

# 6 BURNHOPE POND

A series of shallow ponds and marshy grassland formed as a result of coal mining subsidence and bordered by grazed pasture and coniferous woodland.



*Burnhope Pond*



*Black darter*

The large pond is shallow and irregularly shaped with small areas of open water surrounded by encroaching vegetation consisting of Soft Rush, Bottle Sedge, Water Horsetail, Mares tail and Riccia Fluitans a locally scarce liverwort has been recorded from the site. The ponds support a diverse invertebrate community including whirligig and other water beetles, caddis-fly larvae, alderfly larvae and a variety of aquatic snails. Nine species of dragonfly have been recorded including Black Darter, which is uncommon in the region. Areas of open water were more widespread in the past but the ponds still attract Coot, Moorhen, Little Grebe and occasionally Snipe.



*Cuckooflower*

*Snipe*



The grazed pasture comprises semi-improved neutral grassland with many wet flushes dominated by Soft Rush and Cuckooflower.

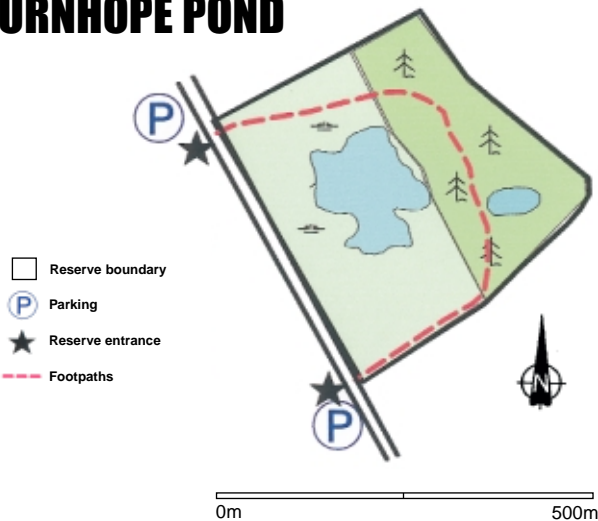
The whole area will have once been covered by mid-altitude heathland but a combination of opencast coal mining and conifer planting has left few areas remaining. Remnant heathland vegetation can still be found within the conifer plantation with scattered areas of Heather and Bilberry. Three small ponds are found within the woodland with small carpets of Sphagnum mosses dominant. Long eared Owls, Goldcrest and Crossbills have been sighted in recent years.



*Alderfly*

**Best seen – April to July for breeding wildfowl, June/July for dragonflies and July/August for meadow flora**

# BURNHOPE POND



## General Information

**Ownership:** Leased from Durham County Council

**Size:** 14.1 hectares

**Grid Reference:** NZ183480

**O.S. Explorer Map No:** 308

**Parking and access to site:**

Park on roadside opposite the gate and stile.

**Public transport:** A regular bus service operates between Durham and Lanchester and connecting buses to Burnhope are available from Lanchester.

**Dogs:** The pasture is grazed for much of the year and therefore dogs must be kept on a lead at all times. Please close all gates behind you.

**Accessibility:** ▲▲▲▲▲

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## Management

Encroachment of vegetation surrounding the pond has reduced the amount of open water and one of the main aims of future management will be vegetation clearance of the pond margins and excavation of new wader scrapes in the surrounding wet flushes. This will provide habitat suitable for a wider range and greater number of wildfowl and waders and may encourage visiting Snipe to breed in the future. A large area of conifers have been clear felled around the woodland ponds to enhance their wildlife value and the pasture will continue to be grazed with sheep and cut for hay in late July.

*Long eared owl*



**Burnhope Colliery** previously occupied the site and subsidence from deep coal mining has created the existing ponds. Much of the surrounding land was opencasted but the site was spared this fate in order to protect its wildlife interest.

*Moorhen*



## Location

The Reserve is 7 miles northeast of Durham City and approx. 1½ miles north east of Lanchester. Follow the A691 from Durham and turn right at the church as you enter Lanchester village. Turn left at the crossroads at the top of the hill and the reserve is ½ mile on the right. There is parking space for a number of cars on the west side of the road opposite the gated entrance to the reserve.

Access to the pond and woodland is via a public footpath over the stiles at the southwestern end of the site.