

**COUNTY:** CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** FULBOURN FEN

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

**Local Planning Authorities:** South Cambridgeshire District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TL 531561

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 154                      **1:10,000:** TL 55 NW

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

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

**Area:** 30.3 ha 74.8 ac

**Other information:** Areas converted to arable have been excluded at the 1985 revision. This site is used and managed by the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Wildlife Trust.

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

The site holds species-rich neutral grassland on calcareous loam and peat, together with remnants of 'fen' woodland. These habitats are now rare in lowland England where only small fragments are known to persist. Areas of secondary woodland have also developed on the drier areas and contribute to the overall habitat variety of the site and its value to bird and invertebrate life.

The calcareous loam pastures are dominated by a range of herbs and grasses. Of the grasses, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and red fescue *Festuca rubra* are particularly common along with herbs such as cowslip *Primula veris*, salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor* and purging flax *Linum catharticum*. The wetter areas support tall fen vegetation including species such as marsh-orchids *Dactylorhiza* spp., fen bedstraw *Galium uliginosum*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* and fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica*.

The 'fen' woodland areas have been rather modified by planting but are retained with the site boundary for the natural elements which still remain and for their ornithological and entomological value in association with the other areas. Wych elm *Ulmus glabra*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, oak *Quercus robur* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior* occur as characteristic components of 'fen' woodland. The ground flora includes stinking iris *Iris foetidissima*, stinking hellebore *Helleborus foetidus* and wood sanicle *Sanicula europaea*.

The site is of particular educational value in view of the variety of different habitats found at the one location.