

County: Humberside

Site Name Allerthorpe Common

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

Local Planning Authority: East Yorkshire Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SE 761475 and SE 768480

Area: 12.6 (ha) 31.1 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 105 **1:10,000:** SE 74 NE

First Notified: 1951*

Date of Revision: 1984

Description:

Allerthorpe Common is one of three remaining heathlands on sandy glacial soil in the Vale of York. During the 1960's, Allerthorpe Common was extensively afforested with pine so that heathland communities are now largely confined to a 6 hectare nature reserve, and an unplanted area in the northeast corner of the common.

Heather *Calluna vulgaris*, cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix*, purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, and cotton grass *Eriophorum angustifolium* form a mosaic of wet and dry heath communities, into which birch woodland has encroached in places as a result of seral succession. There is a small population of marsh gentian *Gentiana pneumonanthe*, a species which is uncommon nationally and now restricted to 38 localities mainly in the south of England. A particular feature of the nature reserve is a large stand of marsh cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*.

The heathland bird community includes breeding nightjar, tree pipit and whinchat.

References:

Good, D A (1964). Skipwith, Allerthorpe and Strensall Commons. An ecological survey and comparison of three lowland heaths in the Vale of York. A thesis presented for the Diploma in Conservation at University College London, May 1964.

Other Information:

1. During the 1984 revision, the area to be renotified has been reduced to exclude the afforested areas of Allerthorpe Common.
2. The 6 hectare nature reserve is managed by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust.
3. See also Skipwith Common SSSI, North Yorkshire and Strensall Common SSSI, North Yorkshire.

*Under Section 23 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949.