



Yorkshire fog, meadow foxtail and rough meadow-grass *Poa trivialis*. Meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, cat's-ear *Hypochoeris radicata*, meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis* and lesser stitchwort *Stellaria graminea* occur frequently in these areas.

Areas of flood-meadow, virtually confined to the southern end of the site, are typified by the presence of meadow foxtail and great burnet. Characteristic grasses include red fescue, rough meadow-grass and sweet vernal-grass. A variety of other species typical of this habitat occurs, for example hairy sedge *Carex hirta*, cat's ear, oxeye daisy, field wood-rush *Luzula campestris*, meadow buttercup and devil's-bit scabious. Locally, small areas of sedge-rich meadow support a great diversity of plants. Sedges present include common sedge, carnation sedge, brown sedge *Carex disticha*, oval sedge *C. ovalis*, star sedge *C. echinata* and bladder sedge. Sharp-flowered rush is also present in abundance with crested dog's tail, red fescue, sweet vernal grass and creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*. Marsh arrow grass *Triglochin palustris*, marsh valerian *Valeriana dioica*, common spike-rush *Eleocharis palustris* and a variety of other herbs occur.

The River Blackwater is a slow-flowing, eutrophic river, dominated by broad-leaved and fennel-leaved pondweeds *Potamogeton natans* and *P. pectinatus*. Marginal vegetation along streams and ditches comprises 'tall herb' species such as meadow-sweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, reed canary grass *Phalaris arundinacea*, branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum*, hemlock water dropwort *Oenanthe crocata*, wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris* and yellow iris *Iris pseudacorus*. Locally, the uncommon species cyperus sedge *Carex pseudocyperus*, bladder-sedge *C. vesicaria* and slender-tufted sedge *C. acuta* occur.

The area of wet woodland is composed of alder with oak and occasional ash, hawthorn, holly, hazel, spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, goat willow *Salix caprea* and honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* in the shrub layer. the ground flora includes dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, bugle *Ajuga reptans* and moschatel *Adoxa moschatellina*. Woodland grasses include wood melick *Melica uniflora*, giant fescue *Festuca gigantea*, false brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum* and wood meadow-grass *Poa nemoralis*. The rare elongated sedge *Carex elongata*, which has a restricted distribution nationally, occurs in the wood in its only Berkshire-Hampshire locality, where it is associated with remote sedge *Carex remota*, yellow iris *Iris pseudacorus*, floating sweet-grass *Glyceria fluitans* and purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*.

The site supports a very rich wetland insect fauna including a number of uncommon species. For example, flies (Diptera) recorded in the meadows include the rare Dolichopodids *Hercostomus chalybeus*, *Dolichopus latelimbatus* and *Syntormon pusilus*, and the Empid fly *Empis volucris*; examples of beetles (Coleoptera) include the seed weevil *Apion cruentatum* and the rove beetle *Ocypus fuscatus*. The scarce hoverflies *Lejogaster splendida* and *Neoascia geniculata*, the soldier flies *Odontomyia viridula* and *Varoyia tenuicornis* and the rove beetle *Stenus lustratus* have been recorded in the extensive area of reed sweet-grass *Glyceria maxima* swamp at the western end of the site.