

CITATION

CARRICK PONDS
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
Dumfries and Galloway

Site code: 328

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NX581506

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 83
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 312

AREA: 44.83 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Freshwater habitats: Basin fen
Biological: Invertebrates: Beetle assemblage

DESCRIPTION

This site consists of a series of pools and mires lying on the Solway coast approximately 6km south of Gatehouse of Fleet. The site is the best in the Stewartry district for its range of physical characteristics and fen plant communities within a small area, with a range of habitats, which includes open water at pH 9.5. The site is one of the richest known areas, measured by the number of species, for water beetles in Scotland.

The site supports blunt-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton obtusifolius* and alternate water-milfoil stands of emergent vegetation of bottle sedge, bogbean and water horsetail. Swamp and fen with rushes, common cottongrass, goat willow carr, acidic and neutral wet grassland with round-leaved sundew, bog pimpernel and lesser water-plantain occur within a mosaic of semi-improved neutral grassland.

This richness of the beetle assemblage is in part due to the availability of the wide range of fen habitats, the undisturbed nature of the pools surrounded by old rough grassland and to the favourable mild climate of the location. It is rated as the fifth most important site in south Scotland in a group of open permanent water sites with mesotrophic or eutrophic fen. Although only one species, *Donacia obscura*, of the 81 species of water beetle present is rare within the British context, the species assemblage represents a very diverse community. A northern species *Helophorus strigifrons*, which is in serious decline nationally, and seven southern species, remaining from a time when temperatures in northern England and Scotland were higher than at present, are also found on this site.

Amphibians including great crested newts also breed in some of the ponds.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

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

Notification reviewed under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004:
27 August 2010.

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 45.1ha).