

18 REDCAR FIELD

A small fragile wetland site supporting a range of fen vegetation types including reedbed, fen meadow and willow carr, this site is only accessible with a wildlife Trust Guide due to its sensitivity.



Reed bed



Sedge Warbler (©RSPB)

One of the few remaining examples of a spring-fed fen on the magnesian limestone and the only one which contains fen meadow. This reserve is of great botanical and scientific interest and has been designated as a SSSI.

The fen meadow is carpeted in bryophytes and as such is very sensitive to disturbance. It is dominated by Blunt Flowered Rush with a wide range of other fen species, including Marsh Lousewort, Marsh Valerian, Early Marsh Orchid, Water Figwort and Fen Bedstraw.

Sneezewort



Scorpion fly

The meadow is bordered on two sides by tall fen/reedbed with Common Reed and Great Willowherb predominating and Meadow Rue which is rare in County Durham is locally common on site. This provides habitats suitable for breeding Sedge Warbler, Reed Bunting and Long Tailed Tit and occasional sightings of Snipe, Woodcock and Redshank have been recorded.

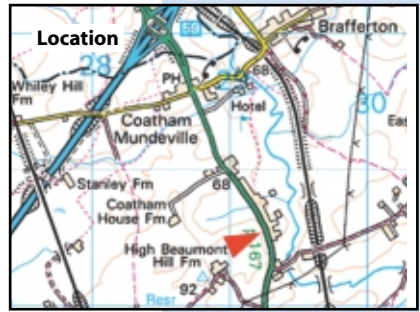
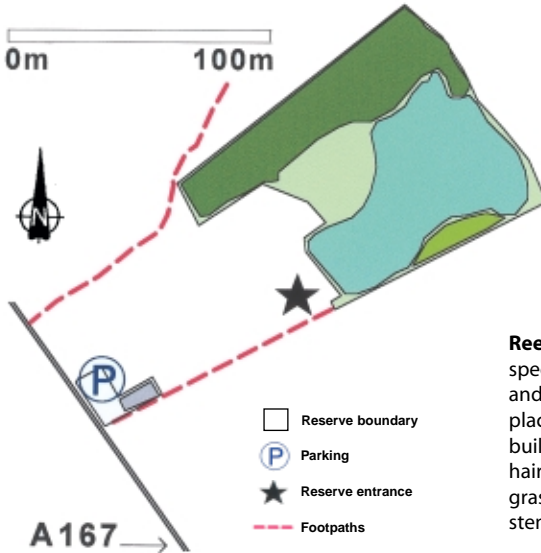
Swamp communities dominated by Lesser Pond Sedge form dense mats of vegetation which are encroaching into the surrounding vegetation types. The remainder of the site is made up of Willow Carr comprising mature Crack Willow with an understorey of Hawthorn and Field Maple.

The reserve is a good site for butterflies and moths but little is known of its invertebrate populations which are under-recorded.



Marsh Valerian

REDCAR FIELD



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General Information

Ownership:
Durham Wildlife Trust / English Nature

Area: 0.41 hectares

Grid Reference:
NZ292198

O.S. Explorer Map No: 304

Parking access to site:
Access to the reserve is restricted due to site fragility

Public transport:
Regular bus services from Darlington.

Dogs: No dogs allowed

Accessibility: ▲▲▲▲

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Management

Management activities are aimed at halting the processes of natural succession in order to maintain the fragile vegetation communities and prevent them from drying out and developing into climax woodland. The fen meadow is cut annually in the autumn and all cuttings removed. Alternate halves of the reedbed are cut each year to prevent the build up of plant litter from dead stems which would eventually cause drying out. Periodic cutting of the swamp is carried out to prevent encroachment onto the fen meadow. The reserve is managed in partnership with English Nature under the "Reserves Enhancement Scheme".

Northern marsh orchid



Reed Bunting is a species of reed beds and other marshy places where it builds its beautiful hair-lined nest of grasses on reed stems.

Reed bunting



Fen meadow

Location

Redcar Field is an extremely sensitive site and access is therefore restricted to authorised personnel or when accompanied by a Trust Official.

The reserve is located just off the A167 approximately 1 mile south of the junction with the A1(M). Parking is available for 6 cars in a small car park adjacent to a roadside café. Access is via the public footpath from Coatham Mundeville to Brafferton which crosses the wetsren edge of the reserve, from which it can be viewed.

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