

Site Notified to Secretary of State on 28 October 1987

**County:** Devon      **Site Name:** Common Moor Langtree

**District:** Torrridge

**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, Torrridge District Council

**National Grid Reference:** ST 460132      **Area:** 17.1 (ha) 42.3 (ac)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 190      **1:10,000:** SS 41 SE

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

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1987      **Date of Last Revision:** –

**Other Information:**

New site.

**Description and Reasons for Notification:**

This site is important as a traditionally-managed area of unimproved grassland which is of high botanical value and of a type which is becoming increasingly rare.

It is located on gently undulating ground of the Carboniferous shales of the Culm Measures of North Devon. The soils are heavy clays and drainage is restricted over most of the site: in some places the ground is permanently waterlogged.

The vegetation covering much of the drier parts of the site is grassland dominated by purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* with heath-grass *Danthonia decumbens* and sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and containing dwarf shrub species, mainly cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix*, heather *Calluna vulgaris*, western gorse *Ulex gallii*, creeping willow *Salix repens* and petty whin *Genista anglica*. Sedge species, particularly green-ribbed sedge *Carex binervis* star-sedge *C. echinata*, tawny sedge *C. hostiana*, common sedge *C. nigra*, carnation sedge *C. panicea* and flea sedge *C. pulicaris* are common. Other herb species which occur include meadow thistle *Cirsium dissectum*, heath spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata*, lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica*, lesser butterfly-orchid *Platanthera bifolia*, saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and heath milkwort *Polygala serpyllifolia*.

In the wetter parts of the site compact rush *Juncus conglomeratus* is abundant and herbs such as meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, valerian *Valeriana officinalis*, marsh pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, bog asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, southern marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, lesser skullcap *Scutellaria minor* and whorled caraway *Carum verticillatum* occur, the last having a nationally very restricted distribution.

Amongst the vertebrate fauna harvest mouse *Micromys minutus* and common lizard *Lacerta vivipara* have been recorded, while the invertebrates include the uncommon marsh fritillary butterfly *Eurodryas aurinia* and the narrow-bordered bee hawk-moth *Hemaris tityus*.