GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Switzerland is a small land-locked country in central Europe surrounded by Germany in the north, Austria and Liechtenstein in the east, Italy in the south and France in the west. Thirty-one sites are identified as Important Bird Areas (IBAs), covering 13% or 5,474 km² of the total surface area of 41,293 km². The previous pan-European inventory identified 13 IBAs (Grimmett and Jones 1989). Twenty new sites have been added, mainly in montane areas (Table 1). Part of one site, former site CH006, has been dropped, whilst the Pointes de Marin area of this site has been incorporated into current site 011.

Topographically, the country can be separated into three main regions. The Jura mountains form the north-western border of Switzerland and occupy approximately 10% of the country’s land area. The region is characterized by limestone mountains reaching a maximum altitude of 1,677 m. It contains three IBAs (001, 002, 003). The Alps (up to 4,634 m) cross southern Switzerland from west to east, and occupy about 60% of the country’s area. There are five IBAs in the northern Alps (016, 017, 018, 019, 020), five in the central Alps (021, 022, 023, 024, 025) and six in the southern Alps (026, 027, 028, 029, 030, 031). These two mountain chains enclose the Central Plateau, which is typified by glacial sediments, large lakes, river systems, several parts of which are IBAs (006,
Important Bird Areas in Europe – Switzerland

Table 1. Summary of Important Bird Areas in Switzerland.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IBA code</th>
<th>1989 code</th>
<th>International name</th>
<th>National name</th>
<th>Administrative region</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Criteria (see p. 11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mont Tremble</td>
<td>Vaud</td>
<td>31,000 B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002</td>
<td></td>
<td>La Brevine et Les Ponts-de-Martel</td>
<td>Neuchâtel</td>
<td>23,200 B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>003</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jura mountains of Baseland/Solothurn</td>
<td>Aargau, Basel-Stadt, Basel-Landschaft, Solothurn</td>
<td>35,000 B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>004</td>
<td></td>
<td>'Genes Moos' plain and Niederwil reservoir</td>
<td>Bern, Fribourg</td>
<td>16,100 A4i, B1i, B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>005</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lowslands of Zurich and lower valley of the River Thur</td>
<td>Schaffhausen, Thurgau, Zürich</td>
<td>22,700 B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>006</td>
<td>CH011</td>
<td>Lake Geneva: Versoix and Hermance–Geneva</td>
<td>Genève</td>
<td>1,100 A4i, B1i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>007</td>
<td>CH010</td>
<td>Lake Geneva: Rolle–Céligny</td>
<td>Genève, Vaud</td>
<td>1,500 A4i, B1i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>008</td>
<td>CH009</td>
<td>Lake Geneva: Granges</td>
<td>Vaud</td>
<td>6,600 A4i, B1i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>009</td>
<td>CH005</td>
<td>Lake Neuchâtel: Coredlettes–Vaumaur</td>
<td>Vaud</td>
<td>690 A4i, B1i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>010</td>
<td>CH012</td>
<td>River Rhône: Geneva–Verbois reservoir</td>
<td>Genève</td>
<td>7,000 A4i, B1i, B2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>011</td>
<td>CH014</td>
<td>Lake Neuchâtel: southern shore</td>
<td>Vaud</td>
<td>17,000 A4i, A4ii, B1i, B2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>012</td>
<td>CH004</td>
<td>Klingnau reservoir</td>
<td>Aargau</td>
<td>410 B1i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>013</td>
<td>CH003</td>
<td>End of Lake Constance and River Rhine until Biberbühle</td>
<td>Schaffhausen, Thurgau</td>
<td>480 A4i, A4ii, B1i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>014</td>
<td>CH001</td>
<td>Lake Constance: Bay of Ermingen</td>
<td>Thurgau</td>
<td>530 A4i, A4ii, B1i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>015</td>
<td>CH002</td>
<td>Lake Constance: Bay of Constance</td>
<td>Thurgau</td>
<td>230 A4ii, B1i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>016</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-alpine region of Pays d'Enhaut</td>
<td>Bern, Fribourg, Vaud</td>
<td>37,100 A3, B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>017</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-alpine region of Gurin</td>
<td>Bern, Fribourg</td>
<td>16,800 A3, B1iv, B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>018</td>
<td></td>
<td>Augstmatthorn</td>
<td>Bern</td>
<td>17,200 A3, B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>019</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-alpine region of Schwyz</td>
<td>Zug, Schwyz</td>
<td>35,600 A3, B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>021</td>
<td></td>
<td>Central Valais between Sierre and Visp</td>
<td>Valais</td>
<td>27,800 A3, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>022</td>
<td></td>
<td>Valley of Zermatt</td>
<td>Valais</td>
<td>22,100 A3, B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>023</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aletsch region</td>
<td>Valais</td>
<td>4,750 A3, B2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>024</td>
<td></td>
<td>Heimzenberg mountain and surrounding valleys</td>
<td>Graubünden</td>
<td>29,000 A3, B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>025</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Engadine and Swiss National Park</td>
<td>Graubünden</td>
<td>101,100 A3, B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>026</td>
<td></td>
<td>Simpion region</td>
<td>Valais</td>
<td>14,700 A3, B2, B3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>027</td>
<td></td>
<td>Piora–Dôtra</td>
<td>Ticino</td>
<td>9,700 A3, B2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>028</td>
<td></td>
<td>Maggia valley</td>
<td>Ticino</td>
<td>14,700 A3, B2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>029</td>
<td>CH013</td>
<td>Bolle di Magadino</td>
<td>Ticino</td>
<td>1,400 B1i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>030</td>
<td></td>
<td>Generoso mountain</td>
<td>Ticino</td>
<td>6,100 B2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>031</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bregaglia valley</td>
<td>Graubünden</td>
<td>10,800 A3, B2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Important Bird Areas in Switzerland that support important numbers of one or more congregatory species (i.e. meeting criteria A4 and/or B1). IBAs meeting both criteria A4 and B1 for the species are shown in bold. IBAs meeting only criterion B1 for the species concerned, and not A4, are shown in normal type. For key to ‘Season’, see p. 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>IBA code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Podiceps cristatus</td>
<td>Great Crested Grebe</td>
<td>W 007, 008, 009, 011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phalacrocorax carbo</td>
<td>Cormorant</td>
<td>W 009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana stenura</td>
<td>Gadwall</td>
<td>W 004, 012, 014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netta rufina</td>
<td>Red-crested Pochard</td>
<td>W 010, 011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aythya nyroca</td>
<td>Tufted Duck</td>
<td>W 006, 010, 011, 013, 014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mergus merganser</td>
<td>Goosander</td>
<td>R 006, 007, 008, 011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

007, 008, 009, 010, 011, 012, 013, 014, 015), and agricultural landscapes (IBAs 004, 005).

ORNITHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Ninety-eight species of European conservation concern (SPECs) breed regularly in Switzerland (Tucker and Heath 1994). Ten species are listed as SPEC 2. 36 as SPEC 3 and 51 as SPEC 4. Crex crex, the only SPEC 1 species, occurs in Switzerland in small numbers, but no longer breeds regularly. Crex crex does not meet criteria at any site but is recorded in three IBAs fulfilling criteria for other species listed in Table 2. Together, they hold approximately 20–30% of all waterbirds wintering in Switzerland. The IBAs on Lac de Neuchâtel (010, 011) are particularly important for Netta rufina and since the beginning of the 1990s they have regularly held 15–25% of the south-west/central European population. Several IBAs are important for resident Mergus merganser, part of a discrete central European breeding population (Table 2). In winter these birds mix with migrating individuals from northern European populations. Additionally, 20–30 individuals of Aythya nyroca (SPEC 1) winter on Swiss waters.

For breeding species the selection of IBAs centres on areas with the highest densities of birds. This approach is adopted primarily because many of these species are dispersal breeders. IBAs hold a considerable proportion of the Swiss breeding population of a number of SPECs (meeting criteria B2 or B3), such as Milvus
migrans, M. milvus, Picus viridis, Monticola saxatilis, Turdus torquatus and Serinus citrinella (Table 3). Of the IBAs in the Jura, three in the northern Alps (016, 019, 020), four in the central Alps (021, 022, 024, 025) and one in the southern Alps (026) hold 5–10 species meeting the B2 or B3 criteria.

For three highly dispersed breeding species, Aquila chrysaetos, Falco peregrinus and Tyto alba, application of the IBA criteria would have resulted in the selection of extremely large IBAs. Therefore, these three species were not considered during the initial selection of IBAs but are used as supporting arguments for prioritizing candidate sites.

Switzerland is particularly important for alpine species which are characteristic of the Eurasian high-montane biome, in particular Prunella collaris, Tichodroma muraria, Pyrrhocorax graculus, Montifringilla nivalis and Serinus citrinella. Fourteen sites meet the A3 criterion. However, no sites are selected on the basis of meeting the A3 criterion alone, but biome-restricted species are used to support the final selection of IBAs based on criteria B2 and B3. Other important species of the Eurasian high-montane biome, though not restricted to it, are Tetroa tetricus, Alectoris graeca, Monticola saxatilis and Turdus torquatus.

**HABITATS**

Switzerland’s varied topography results in a high diversity of habitats, dependent upon factors such as altitude, aspect, slope and substrate. There are often steep altitudinal gradients in small areas. Five altitudinal zones (colline, montane, subalpine, alpine, nival) can be distinguished with characteristic vegetation-types and breeding species associated with reedbeds (Phragmites).

**IMPACTS ON IBAs – LAND-USE AND THREATS**

The landscape has been greatly altered by man for urban, agricultural and industrial development. Remaining natural and semi-natural habitats are under high pressure from recreation and tourism, including lakes on the Central Plateau as well as forests and increasingly remote alpine regions. Recreation and tourism is

---

**Table 3.** Species of European conservation concern with significant breeding populations at Important Bird Areas in Switzerland (meeting any IBA criteria).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Minimum national breeding population (gain)</th>
<th>Proportion (%) of national population breeding at all IBAs in Switzerland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milvus migrans</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>&gt;25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milvus milvus</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>&gt;20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquila chrysaetos</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falco tinnunculus</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>&gt;15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falco peregrinus</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetroa tetricus</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>&gt;15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alectoris graeca</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>&gt;15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyto alba</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynx torquilla</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>&gt;20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picus canus</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>&gt;15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picus viridis</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>&gt;20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picoides tridactylus</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>&gt;15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monticola saxatilis</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>&gt;30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turtur torquatus</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>&gt;20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serinus citrinella</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>&gt;25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Only those species of European conservation concern (see Box 1, p. 12) that meet IBA criteria in Switzerland are listed.
2. Sites not selected based on B2/B3 criteria for those species alone (see overview text).
3. Data are taken from the BirdLife/EBCC European Bird Database 1998 (Heath and Borggreve 2000).
4. Approximate minimum proportion based on knowledge of the populations present in Switzerland.

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**Figure 1.** Habitats at Important Bird Areas in Switzerland (see Appendix 3 for definitions of habitats).

**Figure 2.** Land-uses at Important Bird Areas in Switzerland (see Appendix 3 for definitions of land-uses).
the most widespread land-use and threat to IBAs, although its extent and importance can be difficult to quantify (Figures 2 and 3). Whilst the hunting of waterbirds has been reduced since the previous pan-European inventory (Grimmett and Jones 1989), disturbance from water sports, fishing, boats and walkers is continuing to increase. Control of water-levels, canalization of rivers and embankment of shorelines has further reduced the quality and availability of habitat for many wetland birds, although these are largely historical problems rather than current threats. Efforts to lower nutrient input to wetlands have been successful, reducing eutrophication problems, although these are largely historical and not particularly strong. Parts of many IBAs are also protected by cantonal or communal legislation which often offers stronger protection. However, details of these reserves are not included in this inventory.

In mountainous regions, natural habitats occur mainly on steep inaccessible slopes and above the treeline. Despite increasing exploitation for tourism, habitats and their associated bird communities in the Alps have been less affected than those in the lowlands. However, infrastructure development, particularly increasing road density and other transport networks, are a major threat (Figure 3), especially as they facilitate access to remote areas resulting in more intense disturbance of birds such as Tetrao tetrix.

Twenty-eight IBAs have some sort of agricultural land-use (Figure 2). On the Central Plateau, natural habitats have become very rare. In most areas, agriculture is very intensive and features such as fallow strips, hedges and trees are scarce. Meadows are heavily fertilized and are cut frequently, offering few suitable habitat for species such as Crex crex and Coturnix coturnix. However, changes in agricultural policy are favouring more environment-friendly land-use practises. Whilst this is likely to stop further degradation of agricultural areas, to date it has not improved the habitat for birds. In contrast, marginal agricultural areas in the mountains are being abandoned. Whilst this leads to increased forest cover, many open areas in the Alps are being lost as habitats for species of open and semi-open landscapes. This applies in particular to the south of Switzerland where species like Tetrao tetrix and Alectoris graeca are affected.

Forestry remains an important land-use (Figure 2). Despite major clearance during the last century, forests still occupy 30% of the country’s land area and are expanding again. The majority are managed, which has led to changes in the composition and age structure of tree communities. Woodpeckers and other hole-nesting birds suffer from a shortage of dead wood and breeding sites, but the situation is gradually improving.

