

Date Notified: 17 Nov 1989

County: Humberside **Site Name:** Lambwath Meadows

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

Local Planning Authority: Holderness Borough Council

National Grid Reference: TA 202398, 212396, 208398 & 216398

Ordnance Survey Sheets 1:50,000: 107 **1:10,000:** TA 23 NW, TA 24 SW

Area: 29.0 (ha) 71.6 (ac)

First Notified: 1989

Description:

Lambwath Meadows consist of a series of low-lying seasonally flooded hayfields situated to the north and south of the Lambwath Stream near Withernwick. The meadows are important as one of the best examples of agriculturally unimproved species-rich, damp neutral alluvial grassland in North Humberside and are maintained by traditional management for hay. Such meadows, which were formerly widespread are now very restricted in distribution due to agricultural improvement, particularly reseeding and the use of artificial fertilisers.

Two main grassland communities are represented and these reflect differences in topography and soil moisture levels within the site.

In the low-lying areas of the meadow which are damper and subject to flooding, the sward consists of a diverse assemblage of grasses, sedges, rushes and forbs with meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, common sorrel *Rumex acetosa* and meadow-rue *Thalictrum flavum* being noticeably abundant. The abundance of meadow-rue, a species uncommon in Humberside, is of special note.

Other species widespread in the sward on low-lying parts of the site are pignut *Conopodium majus*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, tufted vetch *Vicia cracca*, brown sedge *Carex disticha*, autumn hawkbit *Leontodon autumnalis*, ragged-robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, amphibious bistort *Polygonum amphibium* and meadow brome *Bromus commutatus*. Species of more restricted distribution in Britain which occur here include pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, tubular water dropwort *Oenanthe fistulosa*, marsh stitchwort *Stellaria palustris*, meadow barley *Hordeum secalinum* and adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*.

On more elevated and sloping ground the grassland is different in character and includes species which favour drier conditions. Typically, the sward in these areas consists of grasses such as crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, red fescue, common bent *Agrostis capillaris* and Yorkshire-fog, together with herbs such as common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, meadow buttercup, yellow-

rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, cowslip *Primula veris*, meadow vetchling, oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare* and lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*.

Green-winged orchid *Orchis morio* and early marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza incarnata* occur within this community but associated with a seepage line.

The individual meadows are separated by ditches which support a range of aquatic and marsh species including reed sweet-grass *Glyceria maxima*, reed canary-grass *Phalaris arundinacea*, common reed *Phragmites australis*, tufted sedge *Carex elata*, great yellow cress *Rorippa amphibia* and celery-leaved buttercup *Ranunculus sceleratus*.