

COUNTY: EAST SUSSEX SITE NAME: STOCKLAND FARM MEADOWS

DISTRICT: WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

Local Planning Authority: WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: TQ 527251 Area: 5.8 (ha.) 14.2 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 199 1:10,000: TQ 52 NW, TQ 52 SW

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1992

Other Information:

This is a new site.

Reasons for Notification:

The site consists of two grazed meadows and a hay field near Hadlow Down, managed by traditional methods, on the sides of a small valley tributary of the River Uck. The grasslands are species-rich and constitute examples of types now very scarce in Sussex.

The fields, which are located on Wadhurst Clay, are divided and bordered mainly by hedgerows, with scrub and a small oak woodland to the north-west. Over eighty plant species have been recorded from the site including such notable ones as pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, betony *Stachys officinalis* and cowslip *Primula veris*. One of the grazed meadows has abundant large ant-hills with such species as mouse-ear hawkweed *Hieracium pilosella* and creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans* on them.

The main swards are dominated by creeping bent grass *Agrostis capillaris* and red fescue *Festuca rubra*. Yorkshire fog grass *Holcus lanatus* is widespread. Species associated with old, undisturbed meadows such as yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, pepper saxifrage and pignut *Conopodium majus* are present. The hay field is extremely species-rich and, in addition to those already listed, the main sward-forming species are common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, common bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and yarrow *Achillea millefolium*. The main sward of the grazed meadows includes species such as dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and spring-sedge *Carex caryophylla*.

There is a small pond in the grazed meadow to the east of the site which has five of the six British species of Amphibia present.