

COUNTY: GLOUCESTERSHIRE

SITE NAME: HORNSLEASOW ROUGHS

DISTRICT: COTSWOLD

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

Local Planning Authority: GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, Cotswold District Council

National Grid Reference: SP 117323

Area: 28.24 (ha.) 69.8 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150

1:10,000: SP 13 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1954

Date of Last Revision: 1974

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1983

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Within the Cotswolds AONB.

Reasons for Notification:

A nationally important Jurassic limestone grassland site which supports a number of nationally and locally rare plant species.

The site consists entirely of grassland habitat which may be subdivided into two main areas. The majority of the area overlies old limestone workings which have resulted in an uneven terrain of hummocks and hollows. The vegetation is unimproved and varies according to aspect, depth of soil, and angle of slope. Although grazed by sheep or cattle there is encroachment of hawthorn scrub. The eastern part of the site has been partially improved resulting in some loss of species diversity.

The rich grassland flora of the western part of the site contains abundant tor grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* with lesser amounts of upright brome *Bromus erectus* and fescues *Festuca* spp. The nationally rare perfoliate pennycress *Thlaspi perfoliatum* grows here together with other rare plants such as Curtis' mouse-ear *Cerastium pumilum*, early gentian *Gentianella anglica*, field fleawort *Senecio integrifolium* and burnt orchid *Orchis ustulata*.

The eastern portion of the site, although partially improved, still retains a fairly good range of plants. Here the sward is dominated by grasses such as cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, crested dog's tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and herb species such as tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and yarrow *Achillea millefolium* are common.

The site is also important for its butterflies having species such as green hairstreak *Callophrys rubi* and others typical of limestone grassland.