

SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON 24 OCTOBER 1986

COUNTY: DEVON

SITE NAME: LADY'S WOOD AND VIADUCT
MEADOW

DISTRICT: SOUTH HAMS

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, Dartmoor National Park

National Grid Reference: SX 686591

Area: 4.9 (ha.) 12.1 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 202

1:10,000: SX 65 NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1969

Date of Last Revision: 1976

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Site originally known as Lady's Wood. The site boundary has been amended by extension. The site is in the Dartmoor National Park. The woods are owned by the Devon Trust for Nature Conservation.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This site comprises a species rich meadow between a 'coppice with standard' woodland and tree lined stream. It represents a small but important example of habitats which are rare in South Devon.

The site is located on Middle Devonian Shales on which have formed silty loam soils. The grassland lies on a shallow slope with a marshy area bordered by a wooded stream to the north and by the woodland on the higher more freely drained ground to the south.

The grassland has a range of soil drainage conditions. Within the better drained areas Lady's Mantle *Alchemilla vulgaris* is abundant; this plant is very uncommon in South Devon.

In the poorly drained areas a herb-rich Purple Moor Grass *Molinia caerulea* community is found. This type of community, found beside a stream on ground with a high water table is extremely restricted in South Devon. It is acidophilous and has abundant Soft Rush *Juncus effusus* and Sharp-flowered Rush *Juncus acutiflorus*, Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, Lesser Skullcap *Scutellaria minor*, Sedges (principally Star Sedge *Carex echinata*, Carnation Sedge *C. panicea*, Common Sedge *C. nigra* and Glaucous Sedge *C. flacca*) and Heath Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata*. Also found in this wetter ground are small areas of a more mesotrophic herb community with Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Ragged Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, Flote Grass *Glyceria fluitans* and Southern Marsh Orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*.

The Scarlet Tiger Moth *Callimorpha dominula* is a local species which occurs here.

The woodland is a mixture of Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur* and Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* with an understorey which consists largely of coppiced Hazel *Corylus avellana* together with other shrubs such as Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*. The ground flora is rich in species which are indicative of ancient woodland and includes: Primrose *Primula vulgaris*, Early Purple Orchid *Orchis mascula*, Yellow

Archangel *Lamium galeobdolon*, Wood Anemone *Anemone nemorosa*,
Moschatel *Adoxa moschatellina* and Pignut *Conopodium majus*.

Amongst the fauna recorded from this wood is the Dormouse *Muscardinus
ovellanarius*.