

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER

SITE NAME: SEVERN VALLEY
GRASSLANDS, 10 RECTORY
FARM MEADOWS

DISTRICT: WYCHAVON

SITE REF: 15 P5K

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

Local Planning Authority: HEREFORD AND WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL,
Wychavon District Council

National Grid Reference: SO 922382

Area: 16.17 (ha.) 39.96 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150

1:10,000: SO 93 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 15 March 1994

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

New site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Rectory Farm Meadows are located in the south-east of the central Worcestershire plain on level ground west of Bredon, adjacent to the River Avon which forms the western boundary. These alluvial semi-natural grasslands overlie Lower Lias clays of the Jurassic period and are traditionally managed by hay cutting with aftermath grazing.

The special interest of these flood meadows lies in their diversity and comparatively large size. The mesotrophic (neutral) grassland is characterised by meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis* and great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*. Frequent grasses include sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, and soft brome *Bromus hordeaceus*, with hairy sedge *Carex hirta*, lesser pond-sedge *C. acutiformis*, common sedge *C. nigra* and spike rush *Eleocharis palustris*. Associated herbs are marsh marigold *Caltha palustris*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis*, meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, marsh bedstraw *Galium palustre*, yellow iris *Iris pseudacorus*, tufted vetch *Vicia cracca*, tubular water-dropwort *Oenanthe fistulosa* and common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*.

Of particular interest on this site is narrow-leaved water-dropwort *Oenanthe silaifolia*, which is nationally scarce.

There is a pond and ditch between the two meadows and also a ditch across the northern end. The remaining boundaries comprise hedges dominated by hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*.