PROTECTION STATUS

National protection
Legislation in Switzerland is organized on federal, cantonal (regional) and communal levels. Habitat inventories, which identify the majority of protected areas, are part of federal legislation, although implementation is usually a cantonal matter. Most IBAs overlap with some protected areas included in the federal inventories. Only three contain no nationally protected areas at all (Figure 4). However, protection offered by some federal legislation is not particularly strong. Parts of many IBAs are also protected by cantonal or communal legislation which often offers stronger protection. However, details of these reserves are not included in this inventory.

National protected areas fall into the following categories:

1. National Park
The only Swiss National Park (established 1914) lies within site 025. It provides complete protection and human intervention in the successional processes is prohibited. Public access is restricted to marked paths.

![Figure 3. Threats at Important Bird Areas in Switzerland (see Appendix 3 for definitions of threat types and impact categories).](image)

![Figure 4. The national protection status of Important Bird Areas in Switzerland.](image)

![Figure 5. The international protection status of Important Bird Areas in Switzerland.](image)
and drainage are forbidden. Sites are fully protected. Building, soil modification, peat-cutting are forbidden.


Sites are fully protected. Building, soil modification, peat cutting and drainage are forbidden.


This inventory protects mire areas with buffer zones with the aim of preserving the landscape with its characteristic elements/structures.


Sites are fully protected. Building, soil modification, peat cutting and drainage are forbidden.


Sites are fully protected. Building, soil modification, peat cutting and drainage are forbidden.


Designed to protect sites and their fauna and flora. The natural water dynamics must be maintained or if possible restored.

7. Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (1977)

Extensive areas with the aim of protecting the landscape as a whole. Interventions are possible as long as they do not impair the site as a whole.


Hunting is prohibited at these sites.

**CONSERVATION**

- NGOs play an important role in the management of protected areas. In accordance with the political structure of the country, conservation work by NGOs is carried out at national, cantonal and communal levels. On a national level, Schweizer Vogelschutz SSV – BirdLife Switzerland, Pro Natura Schweiz and other NGOs carry out national conservation projects for sites, species and habitats and are involved in lobbying and public awareness work. Regionally, local conservation associations, for example, the approximately 500 local societies that are members of BirdLife Switzerland, conduct conservation projects or manage local nature reserves.

- National species-protection plans focus on Crex crex, Tetrao urogallus and Alauda arvensis. Species action plans have also been prepared at regional levels, for example for Lanius senator and Athene noctua.

- Monitoring programmes exist for most IBAs that are important for waterbirds. They are coordinated by the Swiss Ornithological Institute in Sempach, under the mandate of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape.

**ANALYTICAL METHODS**

- IBAs were identified mainly on the basis of data held by the Swiss Ornithological Institute, in particular the database on the waterbird census and data for the distribution atlas of breeding birds 1993–1996 (Schmid et al. 1998). Local experts were consulted for all IBAs to obtain additional information and to draw site boundaries.

- The atlas of breeding birds 1993–1996 includes interpolated abundance maps which are based on a simplified territory mapping of 7.1% of all 1 km squares in the country. These abundance maps were used to select sites based on high densities for species meeting IBA criteria. The number of breeding pairs was estimated on the basis of the abundance maps. Regional inventories provided additional information.

This density-based approach was adopted primarily because many species are dispersed breeders. Therefore, it is difficult to

---

**Table 4. Protection status of Important Bird Areas in Switzerland.**

A tick (✓) indicates that an IBA overlaps with a protected area (to any extent).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IBA code</th>
<th>International name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001</td>
<td>Mont Tendre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002</td>
<td>La Bévéria and Les Ponts-de-Martel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>003</td>
<td>Jura mountains of Baselland/Solothurn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>004</td>
<td>Frouin Moor plain and Niederriet reservoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>005</td>
<td>Lowlands of Zurich and lower valley of the River Thur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>006</td>
<td>River Rhine: Geneva-Verbois reservoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>007</td>
<td>Lake Geneva: Versoix and Hermance-Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>008</td>
<td>Lake Geneva: Rolle-Céligny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>009</td>
<td>Lake Geneva: Grangettes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>010</td>
<td>Lake Neuchâtel: Concellettes-Vaumarcus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>011</td>
<td>Lake Neuchâtel: southern shore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>012</td>
<td>Klingnau reservoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>013</td>
<td>End of Lake Constance and River Rhine until Ribemont</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>014</td>
<td>Lake Constance: Bay of Emmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>015</td>
<td>Lake Constance: Bay of Constance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>016</td>
<td>Pre-alpine region of Pays d’Enhaut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>017</td>
<td>Pre-alpine region of Gurnigel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>018</td>
<td>Augustinmatt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>019</td>
<td>Pre-alpine region of Schwyz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>020</td>
<td>Upper Tuggenberg and Santis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>021</td>
<td>Central Valais between Sierre and Visp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>022</td>
<td>Valley of Zermatt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>023</td>
<td>Aletsch region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>024</td>
<td>Heienberg mountain and surrounding valleys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>025</td>
<td>Lower Engadine and Swiss National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>026</td>
<td>Simplon region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>027</td>
<td>Piora-Dôtra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>028</td>
<td>Maggia valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>029</td>
<td>Bolle di Magadino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>030</td>
<td>Genesio mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>031</td>
<td>Bregaglia valley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total number of IBAs**

1 6 14 20 15 15 27 7 6

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**Box 1. International legislation and initiatives that are relevant to site conservation in Switzerland (see Appendix 1 for a general description of these agreements).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International</th>
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<tr>
<td>Biodiversity Convention ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramsar Convention ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonn Convention ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Heritage Convention ✓</td>
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<td>MAB Programme ✓</td>
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<td>Pan-European Convention signed ✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention ratified/initiative supported ✓</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

• NGO play an important role in the management of protected areas. In accordance with the political structure of the country, conservation work by NGOs is carried out at national, cantonal and communal levels. On a national level, Schweizer Vogelschutz SSV – BirdLife Switzerland, Pro Natura Schweiz and other NGOs carry out national conservation projects for sites, species and habitats and are involved in lobbying and public awareness work. Regionally, local conservation associations, for example, the approximately 500 local societies that are members of BirdLife Switzerland, conduct conservation projects or manage local nature reserves.

• National species-protection plans focus on Crex crex, Tetrao urogallus and Alauda arvensis. Species action plans have also been prepared at regional levels, for example for Lanius senator and Athene noctua.

• Monitoring programmes exist for most IBAs that are important for waterbirds. They are coordinated by the Swiss Ornithological Institute in Sempach, under the mandate of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape.
apply criteria based on absolute numbers as any area large enough would potentially meet criteria. In order to prioritize between sites, IBAs were only selected where several breeding species met criteria. This allowed the selection of the most important sites as IBAs.

