

## Pillwort (*Pilularia globulifera*)

This sub aquatic plant, related to the ferns, has always been rare in East Anglia, though this may be due to under recording because of its grass-like appearance.

e.g. New Zealand pygmy weed (*Crassula helmsii*).

### Current Status

#### 1.1 National

Pillwort, though declining throughout its range across Western Europe, is widely scattered in Britain from the Outer Isles of Scotland to the south coast of England. It grows where there is occasional disturbance in shallow water and on bare land.

#### 1.2 Local

Apart from two old records, it has only ever been recorded in Suffolk from the gently shelving banks of some of the natural reservoirs at Lound, which supply drinking water to the Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth areas. Since the northern part of Suffolk was transferred to Norfolk some years ago, the sites have been equally divided between the two counties, although they all remain in the Vice County of East Suffolk (VC 25).

#### 1.3 Natural Areas

Suffolk Coast and Heaths.

#### 1.4 Protection

**Classified as Nationally Scarce (i.e. it occurs in between 16 and 100 ten km squares in Britain), it receives only general protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.**

- Lack of regular water level fluctuations.
- Due to the site being a reservoir for public water supply, many of the causes of loss or decline nationally do not apply at Lound.

### Current Action

- The Lound site is designated as a County Wildlife Site.
- The site has been visited by Suffolk Wildlife Trust staff and A. C. Jermy (British Museum) in recent years to confirm that Pillwort was still present. Re-checked by Peter Lawson in 1998.
- Further new sites may be found as a direct result of the county-wide survey in process for Atlas 2000 and a new Suffolk Flora.

### Action plan objectives and targets

- 1 *Maintain and, if appropriate, enhance the existing population at Lound.*
- 2 *Seek the highest level of protection for the site.*

### Current factors causing loss or decline

- Growth of competitive vegetation and lack of marginal disturbance due to reduced grazing by cattle, sheep or deer.
- Introduction of competitive alien vegetation with similar habitat needs,

## Proposed action with key local partners

ACTION	KEY LOCAL PARTNERS	TIMETABLE				
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>A. Policy and Legislation</b>						
Seek SSSI status for Lound site	EN		*	*		
Investigate if the site would qualify for grant under Countryside Stewardship or Broads ESA schemes	MAFF/FRCA, SWT, NWT	*	*			
<b>B. Site safeguard and management</b>						
Work with site owners to ensure Pillwort is protected	SWT, NWT	*	*	*	*	*
Continue with earlier negotiations to set up joint SWT/E&SW nature reserve and visitor centre at Lound Water Works	E&SW, SWT	*	*	*	*	*
<b>C. Species management and protection</b>						
Establish best practice for pillwort management at Lound	NWT, SWT, EN	*	*	*	*	*
Work with site owners to put this into practice	SWT, NWT, E&SW, EN	*	*	*	*	*
Monitor annually for presence of New Zealand pygmy weed and seek to eradicate if found	E&SW, SWT, NWT	*	*	*	*	*
<b>D. Advisory</b>						
Ensure landowners and managers are aware of the presence of Pillwort and provide the most appropriate methods of habitat management	E&SW, SWT, NWT, EN	*	*	*	*	*
Liaise with Norfolk Wildlife Trust on Pillwort conservation, since the site is divided by the county boundary	SWT, NWT	*	*	*	*	*
<b>E. Future research and monitoring</b>						
Establish annual monitoring at Lound in terms of extent of colony and response to management initiatives	E&SW, SWT, NWT, EN	*	*	*	*	*
<b>F. Communications and publicity</b>						
Promote the issue of biodiversity and the need for safeguarding habitat at the proposed visitor centre on site	E&SW, SWT	*	*	*	*	*