

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER

SITE NAME: WESTWOOD GREAT
POOL

DISTRICT: WYCHAVON

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,
Wychavon District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 880633

Area: 29.13 (ha.) 72.0 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150

1:10,000: SO 86 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1955

Date of Last Revision: 1975

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

The site supports a plant given full legal protection under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Reasons for Notification:

Westwood Great Pool is a man-made lake lying on the Keuper Marl. It originally formed a major landscape feature of one of Worcestershire's oldest and largest estates, the Westwood estate.

The site, which includes peripheral areas of grassland and woodland, represents one of the largest areas of open water in Worcestershire and is important for both its plant and bird communities.

The Lake and its margins support a wide variety of plants. Amongst the aquatic species present are the yellow water lily *Nuphar lutea* and two national rarities, the eight-stamened waterwort *Elatine hydropiper* and the ribbon-leaved water plantain *Alisma gramineum*. The latter species was first discovered in Britain at Westwood Great Pool in 1920, and is only known from three other sites in the country.

The northern and eastern margins of the Lake support extensive beds of reed *Phragmites communis*, reed mace *Typha latifolia* and bulrush *Schoenoplectus lacustris*.

The eastern margin of the Lake is bordered by a strip of ungrazed rough grassland colonised by scrub, mainly hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and willows *Salix cinerea* and *S. fragilis*. The southern margin is bordered by woodland with a mixture of species dominated by oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and birch *Betula pendula*.

These areas of grassland, scrub and woodland provide valuable screening for the site in addition to being wildlife habitats in their own right.

The Lake and its marginal vegetation provide a valuable ornithological habitat. The breeding birds include the largest colony of reed warblers *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* in the county. Other breeding species include great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, tufted duck *Aythya fuligula* and pochard *A. ferina*. Westwood Great Pool is also one of the most important sites for over-wintering waterfowl in Worcestershire.