

COUNTY: NORFOLK      SITE NAME: DECOY CARR, ACLE

DISTRICT: BROADLAND

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

Local Planning Authority: Broads Authority

National Grid Reference: TG 405090      Area: 55.36 (ha.) 136.79 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 134      1:10,000: TG 40 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1959      Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1985      Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Description:

A large area of wet carr woodland and open fen occupying a side-valley of the River Bure immediately to the south of Acle. The site which is spring-fed and isolated from the main Broadland river system supports excellent examples of the wetland communities characteristic of the region including alder carr, reedbed, mixed fen and open water habitats. Several rare Arctic-alpine mosses have been recorded which indicate that the plant communities have remained relatively undisturbed since post-glacial times. The sedge and reedbeds are still regularly cut for thatching material and the site supports a wide range of fenland plants including several locally uncommon species.

Open areas of mixed fen vegetation are dominated by saw sedge *Cladium mariscus* and blunt-flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus*. The more extensive areas are cut and a diverse fen community has developed with marsh pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, panicked sedge *Carex paniculata* and the locally uncommon marsh fern *Thelypteris thelypteroides*. Commercially managed reedbeds are also present and are dominated by common reed *Phragmites australis*. These areas are naturally rather species-poor but include the scarce marsh sow-thistle *Sonchus palustris*.

The majority of the woodland is sump alder carr on fen peats. Alder *Alnus glutinosa* is dominant with frequent common willow *Salix cinerea* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior*. The ground flora is well-developed and includes lesser pond sedge *Carex acutiformis*, yellow iris *Iris pseudacorus*, bittersweet *Solanum dulcamara*, redcurrant *Ribes rubrum* agg. and marsh fern. Small areas of acid valley alder woodland occur on higher ground where sandy soils underlie a thin layer of peat. Pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* and birch *Betula pubescens* are

frequent and the ground flora contains much bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*.

A network of dykes drains the wet areas and they contain clear springwaters. A wide range of water plants is present including water violet *Hottonia palustris*, greater bladderwort *Utricularia vulgaris* agg., frogbit *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*, shining pondweed *Potamogeton lucens* and the locally uncommon water soldier *Stratiotes aloides*. Hornwort *Ceratophyllum demersum* is abundant in the old decoy pond.

The rare mosses *Cinclidium stygium* and *Camptothecium nitens* have been recorded on the site.