

County: Hampshire **Site Name:** Warblington Meadow SSSI

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

Local Planning Authority: Hampshire County Council, Havant Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SU 730052

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 197

1:10,000: SU 70 NW

Area: 4.26 (ha) 10.52 (ac)

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 16.12.1986

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Reasons for Notification:

Warblington Meadow Site of Special Scientific Interest is an unimproved grazing marsh adjoining Chichester Harbour and is of special interest for its gradation from freshwater, base-rich marsh to old reclaimed saltmarsh, and for its rich associated flora, with a total of 158 species of flowering plants having been recorded up to the time of notification.

The freshwater marsh consists of a sedge-rush community with *Carex acutiformis*, *C. otrubae*, *C. flacca*, *C. panicea*, *C. nigra*, *C. disticha* and *C. ovalis* growing together with *Juncus effusus*, *J. inflexus*, *J. acutiflorus* and *J. articulatus*. The grass component is also high with much Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, crested dog's tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, quaking grass *Briza media* and several fescues *Festuca* species including *F. rubra*, *F. pratensis* and *F. arundinacea*. The sward contains a number of locally distributed herbs, such as marsh arrow-grass *Triglochin palustris*, southern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, bog pimpernel *Anagallis tenella*, creeping jenny *Lysimachia nummularia* and corky-fruited water-dropwort *Oenanthe pimpinelloides*.

The freshwater marsh grades seawards into reclaimed saltmarsh, dominated by saltmarsh rush *Juncus gerardi*, and retaining several elements of the old saltmarsh flora. Species include sea arrow-grass *Triglochin maritima*, sea plantain *Plantago maritima*, sea milkwort *Glaux maritima*, both common and reflexed saltmarsh grasses *Puccinellia maritima* and *P. distans* and glasswort *Salicornia* species in the wetter areas and red fescue *Festuca rubra*, sea rush *Juncus maritimus*, buck's-horn plantain *Plantago coronopus*, hard grass *Parapholis strigosa*, strawberry clover *Trifolium fragiferum* and both distant and divided sedges *Carex distans* and *C. divisa* on the drier ground.

A small bed of reed *Phragmites australis* and a clear, unpolluted stream lined with oaks *Quercus robur*, alders *Alnus glutinosa* and willows *Salix* species add habitat diversity to the site.