- Numbers of waterbirds are based on counts in mid-November and mid-January. Mean and maximum numbers are presented for the period 1993/94–1997/98 (Swiss Ornithological Institute Sempach, unpublished).
- Site 029 does not strictly meet any IBA species criteria. However, it is the main wetland site in Switzerland south of the Alps. It has been identified as a biogeographically unique wetland under the Ramsar Convention. It has high ornithological importance as a stop-over site for migratory birds, particularly waterbirds, and as a breeding site for wetland birds. For these reasons the site has been included in the IBA inventory with criterion B1i being applied at a site level.
- The main habitats were determined from data on land-use provided by the Federal Department of Statistics. Additional information is based mainly on the breeding bird distribution atlas (Schmid et al. 1998), the inventory for waterbird reserves (Martí and Schifferli 1987), and on information from the current monitoring programme on waterbird reserves of international importance. Additional information was provided by local experts.

### Mont Tendre

**Admin region**: Vaud  
**Coordinates**: 46°33′N 6°16′E  
**Altitude**: 760–1,680 m  
**Area**: 31,000 ha

#### Site description

Two mountain chains in the Jura range, separated by an open valley which contains wet meadows, bogs and a small lake.

#### Habitats
- Forest and woodland (46%; native coniferous forest; mixed forest; treeline ecotone), Grassland (22%; alpine/subalpine/boreal grassland), Artificial landscape (8%; highly improved reseeded grassland; arable land), and Land-use (29%; Agriculture, Forestry, Tourism/recreation).

#### Birds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop. min</th>
<th>Pop. max</th>
<th>Acc.</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milvus migrans</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jets torquilla</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1996</td>
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<td>Turdus torquatus</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serinus citrinella</td>
<td>C 1996</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An important site for breeding subalpine species, particularly Turdus torquatus and Serinus citrinella. Species of global conservation concern that do not meet IBA criteria: Crex crex.

#### Protection status

**National High International None**

3,430 ha of IBA covered by Federal Hunting Reserve (Le Noirmont, 3,430 ha). 25,600 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Vallée de Joux et Haut Jura Vaudois, 26,843 ha). 954 ha of IBA covered by Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Creux du Croue; Vallée de Joux; total area 954 ha). 88 ha of IBA covered by Floodplains of National Importance (Sagnes de la Burginére, 88 ha). 313 ha of IBA covered by 13 Fanlens of National Importance (total area 313 ha). 110 ha of IBA covered by 18 Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (total area 110 ha).

#### Conservation issues

- **Threats**: Agricultural intensification/expansion (B), Intensified forest management (C), Recreation/tourism (A).

The forest tree community is changing as a result of the decline of forest grazing. This has resulted in increased grazing pressure on meadows.

### Important Bird Areas in Europe – Switzerland

511 sites meeting IBA criteria (191 in the Alps, 92 in the Jura, 131 in the Eastern Uplands, 29 in the Western Uplands and 58 in the Eastern Plateau). 277 ha of IBA covered by 13 Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (La Brévine; Les Ponts-de-Martel; total area 227 ha). 19 ha of IBA covered by 4 Fanlens of National Importance (total area 19 ha). 2,624 ha of IBA covered by 2 Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (La Brévine; Les Ponts-de-Martel; total area 2,624 ha).

### Glossary

- **Alpine** zone above the treeline, dominated by alpine meadows, scree and rocky areas.
- **Colline** zone 200–600 m above sea-level, the lowest areas of Switzerland.
- **Montane** zone 400–1,800 m above sea-level, most areas of the Central Plateau and the valley bottoms of the Jura and Alps, characterized by agricultural landscapes and Fagus and Quercus forests.
- **Nival** the highest zone in the Alps where there is permanent lying snow.
- **Subalpine** zone 1,600–2,300 m above sea-level, zone in the Jura and Alps up to the treeline, mostly traditional agriculture and conifer forests.

### Acknowledgements

The IBA project group consisted of Lorenz Heer and Werner Müller from Schweizer Vogelschutz SVS – BirdLife Switzerland and Verena Keller. Hans Schmid and Olivier Biber (until May 1998) from the Swiss Ornithological Institute Sempach. Niklaus Zbinden and Beat Naef-Daenzer (Swiss Ornithological Institute) were also involved in the analysis of data. Fifty-one local experts supplied additional data and comments on the draft list of IBAs. Jürg Schenker (Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape) contributed maps of the federal inventories for each IBA. The project was financially supported by the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape.
Important Bird Areas in Europe – Switzerland

### Conservation issues

**Threats**
- Agricultural intensification/expansion (B)
- Drainage (B)
- Infrastructure (B)
- Intensified forest management (C)
- Recreation/tourism (B)

One of the main threats is agricultural intensification in bog areas. The site is included in a *Crex crex* conservation project and mowing has been delayed in some sites.

### Site description

Hills in the Jura mountains dominated by deciduous woodland and a diverse mosaic of meadows and orchards.

**Habitats**
- Forest and woodland (46%; broadleaved deciduous forest; mixed forest)
- Artificial landscape (52%; highly improved reseeded grassland; arable land; perennial crops/orchards/groves; other urban/industrial areas)

**Land-use**
- Agriculture (42%), Forestry (46%), Tourism/recreation, Urban/industrial/transport (13%)

The site is important for species breeding in lowland forests, such as *Picus canus*, *Dendrocopos medius* and *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*.

### Protection status

**National**
- **Partial**
  - International

**None**
6,660 ha of IBA covered by 2 Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Belchen–Passwang–Gebiet; Gempenplateau; total area 11,015 ha).

### Conservation issues

**Threats**
- Agricultural intensification/expansion (A)
- Industrialization/urbanization (A)
- Infrastructure (A)
- Intensified forest management (C)
- Recreation/tourism (B)

The main threats are from the proximity of urban areas which results in habitat destruction within the IBA from building and disturbance from recreation. Species conservation programmes have started for *Athene noctua* and *Lanius senator*.

### Birds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop min</th>
<th>Pop max</th>
<th>Acc</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Milvus migrans</em></td>
<td>Black Kite</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Milvus milvus</em></td>
<td>Red Kite</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>—</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Falco tinnunculus</em></td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Falco peregrinus</em></td>
<td>Peregrine</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Icterus torquilla</em></td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Pica canus</em></td>
<td>Grey-headed Woodpecker</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Picus sibíris</em></td>
<td>Green Woodpecker</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</em></td>
<td>Redstart</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An important area for birds of open and semi-open landscapes, and for wintering ducks on the reservoir.

### Conservation issues

**Threats**
- Agricultural intensification/expansion (A)
- Drainage (C)
- Industrialization/urbanization (C)
- Infrastructure (B)
- Recreation/tourism (C)

The main threat is from agricultural intensification and fragmentation of the landscape as a result of road-building.

