

CITATION

WOODHALL LOCH
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
Dumfries and Galloway

Site code: 1647

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NX670675

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 84
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 320

AREA: 127.34 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological:	Freshwater habitats:	Oligotrophic loch
	Lowland grasslands:	Fen meadow
	Fens:	Open water transition fen
	Invertebrates:	Beetles
	Invertebrates:	Caddisfly (<i>Anabolia brevipennis</i>)

DESCRIPTION

Woodhall Loch Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is a narrow waterbody which lies approximately one kilometre north of Laurieston and runs roughly northwest towards Mosedale for a distance of 4.5km. The site is the best example in the Stewartry of an oligotrophic loch, transitional between a peaty upland and a lowland loch, with a wide range of habitats which include some of the best examples of fen and mire communities in the district.

There are extensive areas of species-rich base-poor fen variously dominated by reed canary-grass, purple moor-grass, bog myrtle, hare's-tail cottongrass, cross-leaved heath, or various sedges, often over bog-mosses *Sphagnum spp.* Base-rich fen also occurs and features abundant whorled caraway, globeflower and marsh pennywort and a range of sedge species, notably white sedge *Carex curta*, pale sedge *C. pallescens*, common yellow sedge *C. demissa*, star sedge *C. echinata*, tawny sedge *C. hostiana* and common sedge *C. nigra*.

Further habitats of open water and floating and emergent vegetation occur within the site. These include stands of the rare needle spike-rush *Eleocharis acicularis*, willow and birch carr and wet alder-birch woodland with a ground flora of opposite-leaved golden saxifrage in the wetter areas.

The community of aquatic water beetles is one of the best representations of loch and fen species in the area which include both southern species such as *Noterus clavicornis* and *Enochrus testaceus* and northern species some of which are rare and declining such as *Hygrotus quinquelineatus* and *Helophorus strigifrons*. A further species *Ilybius subaeneus* is known from

only a small number of Scottish sites. Additional invertebrate interest includes a rove beetle *Stenus nitens* known elsewhere only from East Anglia, a small number of locations across central and northern England and Ireland and the caddisfly *Anabolia brevipennis*.

Although not a notified feature there is also bird interest with either foraging or breeding birds including curlew, common snipe, oystercatcher, common sandpiper, willow tit, grasshopper warbler, wood warbler, nightjar, heron and great crested grebe.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981: 21 May 1990.

Notification reviewed under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004: 29 October 2010, 11 February 2011 (citation only) and 18 February 2015 (citation only).

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 130.1ha).