

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: POPLAR FARM MEADOWS, LANGLEY

DISTRICT: South Norfolk

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

Local Planning Authority: South Norfolk District Council

National Grid Reference: TG 370021

Area: 7.23 (ha) 17.87 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 134

1:10,000: TG 30 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1981

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1985

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

This site is a small spring-fed calcareous fen situated on the edge of the flood-plain of the River Yare. The meadows are exceptionally diverse and several scarce and locally uncommon plants are present. Species-rich calcareous fens are virtually confined to East Anglia and this site is an unusual example with intergrading fen grassland communities. These rich communities are maintained by light summer grazing. The surrounding dykes contain clear spring-waters and support an interesting assemblage of water-plants.

The fen meadows are generally dominated by Blunt-flowered Rush *Juncus subnodulosus* with abundant Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus* and Marsh Valerian *Valeriana dioica*. These floristically-rich areas contain many interesting species including Bog Pimpernel *Anagallis tenella*, Grass of Parnassus *Parnassia palustris*, Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris*, Common Spotted Orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and Fragrant Orchid *Gymnadenia conopsea*. Two locally uncommon plants, Greater Water-parsnip *Sium latifolium* and Fibrous Tussock Sedge *Carex appropinquata* are also present.

An area of tall fen vegetation dominated by Saw Sedge *Cladium mariscus* with abundant Black Bog-rush *Schoenus nigricans* and Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* occurs in one of the meadows. Bushes of Bog Myrtle *Myrica gale* and Creeping Willow *Salix repens* are frequent and other species present include Meadow Thistle *Cirsium dissectum*, Primrose *Primula vulgaris* and Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis*.

A transitional zone occurs on the edge of the *Cladium*-dominated fen where Purple Moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* is dominant with frequent Quaking Grass *Briza media*, Tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and Carnation Sedge *Carex panicea*. Other characteristic plant species of this community include Lesser Spearwort *Ranunculus flammula*, Marsh Arrow-grass *Triglochin palustris*, Ragged Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and Common Butterwort *Pinguicula vulgaris*.

The clear-water dykes hold a number of species of Stonewort *Chara* spp.