### Site description

A lowland area of open river valleys with a mosaic of *Quercus* woodlands, marshland, agricultural land and small villages.

**Habitats**
- Forest and woodland (36%; broadleaved deciduous forest)
- Artificial landscape (60%; highly improved reseeded grassland; arable land; forestry plantation; perennial crops/orchards/groves; other urban/industrial areas)

**Land-use**
- Agriculture (52%), Forestry (36%), Tourism/recreation, Urban/industrial/transport (10%), Water management

An important site for breeding woodpeckers and raptors, and for wintering *Milvus milvus*.

### Protection status

**National**
- **Partial**
  - International

**None**
12,299 ha of IBA covered by 5 Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Untersee-Hochrein; Glaziallandschaft Neerach-Stadel; Glaziallandschaft zwischen Thur und Rhein; Irchel; Lagerengebiet; total area 31,154 ha). 1 ha of IBA covered by Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (Rübrischeen, 1 ha). 154 ha of IBA covered by 9 Fenlands of National Importance (total area 154 ha). 584 ha of IBA covered by Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Neeracher Ried, 584 ha). 432 ha of IBA covered by Flood-plains of National Importance (Eggrank–Thurspitz, 432 ha).

### Conservation issues

**Threats**
- Agricultural intensification/expansion (A)
- Aquaculture/fisheries (C)
- Industrialization/urbanization (B)
- Infrastructure (B)
- Intensified forest management (C)
- Recreation/tourism (C)

An important area for recreation and tourism, with high ornithological interest.
The main threats are from agricultural intensification and habitat destruction as a result of urban development.

**River Rhône: Geneva–Verbois reservoir**

- **Admin region**: Geneva
- **Coordinates**: 46°11′N 6°06′E
- **Altitude**: 360–420 m  **Area**: 1,100 ha

**Site description**
The site covers the outflow from Lake Geneva and part of the River Rhône, which is partly dammed. The river runs through part of the city of Geneva and a steep, forested valley. In the bay of Geneva, water-fringe vegetation has been removed but some reedbeds remain along the river.

**Habitats**
- Forest and woodland (10%; broadleaved deciduous forest; alluvial/very wet forest), Grassland (5%; mesophile grassland), Wetland (12%; river/stream; standing fresh water; water-fringe vegetation), Artificial landscape (53%; highly improved reseeded grassland; arable land; perennial crop/urban park/garden; other urban industrial area)
- Water-fringe vegetation has largely been destroyed.

**Conservation issues**
The main threat is disturbance from boats. The site is protected from hunting by cantonal legislation.

**Protection status**
National None  **International** None

**Lake Geneva: Rolle–Célingy**

- **Admin region**: Genève, Vaud
- **Coordinates**: 46°23′N 6°17′E
- **Altitude**: 370–380 m  **Area**: 1,500 ha

**Site description**
Part of Lake Geneva with both natural and artificial, developed shorelines.

**Habitats**
- Forest and woodland (9%; broadleaved deciduous forest; alluvial/very wet forest), Wetland (62%; standing fresh water), Artificial landscape (29%; highly improved reseeded grassland; arable land; urban park/garden; other urban industrial areas)
- Land-use: Agriculture (18%), Fisheries/aquaculture, Forestry (8%), Hunting, Tourism/recreation, Urban/industrial/transport (10%)

**Protection status**
National None  **International** None

**Protection issues**
The main threat is disturbance from boats.

**Lake Geneva: Granettes**

- **Admin region**: Valais, Vaud
- **Coordinates**: 46°22′N 6°54′E
- **Altitude**: 380–550 m  **Area**: 6,600 ha

**Site description**
This site includes the upper part of Lake Geneva, with areas of both artificial and natural shoreline, and the degraded delta of the River Rhône, with reedbeds (Phragmites), alluvial forests and fens.

**Habitats**
- Forest and woodland (9%; broadleaved deciduous forest; alluvial/very wet forest), Wetland (76%; river/stream; standing fresh water; water-fringe vegetation; fen/transition mire/riparian), Artificial landscape (15%; highly improved reseeded grassland; arable land; forest plantation; urban park/garden; other urban industrial area)
- Land-use: Agriculture (8%), Fisheries/aquaculture, Forestry (8%), Tourism/recreation, Urban/industrial/transport (8%)

**Protection status**
National None  **International** None

**Protection issues**
The main threat is disturbance from boats.

**Lake Geneva: Versoix and Hermance–Geneva**

- **Admin region**: Geneve
- **Coordinates**: 46°15′N 6°12′E
- **Altitude**: 370–380 m  **Area**: 3,400 ha

**Site description**
The site covers a large bay with a predominantly developed shoreline. Water-fringe vegetation has largely been destroyed.

**Habitats**
- Wetland (94%; standing fresh water), Artificial landscape (5%; other urban industrial area)
- Land-use: Fisheries/aquaculture, Tourism/recreation (100%)

**Protection status**
National None  **International** None

**Conservation issues**
The main threat is disturbance from boats, which has now been greatly restricted.

**Lake Geneva: Vevay**

- **Admin region**: Vaud
- **Coordinates**: 46°20′N 6°06′E
- **Altitude**: 1,500 ha

**Protection status**
National None  **International** None

**Conservation issues**
The main threat is disturbance from boats.

**Lake Geneva: Hermance–Geneva**

- **Admin region**: Vaud
- **Coordinates**: 46°11′N 6°06′E
- **Altitude**: 370–380 m  **Area**: 1,032 ha

**Site description**
An important wintering site for waterbirds, particularly Podiceps cristatus and ducks. Breeding Mergus merganser are part of a geographically separate alpine population.

**Birds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop min</th>
<th>Pop max</th>
<th>Acc Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Podiceps cristatus</strong></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>A A4i, B1i</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Great Crested Grebe</strong></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>A B1i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Mean and maximum numbers.
Protection status
National High International Partial
1,011 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Les Granges, 1,011 ha). 100 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Tour d’Aï–Dent de Corjon, 12,505 ha). 6,010 ha of IBA covered by Water and Migratory Bird Reserve (Les Granges, 6,010 ha). 1,011 ha of IBA covered by Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Les Granges, 1,011 ha). 361 ha of IBA covered by Flood-plains of National Importance (Les Granges, 361 ha). 72 ha of IBA covered by 5 Fenlands of National Importance (total area 72 ha). 330 ha of IBA covered by Ramsar Site (Les Granges, 330 ha).

Conservation issues

Site description

An important area for wintering waterbirds, migrating waders and breeding species associated with reedbeds. The site holds 20,000 or more waterbirds in winter, on a regular basis.

