

COUNTY: LINCOLNSHIRE

SITE NAME: SALT FLEETBY-
THEDDLETHORPE DUNES

DISTRICT: EAST LINDSEY

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

Local Planning Authority: EAST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: TF 480910

Area: 952.2 (ha.) 2,352.8 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 122, 113

1:10,000: TF 49 SE, TF 48 NE,
TF 58 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1951

Date of Last Revision: 1981

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1988

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

The whole of the area is managed as a Nature Reserve. The Nature Conservancy Council either own or lease most of the area, 38 hectares are managed part on a license agreement with the Ministry of Defence and part on a lease from Lincolnshire County Council by the County Trust.

The site is described in “A Nature Conservation Review”.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This nationally important site includes flats, dunes, salt and freshwater marsh which together support an exceptionally rich flora and fauna. There are outstanding assemblages of vascular plants, invertebrates and breeding birds and it is the most north-easterly breeding site in Britain for the Natterjack Toad. The rapid accretion of dunes and saltmarsh make this an important site for research into the processes of coastal development.

The intertidal sands and muds provide extensive feeding and roosting grounds for wildfowl and waders including brent geese, shelduck and dunlin. A succession of saltmarsh communities is dominated in turn by glasswort *Salicornia* spp., sea lavender *Limonium vulgare* associated with sea plantain *Plantago maritima* and thrift *Armeria maritima*, sea purslane *Halimione portuloides* and common saltmarsh grass *Puccinellia maritima*. Sea rush *Juncus maritimus* and sea clubrush *Scirpus maritimus* are frequent where salt water inundates the landward edge. Distant sedge *Carex distans* and long-bracted sedge *C. extensa* are abundant here. Yellow wagtails breed on the saltmarsh and there is a small colony of little tern on the shingle bank.

The freshwater marsh and dune slacks have rich fen communities dominated by greater pond sedge *Carex riparia* and water dock *Rumex hydrolapathum* with gypsywort *Lycopus europaeus* and skullcap *Scutellaria galericulata*. Rarer plants like needle spike rush *Eleocharis acicularis*, divided sedge *Carex divisa*, marsh pea *Lathyrus palustris* and greater water-parsnip *Sium latifolium* are found in these habitats which are also the breeding grounds for natterjack toad *Bufo calamita* and commoner amphibians. Ten species of dragonfly breed in the open water provided by ponds and dykes. Breeding birds include water rail, snipe, and reed, grasshopper and sedge warblers.

At the interface between freshwater marsh and dunes, southern and early marsh orchids *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* and *D. incarnata* are found in abundance. The diverse flora of the mature lime-rich dunes include pyramidal and bee orchids *Anacamptis pyramidalis* and *Ophrys apifera*, and lesser meadow rue *Thalictrum minus*. In the absence of grazing the dunes become dominated by scrub of sea buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides*, hawthorn

Crataegus monogyna, wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare* and elder *Sambucus nigra*, all frequented by migrant birds.

Invertebrates recorded include several notable moths and nationally rare species from the moth and beetle families. There are outstanding breeding densities of birds in the dune scrub, with whitethroat a major constituent. Also present are lesser whitethroat and long-eared owl. The oldest areas of scrub now contain breeding blackcap, garden warbler and nightingale.

Date Notified: 13 October 1988