

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: BADLEY MOOR, DEREHAM

DISTRICT: Breckland

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

Local Planning Authority: Breckland District Council

National Grid Reference: TG 013117                      Area: 18.1 (ha) 44.7 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 133                      1:10,000: TG 01 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): -                      Date of Last Revision: -

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

Other Information:  
A new site.

### **Description and Reasons for Notification:**

This site consists of a large area of spring-fed valley fen and grassland situated in the valley of the River Tud. Chalk springs emerge from the valley side and are marked by clearly developed tufa formations where deposition of calcium carbonate has created a series of flushed hummocks. These structures are probably the finest tufa formations in Britain and an exceptionally rich calcareous fen community with a bryophyte (moss) carpet occurs on the flushed slopes. This community has remained undisturbed and is an excellent example of a very localised habitat and includes many uncommon plants.

The rich, short-sward fen communities are of the type that is dominated by Black Bog-rush *Schoenus nigricans* and Blunt-flowered Rush *Juncus subnodulosus*. Many uncommon species are present in abundance and include Common Butterwort *Pinguicula vulgaris*, Great Sundew *Drosera anglica*, Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris*, Grass of Parnassus *Parnassia palustris* and Bog Pimpernel *Anagallis tenella*. These basic flushes grade into a zone of taller mixed fen vegetation dominated by Purple Moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* and Reed *Phragmites australis* with frequent Common Cotton-grass *Eriophorum angustifolium*, Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, Southern Marsh Orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* and Marsh Lousewort *Pedicularis palustris*. Further down the valley slope this mixed fen grades into a small reedbed.

Marshy grassland on poorly-drained soils is dominated by either Blunt-flowered Rush or Sharp-flowered Rush *Juncus acutiflorus* with abundant Marsh Marigold *Caltha palustris*, Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* and Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*. Small areas of a drier, low-growing grassland also occur and are characterised by Glaucous Sedge *Carex flacca*, Quaking Grass *Briza media* and Yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus minor*.

A large part of the site consists of rather species-poor damp neutral grassland maintained by occasional grazing. Much of this area is included because changes in the water levels through drainage would affect the sensitive fen communities. Although the grassland is generally dominated by Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* and Oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* some scarce species are present including Cowslip *Primula veris*, Green-winged Orchid *Orchis morio* and Twayblade *Listera ovata*. A large population of Adder's Tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum* occurs on part of the site.

Several overgrown dykes are present on the valley-floor with a flora that includes Narrow-leaved Water-parsnip *Berula erecta* and Water Dropwort *Oenanthe fistulosa*.

The site is also of ornithological interest and breeding birds include Snipe.