

Date Notified: 5 January 1989

**County:** Humberside

**Site Name:** Hotham Meadow

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

**Local Planning Authority:** Boothferry Borough Council

**National Grid Reference:** SE 895351      **Area:** 1.8 (ha) 4.4 (ac)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 106      **1:10,000:** SE 83 NE

**First Notified:** 1989

**Description:**

Hotham Meadow lies to the north of the village of Hotham in the valley of the Hotham and Twin Becks, on the western edge of the Yorkshire Wolds.

The meadow includes a number of different plant communities which reflect variation in the underlying soils, but is particularly important for its herb-rich neutral grassland. Although small, it is one of the best examples of this grassland type in the District of Boothferry, outside the Derwent Valley.

The neutral grassland has developed on windblown glacial sands. Prominent grass species include an abundance of meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis* together with red fescue *Festuca rubra*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and quaking-grass *Briza media*. Herbs include great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* which is particularly prominent and meadow saxifrage *Saxifraga granulata* an uncommon plant which is known to occur in only two grassland sites in Humberside. Other herb species include pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, lesser stichwort *Stellaria graminea*, meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis*, crosswort *Galium cruciata* and lesser celandine *Ranunculus ficaria*, with pignut *Conopodium majus* and field wood-rush *Luzula campestris* on drier areas.

Where clays and silts are present the neutral grassland grades through wet meadow with ragged-robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*, into fen dominated by lesser pond-sedge *Carex acutiformis* with meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, brown sedge *Carex disticha*, sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus*, and common spike-rush *Eleocharis palustris*.

Mature boundary hedges, a small chalk stream and an area of hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* scrub add diversity to the site.