

COUNTY: SOMERSET SITE NAME: GE-MARE FARM FIELDS

DISTRICT: WEST SOMERSET

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

Local Planning Authority: SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL, West Somerset District Council

National Grid Reference: ST 155424 Area: 4.16 (ha.) 10.28 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 181 1:10,000: ST 14 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

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

Other Information:

A new site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

The site consists of an unimproved species-rich flood pasture community with interest enhanced by the presence of a wetter area supporting a lowland mire community. These habitats are rare both nationally and within the county of Somerset.

The site is an area of mostly flat land, adjacent to a small stream, within a narrow valley bottom. The land is composed of slowly permeable soils formed by alluvium derived from the Triassic Keuper Marl.

The northern field is characterised by the Crested Dog's-tail/Marsh-marigold *Cynosurus cristata*/*Caltha palustris* flood pasture community. This community, on soils enriched by nutrients derived from alluvial deposition, supports a variety of grasses including Crested Dog's-tail, Red Fescue *Festuca rubra*, Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Marsh Foxtail *Alopecurus geniculatus* and Rough Meadow-grass *Poa trivialis*. A number of sedge species are present including Glaucous Sedge *Carex flacca*, Hairy Sedge *Carex hirta*, False Fox-sedge *Carex obtrubae* and Remote Sedge *Carex remota*.

Herb species characteristic of unimproved wet grasslands are frequent. These include Marsh-marigold, Cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis*, Ragged-Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, Wild Angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, Lesser Spearwort *Ranunculus flammula*, Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, Marsh Arrowgrass *Triglochin palustris* and Common Marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre*.

The southern part of the site is wetter and supports a mire community. Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus* is prominent in the vegetation but Soft-rush *Juncus effusus*, Hard

rush *Juncus inflexus*, Hemlock Water-dropwort *Oenanthe crocata*, Water Mint *Mentha aquatica* and Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre* are also important components.

Other species present include Pendulous Sedge *Carex pendula*, Greater Pond-sedge *Carex riparia*, Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Marsh-marigold, Sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica*, Southern Marsh-orchid, Purple-loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria* and Water-pepper *Polygonum hydropiper*.

The southern-most part of the site supports Alder *Alnus glutinosa* woodland.