

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: GUNTON PARK LAKE

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 221345                      Area: 18.4 (ha) 45.4 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 133                      1:10,000: TG 23 SW

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

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986                      Date of Last Revision: N/A

Other Information:  
A new site.

**Description and Reasons for Notification:**

The site consists of a lake of artificial origin set in parkland. The lake is fed by Hagon Beck, a small tributary of the River Bure, and a channel connects it with another lake downstream to the south-east. Several wetland habitats are present including alder carr, reedswamp and marginal vegetation in addition to open water. Wildfowl form the main site interest and the lake has held, in some recent years, the largest post-breeding flock of Gadwall *Anas strepera* in Britain.

The flock of Gadwall usually reaches a peak in September and in several years, over 500 birds have been recorded. The flock therefore represents between 3% and 12% of the British wintering population and in two of the last nine years more than 1% of the north-west/west European population. In addition, flocks of Teal, Mallard, Shoveler, Goosander and Shelduck are present in winter and uncommon passage visitors such as Ospreys have also been recorded.

The lake is relatively deep but is heavily silted up. It has few water plants but marginal vegetation has developed in places and is dominated by Reed *Phragmites australis* with frequent Reed-grass *Glyceria maxima* and Reedmace *Typha latifolia*. Other species present include Panicked Sedge *Carex paniculata*, Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus* and Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre*.

Mature carr, with large coppiced stools of Alder *Alnus glutinosa* and standard trees of Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur* are also present. The ground flora is either dominated by Dog's Mercury *Mercurialis perennis* or Lesser Pond Sedge *Carex acutiformis* depending on the wetness of the ground.