

File ref:

**County:** Essex/Suffolk **Site Name:** Glemsford Pits SSSI

**District:** Braintree/Baberge

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Braintree District Council  
Baberge District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TL 840464 **Area:** 37.5 (ha) 92.5 (ac)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000:** 155 **1: 10 000:** TL 84 NW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1971 (Suffolk) **Date of Last Revision:** 1974  
1974 (Essex)

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1988 **Date of Last Revision:** -

**Other Information:**

**Description and Reasons for Notification:**

Glemsford Pits SSSI comprises a series of water-filled disused gravel workings and a length of the River Stour on the Essex/Suffolk border. The site supports an outstanding assemblage of dragonflies and damselflies (*Odonata*); thirteen species have been recorded, including one rare species.

The outstanding assemblage includes three species which are uncommon in Essex: a nationally restricted species in Britain, the Ruddy Darter *Sympetrum sanguineum*, the Four-spotted Chaser *Libellula quadrimaculata* and the Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma najas*. Other species present include the Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*, the Banded Demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*, the Emerald Damselfly *Lestes sponsa* and the Azure Damselfly *Coenagrion puella*.

The River Stour and the disused gravel pits support a variety of aquatic vegetation, including Yellow Water-lily *Nuphar lutea*, Mare's-tail *Hippuris vulgaris*, Common Club-rush *Schoenoplectus lacustris* and Unbranched Bur-reed *Sparganium emersum*. This vegetation provides cover and emergence sites for nymphs, and perches and egg-laying sites for adult dragonflies and damselflies.

The area surrounding the pools supports a mixed vegetation of tall fen, rabbit-grazed acidic grassland, tall herb, scrub and woodland. These communities include species such as Hemp Agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*, Great Willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Common Valerian *Valeriana officinalis*, Creeping Thistle *Cirsium* cont....

### **Glemsford Pits SSSI (cont...)**

*arvense* and Bramble *Rubus sp.*, which are important nectar sources, attracting insects which provide prey for adult Odonata.

The combination of habitats and communities at this site from open water, to tall herb, scrub and woodland also form a valuable habitat for other invertebrates and birds.