

8 HANNAH'S MEADOW

The reserve consists of two species rich unimproved upland hay meadows and a grazing pasture in a traditional farming landscape in the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Hannah's Meadow



Hannah Hauxwell

The meadows and pasture at Hannah's Meadow have evolved as a result of traditional farming practices over several centuries. They were previously owned and farmed by Hannah Hauxwell for over 50 years. Living alone at Low Birk Hat Farm without the luxury of electricity or running water Hannah managed the land using the traditional methods that avoided adding artificial fertilizers or re-seeding. Instead she farmed the fields for hay and pasture thus maintaining the rich variety of wildlife that has evolved over centuries. Hannah retired in 1988 and the meadows and pasture were bought by Durham Wildlife Trust who now manage them as a nature reserve.

Curlew



Wood Crane's-bill

The meadows are considered to be some of the least improved and most species rich in upland Durham and as such have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The grass sward is dominated by Meadow Fox-tail, Sweet vernal-grass and Crested Dog's-tail with an abundance of wild flowers, including Ragged-Robin, Wood Crane's-bill, Marsh-marigold, Yellow-rattle, Adders-tongue fern and Globe-flower.

The pasture has a more acidic character with rushes and sedges dominating and this supports breeding birds such as Lapwing, Skylark, Redshank, Curlew and Meadow Pipit.



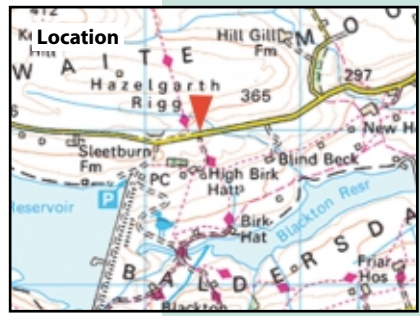
Ragged Robin

Best seen – June/July for Meadow flora.

HANNAH'S MEADOW



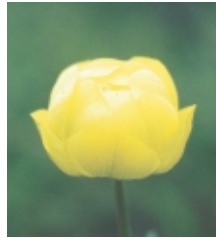
- Reserve boundary
- P Parking
- ★ Reserve entrance
- Footpaths



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Adder's-tongue – a small, scarce fern of ancient grassland, this plant was in much demand by herbalists who believed it to provided a cure for snake-bite.

Globe-flower



Lapwing



Management

In order to maintain this special wildlife resource Durham Wildlife Trust continues to manage the reserve by traditional methods.

Sheep lamb in the spring in the hay meadows followed by some muck spreading. Stock are removed until late July when the haycrop is cut. The grass is then allowed to grow and cows graze the fog (late grass) in September / October. Sheep are brought back into the meadows to run with the tup in November before the winter rest period. The cycle then begins again in the spring.

The dry stone walls require regular maintenance, and the barn has been restored using local stone to provide an unmanned visitor centre displaying information about Hannah and her special meadows.

Hannah's Barn



Location

From Barnard Castle follow the B6277 to Romalldkirk and then follow the Balderhead road via Hunderthwaite. The reserve is adjacent to the public road a 1¼ mile east of the Balderhead Reservoir Car Park. The Pennine Way footpath runs through the reserve.

You are welcome to visit Hannah's Meadow but it is important to realise that it is grazed for much of the year and therefore please close gates behind you. Dogs must be kept on a lead and please take your litter home. The best time to see the meadows is in late June and July.

General Information

Ownership: Durham Wildlife Trust

Size: 8.8 hectares

Grid Reference: NY937186

O.S. Outdoor Leisure Map: 31

Parking and access to site:

Limited parking on roadside at entrance to reserve or access on foot from the Pennine Way.

Public transport: Not readily accessible by public transport.

Dogs: Please keep dogs on a lead at all times as the site is grazed for much of the year.

Accessibility: ▲▲▲▲▲

This card is kindly sponsored by:



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