

Site name: Matley Moor Meadows **County:** Derbyshire

District: High Peak

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as substituted by Schedule 9 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Local Planning Authority: High Peak Borough Council, Peak District National Park Authority

National Grid reference: SK 023896 **Area:** 3.25 ha

Ordnance Survey sheet: **1:50,000:** 110 **1:10,000:** SK 08 NE

Notification date: 23 November 2011

Reasons for notification:

Matley Moor Meadows SSSI is a nationally important site for its lowland unimproved neutral grassland, comprising the nationally scarce National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type MG5 crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* – common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* grassland.

General description:

The site consists of two small fields managed as hay meadows at an altitude of 286 m on poorly drained soils derived from the Millstone Grits on the north-western fringes of the Dark Peak.

Much of the site comprises agriculturally-unimproved, species-rich grassland characterised by a diverse and rich range of native grasses and herbs. Grasses such as red fescue *Festuca rubra*, crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* all occur in abundance, with heath-grass *Danthonia decumbens* and quaking-grass *Briza media* occurring more locally. Throughout is a diverse range of characteristic herbs which include an abundance of autumn hawkbit *Scorzoneroides autumnalis*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, ox-eye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, common cat's-ear *Hypochoeris radicata* and yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*. Also present are harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*, common spotted orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* and common eyebright *Euphrasia nemorosa*. In places on more acidic soil, species such as wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, heath bedstraw *Galium saxatile* and sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella* also occur.