

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: BOOTON COMMON

DISTRICT: Broadland

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

Local Planning Authority: Broadland District Council

National Grid Reference: TG 113230      Area: 7.73 (ha) 19.10 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 133      1:10,560: TG 12 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1954      Date of Last Revision: 1971

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984      Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Managed as a nature reserve by the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust.

**Reasons for Notification:**

Booton Common lies in the valley of a tributary of the River Wensum, about 1 mile east of Reepham. The principal interest of the site is associated with a mosaic of wet calcareous fen grassland and acid heath communities which have developed due to the naturally undulating ground. Areas of tall fen and a strip of valley alder woodland occupy the lower ground adjacent to the stream.

The wet hollows are floristically rich and support abundant Bog-rush *Schoenus nigricans* and Blunt-flowered Rush *Juncus subnodulosus*. Notable associated species include Grass of Parnassus *Parnassia palustris*, Common Cotton-grass *Eriophorum angustifolium*, Common Butterwort *Pinguicula vulgaris*, Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris*, Fragrant Orchid *Gymnadenia conopsea*, Adder's Tongue Fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum* and the rare Marsh Fern *Thelypteris thelypteroides*.

The ridges between the hollows support a type of wet heathland with Heather *Calluna vulgaris* and Purple Moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* as the principal species. Gorse *Ulex europaeus* and Tormentil *Potentilla erecta* are also present.

Reed *Phragmites australis* dominates the tall fen vegetation and typical associates include Hemp Agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*, Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus* and Marsh Marigold *Caltha palustris*.

Additional interest is provided by the alder woodland. This contains some Ash with a ground flora of Yellow Iris, Bittersweet *Solanum dulcamara* and nettles.

A variety of breeding birds are present including Snipe, Woodcock, Grasshopper Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat.