

COUNTY: HEREFORD & WORCESTER

SITE NAME: SEVERN VALLEY
GRASSLANDS, 16 STOCK WOOD
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 998586

Area: 1.75 (ha.) 4.32 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 150

1:10,000: SO 95 NE

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:

Stock Wood Meadows are located in the east of the central Worcestershire plain, one and a half kilometres north-west of the village of Inkberrow. The two meadows are maintained as traditional hay meadows, with aftermath grazing. A stream runs through part of the site and there is a pond in the north east corner. The neutral soils are poorly drained, derived from the underlying Lower Lias clays of the Jurassic Period.

The special interest of the site lies in the diversity of the damp semi-natural mesotrophic (neutral) grassland sward, characterised by crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*. The vegetation is typical of the lady's bedstraw *Galium verum* sub-community. Grasses include meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, downy oat-grass *Avenula pubescens*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and tall fescue *Festuca arundinacea*. Herb species which occur throughout the sward are common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, cowslip *Primula veris*, yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, pepper-saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor* and rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*. Wetter areas also support ragged-robin *Lynchis flos-cuculi* and meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*.

Locally uncommon species found are green-winged orchid *Orchis morio* and adder's-tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*. An unusual feature is the presence of early-purple orchid *Orchis mascula*, a species more characteristic of woodlands.

The meadows are bounded by species-rich hedges to the north and east, with guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, field maple *Acer campestre*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* and elder *Sambucus nigra*.