

County: Devon

Site Name: Quarry Fields Farm

District: East Devon

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

Local Planning Authority: Devon County Council
East Devon District Council

National Grid Reference: ST 275013 **Area:** 5.48 (ha) 13.53 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 193 **1:10,000:** ST 20 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): – **Date of Last Revision:** –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1990 **Date of Last Revision:** –

Other Information:

This is a new site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Quarry Fields, a small traditionally managed hillside farm in East Devon, contains four hay meadows supporting species rich grassland swards highly representative of a community type that is scarce nationally, and of which only a few small remnants are known to now survive in the county. The fields are of particular importance for their large population of green-winged orchid *Orchis morio*.

The gently sloping fields, sited at an altitude of 150 m, lie over the Jurassic Lower Lias Clays which give rise to their fine loamy soils that are however only slowly permeable.

The grass component of the sward is diverse and typically dominated by sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, together with red fescue *Festuca rubra*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris* and cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*.

Characteristic herbs of the community are common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, field wood-rush *Luzula campestris* and spring sedge *Carex caryophyllea*. Other species present include yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* and bulbous buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*. Cowslip *Primula veris* and hairy oat-grass *Avenula pubescens*, two local species in Devon, also occur.

The central field supports many hundreds of plants of green-winged orchid, a species which is now rare in Devon.

No information is available as yet on the invertebrate fauna of the site.