

**MACHYNYS PONDS  
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**



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**YOUR SPECIAL SITE AND ITS FUTURE**

‘Your Special Site and its Future’ is part of our commitment to improve the way we work with Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) owners and occupiers. In it, we explain what is special about the wildlife on your site, and what care is needed to look after its wildlife into the future.

All SSSIs are considered to be of national importance and we recognise the crucial role that owners and occupiers play in their management and protection. We need you to share your views and knowledge of this site with us, to help safeguard it.

We hope that you will find ‘Your Special Site and its Future’ interesting and helpful. Please contact us if there is anything about the site and its management that you would like to discuss.

## **What is ‘special’ about the wildlife at Machynys Ponds SSSI?**

This site has 2 special features:

- Standing Water and Swamp
- Dragonfly Assemblage

As well as the features listed above, this site has other habitats that contribute to the special wildlife interest. These include areas of wet willow woodland and scrub, and flower-rich grassland. This diversity of habitats similarly supports a wide range of species and these too are a key component of the special interest of the site. Unless it is specified below, management of this site should aim to look after these habitats as well as the listed features of interest.

## **What do we want Machynys Ponds to look like?**

The following is a description of how we would like to see the features at this site.

*The standing water and swamp should cover about 70% of the site, and support a range of typical wetland plants, invertebrates and wildfowl. Various aquatic plants such as spiked water-milfoil and Canadian waterweed characterise this assemblage, as does fringed water-lily, though this latter species will need periodic control. Species, which indicate nutrient enrichment of the water, such as blanket weed should be absent or rare. The margins of the water bodies have beds of bulrush, sea club-rush and common reed. This marginal vegetation is important for feeding and nesting wildfowl such as pochard and gadwall and for the assemblage of dragonfly including the colourful emperor and black-tailed skimmer and other invertebrates.*

## **What management is needed on Machynys Ponds SSI and why?**

The Machynys Ponds originated from the 19<sup>th</sup> century digging for clay for brick making. The subsequently flooded diggings have accrued an interesting vegetation community with associated wildfowl and invertebrates. Latterly, the SSSI and substantial areas of surrounding land have been developed as a golf course; this has facilitated some recent positive management such as scrub control, removal of invasive fringed water lily and pond extensions.

Although this site is an excellent place for wildlife it will only remain so if the necessary management continues. CCW’s priority is to work with you to ensure that this management is carried out.

## **What does this mean in practice?**

There are a number of different factors that could damage the special features at this site if they are not properly managed. These are the ones we regard as most important:

### **Nutrient and Pollution**

Where possible, fertiliser use on the golf course around the ponds should be limited, to avoid run-off. This is, incidentally, desirable for aesthetic as well as for wildlife

management reasons – to avoid unsightly blanket weed. It is crucial to allow an area of marginal vegetation both at the water edges and on dry land immediately adjacent to the ponds to grow up to absorb run-off; such vegetation would also be desirable for wildlife.

Apart from the already agreed areas to be intensively used for golf (e.g. pathways crossing the eastern part) some areas should try to be excluded from regular access to favour the nesting and wintering wildfowl that utilise the standing water and swamp habitats.

The dozen or more known breeding species of dragonfly are dependent on the presence of clean, unpolluted water with a variety of aquatic and emergent plant species, structural diversity of vegetation and an element of shelter (e.g. certain areas of trees and shrubs). Apart from the retention of the above features, no specific management is required.

### **Finally**

Our knowledge and understanding of wildlife is continually improving. It is possible that new issues may arise in the future, whilst other issues may disappear. This statement is written with the best information we have now, but may have to change in the future as our understanding improves. Any information you can provide on the wildlife of your site, its management and its conservation would be much appreciated.

**If you would like to discuss any aspect of your SSSI, or have any concerns about your SSSI, please contact your local CCW office.**

### **Your local office is;**

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