

COUNTY: NORFOLK            SITE NAME: HALL FARM FEN, HEMSBY

DISTRICT: GREAT YARMOUTH

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

Local Planning Authority: Part Great Yarmouth Borough Council, part Broads Authority

National Grid Reference: TG 481170            Area: 9.0 (ha.) 22.2 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 134            1:10,000: TG 41 NE

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

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986            Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

A new site.

Description:

Hall Farm Fen, Hemsby, lies to the north-east of Ormesby Broad and consists of an area of unimproved fen grassland with dykes. It is unusual in supporting plant communities favouring both acidic and calcareous conditions and is consequently very rich in species, including a great abundance of orchids with some unusual hybrids. The site is bisected by numerous dykes and these support a well developed aquatic flora and fauna, including a nationally rare species of water snail.

Wet unimproved grassland, grazed by cattle and horses, covers much of the site. Blunt-flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus* and jointed rush *J. articulatus* are abundant, with frequent bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata* and marsh cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*. Several uncommon species are present including bog pimpernel *Anagallis tenella*, marsh arrow-grass *Triglochin palustris*, marsh lousewort *Pedicularis palustris*, common cotton-grass *Eriophorum angustifolium*, creeping willow *Salix repens*. Purple moor-grass a good variety of sedges present including star sedge, spring sedge, flea sedge and oval sedge. The orchids are mainly southern marsh *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, early marsh *D. incarnata* and heath spotted orchid *D. maculata* with their hybrids. A short sward vegetation indicative of rather drier chalkier soils is present in places characterised by common quaking grass *Briza media*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, hairy sedge *Carex hirta* and devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*. Narrow strips of disturbed dry grassland are present near some boundaries where dyke dredgings have been placed.

The dykes are also an important feature of the site. Canadian pondweed *Elodea canadensis* and broad-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton natans* form the principal aquatics, with water violet *Hottonia palustris*, opposite-leaved pondweed *Groenlandia densa*, frogbit *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*, flat-stalked pondweed *P. friesii* and stoneworts *Chara spp.* Emergent and bank-edge species include water dropwort *Oenanthe fistulosa*, cyperus sedge *Carex pseudocyperus*, bottle sedge *Carex rostrata*, fool's watercress *Apium nodiflorum* and water plantain *Alisma plantago-aquatica*. The dyke also supports a rich invertebrate fauna which includes the rare mollusc *Segmentina nitida*.