

COUNTY: Norfolk

SITE NAME: HOLLY FARM MEADOW, WENDLING

DISTRICT: Breckland

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

Local Planning Authority: Breckland District Council

National Grid Reference: TF 936131

Area: 2.5 (ha) 6.17 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 132

1:10,000: TF 91 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): N/A

Date of Last Revision: N/A

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

A new site.

### **Reasons for Notification:**

This site which is situated in the valley of a small tributary of the River Wensum, is a valuable example of a calcareous spring-line meadow with gradations between wet and dry conditions. It supports an area of species-rich unimproved fen grassland which is maintained by seasonal grazing.

Wet marshy grassland occurs in the central area of the meadow and is dominated by Blunt-flowered Rush *Juncus subnodulosus* and Carnation Sedge *Carex panicea* with frequent Marsh Marigold *Caltha palustris*, Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, Marsh Valerian *Valeriana dioica* and Southern Marsh Orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*.

Unimproved neutral grassland with frequent anthills is present on the drier soils. Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Red Fescue *Festuca rubra* and Tufted Hair-grass *Deschampsia caespitosa* are dominant with Quaking-grass *Briza media*, Adder's Tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, cowslip *Primula veris*, Hoary Plantain *Plantago media* and Common Twayblade *Listera ovata*.

A diverse short-sward community occurs where the dry grassland grades into marsh. Here, Glaucous Sedge *Carex flacca* is dominant with frequent Blunt-flowered Rush, Sweet Vernal-grass and Bog-rush *Schoenus nigricans*. A number of uncommon species are present including Fragrant Orchid *Gymnadenia conopsea* var *densiflora*, Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris* and Common Spotted Orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*.

Additional interest is provided by tall herb vegetation which surrounds the open areas. This is dominated by Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* and Great Willow-herb *Epilobium hirsutum* with Oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* and Great Horsetail *Equisetum telmateia*. Hawthorn scrub has developed on the driest ground and has spread from thick boundary hedges.