

File ref:

County: Hampshire **Site Name:** Norley Copse and Meadow SSSI

Local Planning Authority: Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council

National Grid Reference: SZ 364981

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 196 **1:25,000:** SZ 39

Area: 7.1 (ha) 17.5 (ac)

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1971 (part) **Date of Last Revision:** –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984 **Date of Last Revision:** –

Other Information:

Norley Meadow was formerly included within the New Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Reasons for Notification:

The site comprises a small unimproved highly species-rich grazing meadow and the adjacent woodland known as Norley Copse. The SSSI also includes the Crockford stream, a clear unpolluted water course which links the two major habitat features.

The meadow lies wholly on the mildly calcareous Headon Beds, and the flora reflects this, exhibiting a mixture of lime-loving species together with neutral or acid-loving species in the more leached areas. Dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria* is abundant in parts of the meadow, and other notable species include the heath dog-violet *Viola canina*, sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica*, yellow loosestrife *Lysimachia vulgaris*, narrow-leaved lungwort *Pulmonaria longifolia*, spotted and marsh orchids *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and *D. praetermissa*, and the pale sedge *Carex pallescens*. The flora totals some 140 species of higher plants.

The meadow is particularly rich in invertebrates with, amongst other things, eight species of dragonfly, large numbers of green hairstreak *Callophrys rubi* butterflies, a rare picture-winged fly *Sphenella marginata* and a very local crab spider *Oxyptila sanctuaria*.

The copse is predominantly oak woodland with hazel coppice. The flora is significantly richer than most woods in the New Forest because of the comparatively base-rich soils and the absence of grazing by commoners' animals, to which the Forest woodlands are subject. Species present include narrow-leaved lungwort *Pulmonaria longifolia*, wild daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*, bird's-nest orchid *Neottia nidus-avis*, butcher's broom *Ruscus aculeatus* and large quantities of the more common woodland species, such as wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa* and lesser celandine *Ranunculus ficaria*.

The juxtaposition of unimproved meadow and old woodland, together with the heathland and wetland habitats of the adjacent New Forest, is particularly valuable and unusual.