

CITATION

COUNTY: DEVON SITE NAME: RIBSONS MEADOWS

DISTRICT: WEST DEVON

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended

Local Planning Authority: DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL, West Devon Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SX 495021 Area: 9.3 (ha.) 23 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 191 1:10,000: SX 40 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): – Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1988 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

A new site, adjacent to Coombe Meadow SSSI.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This site is important for its herb-rich grassland communities.

The meadows are gently sloping and, being situated on the clayey soils derived from the underlying Carboniferous shales, drain relatively slowly with some seasonal waterlogging.

The sward is dominated by Purple Moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, other grasses including Heath-grass *Danthonia decumbens*, Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Velvet Bent *Agrostis canina* and in places Marsh Foxtail *Alopecurus geniculatus* and Mat-grass *Nardus stricta*. These are accompanied by abundant Meadow Thistle *Cirsium dissectum* and Sharp-flowered Rush *Juncus acutiflorus* together with herbs such as Heath Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata*, Lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica*, Saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*, Sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica* and Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis*. Sedges are abundant and include Common Yellow-sedge *Carex demissa*, Flea Sedge *C. pulicaris*, Oval Sedge *C. ovalis*, Glaucous Sedge *C. flacca*, Tawny Sedge *C. hostiana*, Common Sedge *C. nigra* and Carnation Sedge *C. panicea*.

There is a strip of well-established woodland around the site, with Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and Hazel *Corylus avellana* as the main components, and Willow *Salix* sp. and Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* forming occasional thickets.

The nationally scarce Marsh Fritillary *Eurodryas aurinia* and Silver-washed Fritillary *Argynnis paphia* breed on site.

Site notified to Secretary of State on 24 June 1988