

**COUNTY:** NORTHAMPTONSHIRE    **SITE NAME:** TITCHMARSH MEADOW

**District:** East Northamptonshire

**Status:** Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

**Local Planning Authority:** East Northamptonshire District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TL 031797

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 141                      **1:10,000:** TL 07 NW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):**                      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1986                      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Area:** 2.3 ha    5.6 ac

**Other Information:** This is a new site.

### **Description and Reasons for Notification**

Titchmarsh Meadow is a small poorly-drained field lying alongside a stream. A medieval fish pond, now drained and supporting marsh vegetation occupies part of the site. The grazed sward is rich in plant species and varies considerably in composition according to local topography and drainage patterns. Much of the site comprises base rich marsh communities of high botanical interest with calcareous clay and loam pastures also represented on small drier areas. These community types have declined rapidly throughout the country and the majority of those present on the site are now rare in Northamptonshire and Great Britain.

The wetter areas of marsh in the bottom of the fish pond are dominated by the rushes *Juncus articulatus*, *J. inflexus* and *J. effusus*, false fox-sedge *Carex otrubae* and Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*. The sweet-grasses *Glyceria maxima*, *G. declinata* and *G. plicata* are abundant and common reed *Phragmites australis*, reed canary-grass *Phalaris arundinacea*, ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and water mint *Mentha aquatica* also occur. Of special interest is the presence of the uncommon marsh arrowgrass *Triglochin palustris*.

Outside the fish pond are marsh areas dominated by the rushes *Juncus articulatus* and *J. inflexus* and common spike-rush *Eleocharis palustris* with blunt-flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus* also present. Where drainage is better the grasses Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, brown bent *Agrostis canina* and cock's foot *Dactylis glomerata* replace the rushes, and herbs such as pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, marsh marigold *Caltha palustris*, marsh valerian *Valeriana dioica* and greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus uliginosus* are found. Large numbers of the notable county rarity, southern marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* occur throughout this area.

On the dry banks of the fish pond quaking grass *Briza media*, meadow oat-grass *Avenula pratense*, lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus* are found.

Overgrown hedges, scrub, anthills and the surrounding streams and ditches with their associated vegetation add interest to the site, and provide valuable habitat for invertebrates, birds and small mammals.

Re-presentation of details approved by Council. Re-typed October 1999.