

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER SITE NAME: SEVERN VALLEY
GRASSLANDS, 13 NAUNTON
COURT 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 955524

Area: 4.82 (ha.) 11.91 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150

1:10,000: SO 95 SE

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:

Naunton Court Meadows are located in the east of the central Worcestershire plain, on level terrain west of Naunton Court Farm near Naunton Beauchamp. The two meadows are managed as traditional hay meadows with aftermath grazing. The meadows lie on alluvial soils over Lower Lias clays of the Jurassic period, giving rise to neutral soils.

The special interest of the site lies in the diversity of the semi-natural grassland sward. The vegetation conforms with the mesotrophic (neutral) grassland characterised by crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*. Meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, bulbous buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*, goat's-beard *Tragopogon pratensis* and yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor* are the dominant species.

The southern meadow is characteristic of the meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* sub-community with meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, dropwort *F. vulgaris*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and meadow crane's-bill *Geranium pratense*. The locally uncommon green-winged orchid *Orchis morio* is also present. The northern meadow exhibits a more calcareous flora typical of the lady's bedstraw *Galium verum* sub-community, with salad burnet *Sanguisorbia minor*, scattered populations of cowslip *Primula veris* and the locally uncommon adder's-tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*.

The meadows are bounded by hedges with field maple *Acer campestre*, midland hawthorn *Crataegus laevigata*, spindle *Eunonymus europaeus*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* and buckthorn *Rhamnus catharticus*.

Butterflies present in the meadows include orange tip *Anthocaris cardamines* and common blue *Polyommatus icarus*.