

County: North Yorkshire

Site Name: Newton Mask

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

Local Planning Authority: East Yorkshire Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SD 920987

Area: 16.5 (ha) 40.8 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 105, 106 **1:10,000:** SE 74 NW, SE 75 SW

First Notified: 1986

Description:

Newton Mask is a single large meadow adjacent to the River Derwent with rising ground (Mask Brow) forming its eastern boundary. In consequence of inherent variation in topography different parts of the meadow are subject to varying flooding regimes and display a variety of plant communities. The field is managed traditionally for hay and pasturage.

In the low-lying wettest areas, which include overgrown ditches, species such as reed sweet-grass *Glyceria maxima* and reed canary grass *Phalaris arundinacea* are dominant: where flooding is less severe the marsh foxtail grass *Alopecurus geniculatus* and creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera* are abundant, associated with stands of brown sedge *Carex disticha* and herbs such as marsh arrowgrass *Triglochin palustris* and marsh marigold *Caltha palustris*. Still drier communities are characterised by the abundance of meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis* with sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica* and great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*.

In contrast to these typical flood meadow communities, the vegetation of Mask Brow includes species which are sensitive to flooding, and are more characteristic of long-established neutral or calcareous meadowland. They include green-winged orchid *Orchis morio*, fairy flax *Linum catharticum*, twayblade *Listera ovata*, adder's-tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, cowslip *Primula veris*, yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, bugle *Ajuga reptans*, spring sedge *Carex caryophyllea*, pignut *Conopodium majus*, down oat grass *Avenula pubescens* and heat grass *Danthonia decumbens*.

Other Information:

1. Newton Mask is regarded as an extension to the Derwent Ings as listed in "A Nature Conservation Review" edited by D. A. Ratcliffe, 1977, Cambridge University Press, having been accepted as of equivalent standard in 1982.
2. The river adjacent to this site is included in the River Derwent SSSI.