

Site name: Waterfall Meadows **County:** Derbyshire

District: Derbyshire Dales

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: Derbyshire Dales District Council, Peak District National Park Authority

National Grid reference: SK197772 **Area:** 8.53 ha

Ordnance Survey sheet: **1:50,000:** 119 **1:10,000:** SK 17 NW

Notification date: 25 June 2013

Reasons for notification:

Waterfall Meadows SSSI is a nationally important site for species-rich neutral grasslands of the rare National Vegetation Classification (NVC) type MG5 crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* – common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* grassland.

General description:

The site consists of a series of adjoining fields predominantly comprised of lowland neutral grasslands. Most of the site lies on a gentle south-facing slope bordered to the south-west by a stream which also flows through the southern end of the SSSI. The majority of the fields are managed as hay meadows, with a neutral grassland pasture in the south of the site.

The most extensive areas of neutral grassland are characterised by grasses, such as crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus* and cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*. The herbs include common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, eyebright *Euphrasia officinalis* agg., meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*, yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus minor* and, more locally, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*.

In places, the neutral grasslands show transitions to communities that have some affinities to fen-meadows, which have developed around the margins of small watercourses and are characterised by soft-rush *Juncus effusus* and jointed rush *J. articulatus*. The herbs include wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, common valerian *Valeriana officinalis*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, greater birds-foot-trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus*, meadow vetchling, bush vetch *Vicia sepium*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, yellow-rattle, common marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre*, brooklime *Veronica beccabunga* and water mint *Mentha aquatica*.