provided by wetlands

For thousands of years, close relations have been woven between these alkaline peaty environments, the fauna, the flora and the men. Over time, they have provided food, raw materials (reeds, peat, wood...), and places to hide during wars. Home to nearly 70% of the department's inhabitants, this territory also has an economic (breeding, tourism) and leisure (hunting, fishing or walking) vocation. These environments are real filters and contribute to the improvement of water quality while mitigating floods and low water levels. Finally, by storing carbon, the marshes and peat bogs limit the phenomena of global warming.



Adverse factors

Some human achievements (canalisation of the Somme, drainage, catchment, etc.) have considerably complicated the hydraulic functioning of these wetlands. For many years, traditional human activities (extensive breeding, wood cutting, reed mowing, peat extraction...) have shaped landscapes of great quality.

More recently, embankments, the development of light leisure dwellings, silting, water pollution and drainage operations have altered the expression of the biodiversity of this peat corridor. Finally, the numerous connections favor the rapid dissemination of invasive exotic species.

Four species representative of the site



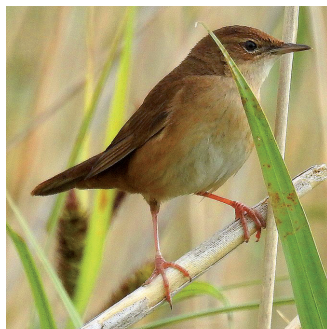
EUROPEAN EEL
(*Anguilla anguilla*)

The European eel is in critical danger of extinction. This fish, whose life cycle is still relatively unknown, reproduces in the Sargasso Sea and grows in European rivers. Faced with the decline in populations, observed since the 1980s, France has set up a national management plan. Eel monitoring stations have therefore been set up on the Somme River within this framework.



GREATER SPEARWORT
(*Ranunculus lingua*)

The greater spearwort is a large plant of the buttercup family, a kind of "great buttercup of the reed beds" with large yellow flowers easily identifiable. This nationally protected species enjoys fairly open marshes and peaty pond edges. Within this Ramsar perimeter is one of the largest populations of the great moat of France.



SAVI'S WARBLER
(*Locustella luscinioides*)

The savi's warbler is a small migratory passerine that finds here the wet reedbeds it loves. The song of the locustelle is a prolonged stridulation reminiscent of that of the cricket. It feeds mainly on insects but also on spiders and small gastropods. Present in the reeds in spring and summer, it begins its migration towards Africa in autumn.



ORANGE-SPOTTED EMERALD
(*Oxygastra curtisii*)

The fine-bodied cordulia is an odonate (dragonfly) protected at the European level. It is easily identifiable thanks to small yellow spots which contrast with its eyes and its metallic green abdomen. The cordulie appreciates waters, running or stagnant, lined with woody. The larvae live in submerged plant debris. Adults are visible from May to August.

Translation from french : H.Zarrouki Ministry of ecological transition (MTE)



Biodiversity

With its 13,100 hectares, the marshes and peat bogs of the Somme and Avre valleys host a mosaic of diversified peaty environments (reedbeds, aspen, wet meadows, low marshes...) on which specific and sometimes rare and threatened species develop (dwarf bittern, colored pondweed, creeping ache...). Their populations are often important on a national scale (the largest French population of crested fern, for example) or on an international scale (eel, paludicolous birds, etc.). This vast peaty ecological continuum thus constitutes a real melting pot which combines diversity of ecosystems, diversity of species and diversity of their genetic heritage.



Management and conservation

- The preservation and management of this heritage are implemented in a coordinated manner thanks to various partners (Departmental Council, Conservatoire d'espaces naturels de Picardie, Conservatoire botanique national de Bailleul, EPTB Somme-Ameva, Conservatoire du littoral) and the financial support of the European Union, the State, the Hauts-de-France region, the Artois-Picardy Water Agency, the Department of the Somme, and other communities.
- In addition, a land action has been engaged for a long time as well as several agro-environmental programs.
- On the scale of the Ramsar site, several management documents coexist. Therefore, an integrating management plan, built in articulation with the Ramsar site of the Bay of the Somme, will be carried out with the objectives of supporting a territorial animation going beyond the administrative limits, and of building a program of knowledge and coordinated intervention on the scale of the site.



The Ramsar Convention

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, commonly known as the Ramsar Convention, is a global inter-governmental treaty that provides the frame-work for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. It is the only global treaty to focus on one single ecosystem.