

COUNTY: BERKSHIRE

SITE NAME: WASING WOOD PONDS

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

Local Planning Authorities: Newbury District Council, Berkshire County Council

National Grid Reference: SU578636, SU583633

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 174 **1:10,000:** SU56 SE

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984 **Date of Last Revision:**

Area: 12.52 ha 30.94 ac

Description and Reasons for Notification

A group of ponds, wet ditches and marshy areas partly in Wasing Wood and partly on open ground formerly excavated for gravel.

The ponds vary in depth, substrate, water-chemistry, shade and marginal vegetation and provide an important range of habitats for aquatic insects. They are especially important for dragonflies, Odonata, of which some 21 species have been recorded breeding in or adjacent to the site. This is more than half the total British dragonfly fauna. Some of the species are very uncommon, being confined to a scatter of sites in southern England. They include the Downy Emerald *Cordulia aenea*, Brilliant Emerald *Somatochlora metallica* and Ruddy Darter *Sympetrum sanguineum*. A large area of woodland present nearby is important as a feeding area for dragonflies.