

**CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

DOLYHIR MEADOWS

Date of notification: 1989

National grid reference: SO 245581 and SO 243581

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 148
1:25,000 Sheet number: SO 25

Site area: 0.6 ha

Description:

These two small herb-rich hay meadows are noted for the occurrence of a neutral grassland vegetation type which is not widely distributed and is more typical of central or eastern England. Additionally, they support a good population of meadow saffron *Colchicum autumnale*, a nationally uncommon plant which is on the western edge of its range in mid-Wales. The western meadow is moderately sloping with a north-easterly aspect, whilst the eastern meadow is on level ground. Both sites are well drained and prone to receiving limestone dust from the adjacent quarry.

The dominant grasses of the sward are sheep's-fescue *Festuca ovina*, red fescue *F. rubra* and crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, with abundant sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and a good representation of quaking-grass *Briza media* and yellow oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens*. Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* occurs locally, apparently in association with areas of deeper soil. The eastern pasture is more grass-dominated, with a greater frequency of perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*.

Species which are well represented in the herb-rich sward are rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus* and common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* (both locally dominant in the western meadow), and also cowslip *Primula veris*, which is particularly abundant in the western meadow. Other constant species include carnation sedge *Carex flacca*, yarrow *Achillea ptarmica*, meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, bulbous buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and red clover *Trifolium pratense*. An indication of the relatively base-rich status of the soil is the significant occurrence of fairy flax *Linum catharticum* and lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*.

The inclusion of some woodland and some grassed-over disused railway track adds to the species diversity of the site which, despite its small size, contains at least 80 species of flowering plants.

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