

**Humberside****Boynton Willow Garth**

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

**Local Planning Authority:** East Yorkshire Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** TA 126676

**Ordnance Survey Sheets:** 1:50,000 : 101  
1:10,000 : TA 16 NW

**Area:** 5.07 hectares 12.5 acres

**First notified:** 1984      **Date of Revision:** 1988

**Description**

Boynton Willow Garth is probably the best example of fen carr in North Humberside, and is particularly important for the range of trees and shrubs it supports. The site contains a diverse mosaic of contrasting habitats: woodland, scrub, fen and running water, which adds to its interest.

The tree canopy consists of mixed-age stands of English elm *Ulmus procera* with alder *Alnus glutinosa*, crack willow *Salix fragilis* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, as well as some introduced species. There are mature individual trees of black poplar *Populus nigra* thought likely to be native at this site.

The shrubs are particularly varied with three species of willow *Salix cinerea*, *S. viminalis* and *S. purpurea*, guelder rose *Viburnum opulus* and purging buckthorn *Rhamnus catharticus*. The north-west corner of the site is dominated by the common osier *Salix viminalis* and retains the appearance of a managed osier bed.

The ground flora of the open areas consists of a tall herb community dominated by great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, butterbur *Petasites hybridus* or meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*. Herbaceous species, such as herb robert *Geranium robertianum*, enchanter's nightshade *Circaea lutetiana* and herb bennet *Geum urbanum*, characteristic of woodland, occur where the tree canopy is more complete.

The Gypsey Race, a chalk stream containing large stands of branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum*, runs through the northern part of the site.

The bird life has been extremely well documented and 63 breeding species have been recorded in the last 30 years. Of these, 42, including water rail, breed regularly.

Additionally, the Willow Garth is an important Quaternary site yielding an extensive Late-glacial and Flandrian pollen record, a rare occurrence on the chalk. It is significant not only for the large number of taxa identified, but also for a vegetation

record that supports the theory that chalk grassland has existed continuously in the Great Wold Valley since the Late-glacial. The site is currently being studied in detail.

**Other information**

This site is identified as being of national importance in the Geological Conservation Review.