

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: DUCAN'S MARSH, CLAXTON

DISTRICT: South Norfolk

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Local Planning Authority: South Norfolk District Council

National Grid Reference: TG 339027 Area: 3.6 (ha) 8.8 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 134 1:10,000: TG 30 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): N/A Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:
A new site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Ducan's Marsh is situated in the valley of a small tributary of the River Yare and is one of the richest areas of unimproved, wet valley grassland now remaining in East Norfolk. Springs emerge from the valley-side and species-rich fen and fen grassland communities have developed in the seepage zones. The plant communities include several uncommon species and are maintained by a traditional management of light summer grazing.

Calcareous fen communities cover much of the site and are of the type dominated by Blunt-flowered Rush *Juncus subnodulosus* and Black Bog-rush *Schoenus nigricans* with abundant Purple Moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, Glaucous Sedge *Carex flacca*, Common Sedge, *C. nigra* and Marsh Horsetail *Equisetum palustre*. This species-rich community includes many notable plants such as Common Butterwort *Pinguicula vulgaris*, Bog Pimpernel *Anagallis tenella*, Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris*, Fragrant Orchid *Gymnadenia conopsea*, Flat-sedge *Blysmus compressus*, Meadow Thistle *Cirsium dissectum* and the locally uncommon Marsh Fern *Thelypteris thelypteroides*.

Fen grassland occurs on the drier parts of the site where the sward is dominated by Blunt-flowered Rush and a variety of grasses including Crested Dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, Quaking Grass *Briza media* and Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*. Associated species include Yellow Rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, Ragged Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, Cuckoo Flower *Cardamine pratensis* and large populations of Common Spotted Orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and Southern Marsh Orchid *D. praetermissa*.

There is, in addition, a small area of carr woodland dominated by Alder *Alnus glutinosa* on the edge of the site. Scrub is scattered thinly over the meadows and includes Purple Osier *Salix purpurea*.