

File ref:

County: Nottinghamshire **Site name:** Gamston & Eaton Woods & Roadside Verges

District: Bassetlaw

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

Local Planning Authority: Bassetlaw District Council

National Grid Reference: SK 727767 **Area:** 57.5 (ha) 142.1 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 120 **1: 10 000:** SK 77 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1972 **Date of Last Revision:** 1981

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1983 **Date of Last Revision:** 1988

Other Information:

Description and Reasons for Notification:

The site comprises one of the best examples of an ash-oak-maple wood in Nottinghamshire and is representative of semi-natural woodland developed on clay soils in Central and Eastern England. It is complemented by species-rich roadside verges.

A fine example of ash-oak-maple woodland developed primarily on soils derived from the Triassic Keuper Marl. Although the woodland structure has been modified by recent management the site is dominated by ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and oak *Quercus robur*, with birch *Betula pendula* also common. The main constituents of the understorey are hazel *Corylus avellana*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, goat willow *Salix caprea* and field maple *Acer campestre*, and there is a strong development of woody climbing and rambling plants, notably honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, bramble *Robus fruticosus* and rose *Rose spp.* The ground vegetation is characterised by the abundance of dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, wood meadow-grass *Poa nemoralis*, wood avens *Geum urbanum*, sweet woodruff *Galium odoratum*, sanicle *Sanicula europaea* and primrose *Primula veris*, together with a variety of other plant species indicative of ancient woodland. The woodland rides have a well developed flora characteristic of heavy clay soils. Typical plants are meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, yellow pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum*, creeping jenny *L. nummularia*, twayblade *Listera ovata* and other woodland orchids. Additional interest is provided by the variety of the breeding bird community which utilises the site.

To the west of East and Gamston Woods the roadside verges carry a grassland sward of unusual species richness. The sward varies in character, some areas being dominated by cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* and false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* while others are dominated by sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* or tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum*. The fescue and tor- cont...

Gamston & Eaton Woods & Roadside Verges (cont...)

grass swards have developed calcareous plant communities containing such herbs as saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, rock-rose *Helianthemum chamaecistus*, great burnet-saxifrage *Pimpinella major* and wild liquorice *Astragalus glycyphyllos*. These verges, botanically, are among the richest in Nottinghamshire and constitute a valuable breeding and feeding area for a variety of butterflies and other insects.