

Notification Date: 2 October 1985

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER

SITE NAME: PUXTON MARSHES

DISTRICT: WYRE FOREST

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

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD & WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL, Wyre Forest District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 828777

Area: 12.81 (ha.) 31.66 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 138

1:10,000: SO 87 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1985

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

New site.

Reasons for Notification:

Puxton Marshes lie on alluvial soils in the valley of the River Stour near Wolverley in North Worcestershire. The site comprises a large area of unimproved marshy grassland with associated damp woodland and open water. It is one of the largest and most important areas of marshland remaining in the county and is a remnant of more extensive marshland once present in the Stour Valley.

Most of the marshy grassland is dominated by tall fen with characteristic species such as reed canary-grass *Phalaris arundinacea*, reed sweet-grass *Glyceria maxima*, common valerian *Valeriana officinalis*, great hairy willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum* and meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*. The marsh is noted not for its rare plants but for the variety of its plants of which 110 species have been recorded. These include less common species such as marsh cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, skullcap *Scutellaria galericulata* and water dock *Rumex hydrolapathum* with seven species of sedge including paniced sedge *Carex paniculata*, cyperus sedge *C. pseudocyperus* and false fox-sedge *C. otrubae*.

The small area of damp woodland is dominated by alder *Alnus glutinosa* with grey willow *Salix cinerea* and crack willow *S. fragilis*.

The open water consists of an ox-bow lake, with great reedmace *Typha latifolia* and branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum* growing round the edge, and a number of silted up ditches which dissect the site supporting a number of wetland plants such as floating sweet-grass *Glyceria fluitans* and water cress *Nasturtium officinale*. These are lined with old pollards of crack willow and alders. The site attracts many birds and is particularly important for breeding snipe. Other species which breed include willow tit and reed bunting.