Protection status
National Partial International Partial
2,545 ha of IBA covered by 4 Water and Migratory Bird Reserves (Chevroux–Portebon; Chablais–Cudrefin; Yvonand–Cheyres; Grandson–Champ Pittet; total area 2,545 ha). 4,218 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Rive sud du lac de Neuchâtel, 4,218 ha). 5,405 ha of IBA covered by Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Grande Caricaie, 5,405 ha). 733 ha of IBA covered by Fenlands of National Importance (total area 733 ha). 1,505 ha of IBA covered by 8 Flood-plains of National Importance (Les Grèves d’Yverdon–Les Tuileries; Les Grèves d’Yvonnand; Yvonand; Les Grèves de Chevroux–Portebon; Les Grèves de Cheyres–Font; Les Grèves de Portebon–Cudrefin; Les Grèves du Chablais de Cudrefin; Seewald–Fanel; total area 1,505 ha). 3,063 ha of IBA covered by Ramsar Site (Rive sud du lac de Neuchâtel, 3,063 ha). 1,155 ha of IBA covered by Ramsar Site (Baie du Fanel et Le Chablais, 1,155 ha).

Conservation issues

Site description

An important site for wintering waterbirds, especially ducks.

Protection status
National Partial International None
162 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Grèves vacuoises de la rive gauche du lac, 162 ha). 91 ha of IBA covered by 3 Flood-plains of National Importance (Les Grèves de Conice; Les Grèves de Corelles; Les Grèves de Grandson–Bonnillars–Onnens; total area 91 ha).

Conservation issues

Site description

An important site for waterbirds, with a large number of species. A passage site for waders and ducks.
**Protection status**

**National High** International Partial


**Conservation issues**

No serious threats are known at this site.

The site holds 20,000 or more waterbirds in winter, on a regular basis. Waterbird numbers are given for the whole bay of Ermatingen including both the Swiss and German IBAs.

**Protection status**

**National High** International None

530 ha of IBA covered by Water and Migratory Bird Reserve (Ermatinger Becken, 570 ha). 60 ha of IBA covered by Fenlands of National Importance (Esper Riet, 60 ha). 500 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Untersee–Hochrhein, 12,827 ha).

**Conservation issues**

One of the main threats is disturbance from recreational activities, particularly boating and walking. Hunting is allowed in some places.

**Protection status**

**National None** International None

**Conservation issues**

The main threat is disturbance from boats, divers and hunters.

The site holds 20,000 or more waterbirds in winter, on a regular basis (including *Bucephala clangula*, 1,700 individuals).

**Protection status**

**National High** International None

480 ha of IBA covered by Water and Migratory Bird Reserve (Stein am Rhein, 480 ha). 6 ha of IBA covered by Fenlands of National Importance (Untersee and River Rhine, 6 ha). 480 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Untersee–Hochrhein, 12,827 ha).

**Conservation issues**

The main threat is disturbance from boats, divers and hunters.

The site holds 20,000 or more waterbirds in winter, on a regular basis (includes *Aythya fuligula* 2,500–5,600 individuals). The site only fulfills criteria if the Swiss and German IBAs are considered together.

**Protection status**

**National None** International None

**Conservation issues**

The main threat is disturbance from boats. Most of the area is protected from hunting by cantonal legislation.

**Protection status**

**National None** International None

**Conservation issues**

The main threat is disturbance from boats. Most of the area is protected from hunting by cantonal legislation.

**Protection status**

**National None** International None

**Conservation issues**

The main threat is disturbance from boats. Most of the area is protected from hunting by cantonal legislation.
An important site for species breeding in conifer forests. *Tetrax tetrix*, *Picoides tridactylus*, *Turdus torquatus* and *Serinus citrinella* reach high densities.

### Protection status

National Partial International None
2,298 ha of IBA covered by 2 Federal Hunting Reserves (Les Bimis–Cime des Pasch; PlererReuse–Gumfhh, total area 2,298 ha). 20,582 ha of IBA covered by 3 Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Col des Mosses/La Lécherette; Lauenensee, total area 2,835 ha). 68 ha of IBA covered by 2 Flood-plains of National Importance (Col des Mosses/La Lécherette; Lauenensee, total area 2,835 ha). 68 ha of IBA covered by 2 Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Habkern/Sörenberg; Rotmoos/Eriz; 12,229 ha). 2,010 ha). 2,275 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Hohgant, 2,275 ha). 1,868 ha of IBA covered by 38 Fenlands of National Importance (total area 781 ha). 70 ha of IBA covered by 8 Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (total area 70 ha).

### Conservation issues

No serious threats are known at this site.

### Site description

A subalpine landscape with mixed and natural conifer forests at lower elevations. Above the treeline, there are extensive alpine meadows and rocky areas.

### Pre-alpine region of Gurnigel

Admin region Bern, Fribourg
Coordinates 46°54'N 7°25'E
Altitude 900–2,150 m Area 16,800 ha

### Birds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop min</th>
<th>Pop max</th>
<th>Acc</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td>Falco tinnunculus</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falco peregrinus</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetrax tetrix</td>
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<td>1996</td>
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<td>500</td>
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<td>B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>90</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B2</td>
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<td>Monticola saxatilis</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<td>B2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turdus torquatus</td>
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<td>1996</td>
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<td>2,500</td>
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<td>B3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tidhronoma muraul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serinus citrinella</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Eurasian high-mountain biome.

An important site for species associated with subalpine forest.

### Protection status

National Partial International None
2,010 ha of IBA covered by Federal Hunting Reserve (Augstmatthorn, 2,010 ha). 2,275 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Hohgant, 2,275 ha). 1,868 ha of IBA covered by 38 Fenlands of National Importance (total area 1,910 ha). 417 ha of IBA covered by 40 Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (total area 417 ha). 8,500 ha of IBA covered by Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Habkern/Sörenberg; Rotmoos/Erize; 12,229 ha).

### Conservation issues

No serious threats are known at this site.

### Site description

A mountainous area with alpine meadows dominant at higher elevations and natural conifer forest, interspersed with bogs and pastures at lower altitudes.

### Augstmatthorn

Admin region Bern
Coordinates 46°45'N 7°58'E
Altitude 600–2,245 m Area 17,200 ha

### Birds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop min</th>
<th>Pop max</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. Eurasian high-mountain biome.

An important site for species breeding in conifer forests. *Tetrax tetrix*, *Picoides tridactylus*, *Turdus torquatus* and *Serinus citrinella* reach high densities.

### Protection status

National Partial International None

### Conservation issues

No serious threats are known at this site.

### Site description

A hilly area in the northern foothills of the Alps with lakes, bogs, villages, extensive woodlands, alpine meadows and karst mountains.

### Pre-alpine region of Schwyz

Admin region Zug, Schwyz
Coordinates 47°01'N 8°49'E
Altitude 810–2,800 m Area 35,600 ha

### Birds

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
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<th>Pop min</th>
<th>Pop max</th>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>300</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Eurasian high-mountain biome.

