

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: WESTWICK LAKES

DISTRICT: North Norfolk

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

Local Planning Authority: North Norfolk District Council

National Grid Reference: TG 273274 Area: 9.55 (ha) 23.6 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 133 1:10,000: TG 22 NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1973 Date of Last Revision: N/A

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1985 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

The boundary has been amended by a small deletion.

Reasons for Notification:

Westwick Lakes form a compact group of five secluded, man-made lakes. The Perch Lake group is of a type rarely found in East Anglia and closely resembles nutrient-poor lakes found in the upland areas. The acidic waters support an unusual aquatic flora and plankton fauna which includes one locally uncommon species. The other lakes are more typical with abundant water weeds and provide an interesting contrast to the Perch Lake group. There is considerable ornithological interest with large flocks of wildfowl overwintering in the lakes.

Perch Lake is the largest and deepest of the lakes. It has a sandy bottom and is fed by underground springs. Aquatic plants are naturally poorly represented in the highly acidic nutrient-poor waters but White Water-lily *Nymphaea alba* is present in addition to the locally very uncommon Shoreweed *Littorella uniflora*. Carpets of Bog mosses *Sphagnum* spp. project into the lake in places and the muddy margins are dominated by Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*.

Little Perch Lake is shallow and shows an interesting succession from open water to Birch *Betula pubescens* woodland. Yellow Water-lily *Nuphar lutea* is dominant in the lake but the fringing vegetation of Bog Pondweed *Potamogeton polygonifolius*, Bulbous Rush *Juncus bulbosus* and Bog mosses is extending into the open water. The swampy, marginal vegetation is being invaded and stabilised by Birch.

Water-lilies dominate Mill Pond and Captain's Pond, the two eutrophic water-bodies. Other water plants include Duckweed *Lemna minor*, the free-floating Liverwort *Riccia fluitans* and several species of Pondweed *Potamogeton* spp. The marginal vegetation is dominated by Lesser Reedmace *Typha angustifolia* with Soft Rush *Juncus effusus*, Sweet Flag *Acorus calamus*, Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, Reed Sweet-grass *Glyceria maxima* and Great Reedmace *T. latifolia*.

Perch Lake attracts many species of diving duck in winter including Goldeneye and Goosander.