

CITATION

**BALERNO COMMON
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
City of Edinburgh**

Site code: 120

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NT 162635

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger series 65
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 344

AREA: 56.17 ha.

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: **Bogs:** Raised bog
Fens: Transition open fen
Non-vascular plants: Bryophyte assemblage
Freshwater habitats: Mesotrophic loch

DESCRIPTION:

Balerno Common SSSI is located on the north side of the Pentland Hills, 14 km south-west of Edinburgh and about 2 km south of Balerno. This is a composite site comprising Red Moss and Bavelaw Marsh, each with different habitats.

Red Moss is an area of raised bog displaying the characteristic dome-shaped profile. The bog is relatively undisturbed and shows a hummock and hollow pattern. Heather and cotton grass *Eriophorum vaginatum* occur on the hummocks, while several species of bog moss *Sphagnum* are present in the wetter hollows.

Bavelaw Marsh is an area of open water with stands of emergent vegetation, including bottle sedge *Carex rostrata*, bog bean *Menyanthes trifoliata* and marsh horsetail *Equisetum palustre*. There are also large marginal areas of marshy grassland with meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, and willow carr *Salix* spp.

Red Moss is the largest and least disturbed area of raised bog in Edinburgh, while Bavelaw Marsh is the only area of fen of any size. In combination, these two areas form a site that is unique within Edinburgh in terms of size and diversity of both species and habitat.

Several nationally rare or scarce bryophyte species occur on the mud exposed at low water levels in Bavelaw Marsh including fertile feather-moss *Drepanocladus polygamus*, tufted apple-moss *Philonotis caespitosa* and round-leaved bryum *Bryum cyclophyllum*.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1952

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 24 April 1986
Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 04 March 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 62.7 ha).