An important site for species breeding in conifer forests. *Tetrax tetrix*, *Picoides tridactylus*, *Turdus torquatus* and *Serinus citrinella*. The site is a migratory bottleneck, where more than 3,000 raptors regularly pass in autumn.
**Protection status**

**National Partial International None** 8,150 ha of IBA covered by 2 Federal Hunting Reserves (Mythen; Silbermn-Jagern–Bodmerenwald; total area 8,500 ha). 8,774 ha of IBA covered by 2 Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Silbermn; Moorlandschaft Rothenthurm–Altinitz–Biberbrugg; 9,043 ha). 32 ha of IBA covered by Flood-plains of National Importance (Biber im Aegeri, 32 ha). 4,440 ha of IBA covered by 4 Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Rothenthurm; Schwantenau; Breitried/Unteriberg; Ibergeregg; total area 4,440 ha). 523 ha of IBA covered by 14 Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (total area 523 ha). 1,776 ha of IBA covered by 56 Fenlands of National Importance (total area 1,776 ha).

**Conservation issues**

**Threats** Infrastructure (C), Recreation/tourism (B).

The main threat is from recreational activities.

**Site description**

A mountainous area with mixed and conifer forest, alpine meadows and rocky areas.

**Habitats** Forest and woodland (31%; broadleaved deciduous forest; native coniferous forest; mixed forest; treeline ecotone); Grassland (43%; alpine/subalpine/boreal grassland); Rocky areas (7%; inland cliff); Artificial landscape (11%; arable land; other urban/industrial areas)

**Land-use** Agriculture (40%), Forestry (30%), Tourism/recreation

**Birds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
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<th>Pop max</th>
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<td>Alectoris graeca</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picus canus</td>
<td>Grey-headed Woodpecker</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picus viridis</td>
<td>Green Woodpecker</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picidae typicalus</td>
<td>Three-toed Woodpecker</td>
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<td>B2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Prunella collaris</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<td>1 Monticola saxatilis</td>
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<td>2,500</td>
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<td>B3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Tichodroma muraria</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<td>1 Pyrrhocorax graculus</td>
<td>Alpine Chough</td>
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<td>B3</td>
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<td>1 Motacilla alba</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>B3</td>
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<td>150</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Eurasian high-montane biome.

An important site for species found in semi-open landscapes, including Alectoris graeca, Jynx torquilla, Phoenicurus phoenicurus and Monticola saxatilis.

**Protection status**

**National Partial International None** 6,300 ha of IBA covered by 3 Federal Hunting Reserves (Alpjuhorn; Luetzerb; Wilerhorn; total area 12,980 ha). 8,666 ha of IBA covered by 4 Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Bergii–Platten; Berno Hochalpen and Aletsch–Bietschhorn–Gebiet; Pfywnald–Ilgraben; Raron–Heinischbiel; total area 48,506 ha). 5 ha of IBA covered by 14 Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (total area 5 ha). 348 ha of IBA covered by 3 Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Mutt, 5 ha). 30 Fenlands of National Importance (total area 30 ha).

**Conservation issues**

**Threats** Agriculture intensification/expansion (C), Recreation/tourism (B).

The main threat is from recreational activities.

**Birds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop min</th>
<th>Pop max</th>
<th>Acc</th>
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<td>B2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turdus torquatus</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>450</td>
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<td>B3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Snowfinch</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>B3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serinus citrinella</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>300</td>
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<td>A3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. Eurasian high-montane biome.

An important site for species associated with subalpine forests.

**Protection status**

**National High International None** 2,590 ha of IBA covered by Federal Hunting Reserve (Santis; Santsgebiet; Speer–Churfirsten–Alvier; total area 48,233 ha). 4,026 ha of IBA covered by 3 Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Schwagel; Grappel; Vorder Hoh; total area 4,026 ha). 142 ha of IBA covered by Raised and 23 Transitional Bogs of National Importance (total area 142 ha). 760 ha of IBA covered by 30 Fenlands of National Importance (total area 760 ha).

**Conservation issues**

**Threats** Agricultural intensification/expansion (C), Recreation/tourism (B).

The main threats are from recreational activities.

**Birds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop min</th>
<th>Pop max</th>
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<td>60</td>
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<td>B2</td>
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<td>450</td>
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<td>B3</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td>B3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Eurasian high-montane biome.

An important site for species associated with subalpine forest.

**Protection status**

**National High International None**
**Valley of Zermatt**

**Site description**
The site consists of a long running valley from south to north in the central Alps. Habitats include natural conifer forests, alpine meadows, rocky areas, traditional agricultural landscapes and urban areas.

Habitats include forest and woodland (20%), native coniferous forest; mixed forest; trellein ectonie; Grassland (33%); alpine/subalpine/boreal grassland; Rocky areas (33%); inland cliff; Artificial landscape (7%); arable land; perennial crops/orchards/groves; urban parks/gardens; other urban/industrial area.

**Land-use** Agriculture (24%), Forestry (24%), Tourism/recreation

**Protection status**
National Partial International

No serious threats are known at this site.

**Conservation issues**
A regional ski-centre, within the IBA, has been extended and plans for further developments exist.

---

**Aletsch region**

**Site description**
A mountain ridge in the central Alps, bordering the Aletsch glacier. The south-facing slope has conifer forests, alpine meadows, pastures and villages. The north-facing hillsides have native Larix–Pinus forest and screes.

Habitats include forest and woodland (43%); native coniferous forest; mixed forest; alluvial/very wet forest; trellein ectonie; Grassland (42%); alpine/subalpine/boreal grassland; Rocky areas (7%); inland cliff; Artificial landscape (5%); arable land; perennial crops/orchards/groves; urban parks/gardens; other urban/industrial area.

**Land-use** Agriculture (39%), Forestry (31%), Tourism/recreation

**Protection status**
National Partial International

No serious threats are known at this site.

**Conservation issues**
No serious threats are known at this site.
**Site description**

This site encompasses the lower part of the central alpine Engadine valley, the Swiss National Park and the Val Müstair in the south. The site includes natural forests, traditional agriculture and alpine regions.

**Habitats**
- Forest and woodland (28%); native coniferous forest; mixed forest; treetline ecosystems.
- Grassland (32%); dry calcareous grassland; alpine/subalpine/boreal grassland.
- Rocky areas (32%); alpine meadows and rocky areas.
- Artificial landscape (6%); arable land; prennial crops/orchards/groves; urban parks/gardens; other urban/industrial areas.

**Importance**
- Land-use: Agriculture (27%), Forestry (22%), Nature conservation/research (32%), Tourism/recreation

**Protection status**

National Partial International None

11,498 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Lagginhal–Zwischbergental, 11,498 ha). 67 ha of IBA covered by Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (Simplonpass/Hopschusee, 67 ha).

**Conservation issues**

No serious threats are known at this site.

**Birds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop min</th>
<th>Pop max</th>
<th>Acc Criteria</th>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pica sibiria</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Eurasian high-montane biome.

An important area for species of subalpine and alpine habitats.

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**Important Bird Areas in Europe – Switzerland**

**Lower Engadine and Swiss National Park**

**Site description**

An important area for species associated with subalpine and alpine habitats and areas used for traditional agriculture. Species of global conservation concern that do not meet criteria: *Crex crex*.

**Protection status**

National Partial International None

16,887 ha of IBA covered by National Park (Swiss, 16,887 ha). 30,649 ha of IBA covered by 2 Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Piz Arna; Schweizerscher Nationalpark und Randgebiete; 34,240 ha). 1,096 ha of IBA covered by 2 Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Buntsandstein-Obere Flammztal, Piz Lagginhal–Zwischbergental, total area 1,096 ha). 187 ha of IBA covered by 7 Flood-plains of National Importance (Strada; Plan–Sot; San Batrunieue; Panas–ch–Regia; Craviz; Il Rom Chalvaha–Graveras (Müstair); Lischan–Suronnes; total area 187 ha). 0.1 ha of IBA covered by Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (Lai Nair, 0.1 ha). 105 ha of IBA covered by 8 Fenlands of National Importance (total area 105 ha).

**Conservation issues**

Threats: Abandonment/reduction of land management (C), Disturbance to birds (C), Infrastructure (B), Intensified forest management (C), Recreation/tourism (B)

There are plans to double the size of the National Park by creating buffer zones. A reintroduction programme of Gypaetus barbatus is underway. Some parts of the site are included in an action plan for *Crex crex*.

**Buttons**

1. Eurasian high-montane biome.

---

**Piòra–Dötra**

**Site description**

A high mountain region, in the southern Alps, with extensive forests, scrub, alpine meadows and rocky areas.

**Protection status**

National Partial International None


**Conservation issues**

No serious threats are known at this site.
**Maggia valley**

**Admin region Ticino**

Coordinates 46°15’N 8°44’E

Altitude 300–2,360 m Area 14,700 ha

**Site description**

This site contains a low-altitude valley with extensive alluvial areas and a mountainous region in the southern Alps. The steep slopes are forested and, at higher elevations, alpine meadows and rocky areas dominate.

Habitats Forest and woodland (16%); broadleaved deciduous forest; native coniferous forest; alluvial forest; fen/very wet forest; woodland; alpine/subalpine/boreal grassland; Rocky areas (7%); inland cliff

Land-use Agriculture (9%), Forestry (52%), Tourism/recreation

**Protection status**

National Partial International Partial

661 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Delta del Ticino e della Verzasca, 661 ha.). 353 ha of IBA covered by 3 Flood-plains of National Importance (total area 353 ha). 82 ha of IBA covered by 9 Fenlands of National Importance (total area 82 ha.). 1,066 ha of IBA covered by Mire Landscapes of Particular Beauty and of National Importance (Piano di Magadino, 1,066 ha.). 661 ha of IBA covered by Ramsar Site (Bolle di Magadino, 661 ha.).

**Conservation issues**

Threats Agricultural intensification/expansion (A), Aquaculture/fisheries (B), Disturbance to birds (C), Drainage (C), Dredging/canalization (A), Infrastructure (A), Recreation/tourism (B)

The main threats are disturbance from recreational activities.

**Bolle di Magadino**

**Admin region Ticino**

Coordinates 46°08’N 8°54’E

Altitude 190–220 m Area 1,400 ha

**Site description**

An important site for breeding species found in the treeline ecotone and in semi-open landscapes. *Tetrao tetrix*, *Jynx torquilla*, *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* and *Monticola saxatilis* occur in high densities.

**Protection status**

National Partial International None

3,800 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Val Verzasca, 19,932 ha). 439 ha of IBA covered by 2 Flood-plains of National Importance (Maggia; total area 439 ha). 3 ha of IBA covered by Raised and Transitional Bogs of National Importance (Piano sopra Visletto, 3 ha.).

**Conservation issues**

Threats Abandonment/reduction of land management (B), Industrialization/urbanization (C), Recreation/tourism (B)

There is substantial recreational pressure along the Maggia river, but higher areas are largely undisturbed.

**Generoso mountain**

**Admin region Ticino**

Coordinates 45°54’N 9°02’E

Altitude 300–1,700 m Area 6,100 ha

**Site description**

A mountainous area in the southern foothills of the Alps. The site is dominated by deciduous forests. There are also small villages with areas of traditional agriculture.

Habitats Forest and woodland (76%); broadleaved deciduous forest, Grassland (9%); mesophile grassland, Artificial landscape (15%); perennial crops/orchards/groves; urban parks/gardens; other urban/industrial areas

Land-use Agriculture (9%), Forestry (76%), Tourism/recreation, Urban/industrial/transport (7%)

**Birds**

An important site for species associated with agriculture and forest in the foothills and montane zone.

**Protection status**

National High International None

6,100 ha of IBA covered by Inventory of Landscapes and Natural Monuments of National Importance (Monte Generoso, 6,203 ha.).

**Conservation issues**

Threats Abandonment/reduction of land management (B), Recreation/tourism (C)

The main threat is the abandonment of traditional agriculture, which results in the loss of hay-meadows as they succeed to scrub and forest.

**Bregaglia valley**

**Admin region Graubünden**

Coordinates 46°21’N 9°36’E

Altitude 680–3,245 m Area 10,800 ha

**Site description**

This site encompasses an alpine valley and its surrounding slopes in the southern Alps. The valley bottom contains settlements and pastures. At low elevations, the slopes are covered by forests, changing with increasing altitude to scrub and then alpine meadows and rocky areas.

Habitats Forest and woodland (40%); broadleaved deciduous forest; native coniferous forest; mixed forest; treeline ecotone, Grassland (30%); alpine/subalpine/boreal grassland; Rocky areas (22%); inland cliff, Artificial landscape (6%); arable land; perennial crops/orchards/groves; urban parks/gardens

Land-use Agriculture (20%), Forestry (32%), Tourism/recreation

**Birds**

The site is very important for migratory birds crossing the Alps, and for waterbirds and breeding species associated with reedbeds. It is the only Swiss wetland south of the Alps. It is regarded as a biogeographically unique wetland under Ramsar Convention criteria. As a result it is included in the IBA inventory (criterion B1i having been applied at a site level) despite not fulfilling species criteria.
An important site for different species of a wide range of altitudes and habitats, from 700 m to alpine.

**REFERENCES**


