Birmingham & Black Country Local Sites Assessment Report

EcoRecord Reference	Site Name	Grid Reference	Current Status [1]	Survey Date(s)			
None	Bushbury Pastures	SJ 91912 00463	PSI	01/09/2022			
Planning Authority	Site Ownership	Area/Length Reason for Survey		Report Date			
Wolverhampton City Council	Unknown	4.0ha	2022 SINC / SLINC review	31/01/2023			
Meets LS Criteria	SLINC	Туре	Wildlife	i.e. Wildlife/Geological			
Amendment(s)	New Site	New Site i.e. None; New Site; Upgrade; Downgrade; Extension; Whole/Part Deletion					
Description	Description Designate as SLINC (Wildlife)						

Citation (Summary of Value)

Bushbury Pastures is composed of a several habitats, primarily dense and scattered scrub including some broadleaved woodland and a sizeable area of semi-improved natural grassland. The scrub is primarily composed of hawthorn, which is most dense to the south and south-west of the site. The grassland is interspersed with hawthorn and has typical neutral grassland species with Common Knapweed - Centaurea nigra sens. lat., Common Bent – Agrostis capillaris, Hairy Sedge – Carex hirta, Black Medick – Medicago lupulina, Autumn Hawkbit – Scorzoneroides autumnalis and Red Clover – Trifolium pratense all at least locally frequent.

A small stream flows through the site parallel with its northern boundary and typical streamside species found include Brooklime – *Veronica beccabunga*, Wild Teasel – *Dipsacus fullonum* and Hoary Willowherb – *Epilobium parviflorum*. Two ponds occur in the southern part of the site where Celery-leaved Buttercup – *Ranunculus sceleratus*,, Water Plantain - *Alisma plantago-aquatica*, Common Duckweed – *Lemna minor*, Marsh Foxtail – *Alopecurus geniculatus*, Toad Rush – *Juncus bufonius* and Gypsywort – *Lycopus europaeus* are all found.

Local Site Selection Criteria			
Ecological			
Habitat Diversity	м	The site includes a range of habitats, mostly scattered and dense scrub but a significant amount of grassland, currently maintained by constant fly-grazing. Areas of stream and ponds adds to the diversity as does an area of scrub that has succeeded to broadleaved woodland	
Species Diversity	M/H	Over 70 species of vascular plant within an area of 4ha is indicative of the varied habitats. Whilst some of these are non-native / naturalised species (e.g. Garden Lupin and Michaelmas Daisy), the majority are typical of semi-natural habitats	
Habitat Rarity	L/M	None of the habitats are rare in a local context, however the grassland, albeit inundated by scrub, non-native species and signs of disturbance (e.g. fly tipping), is a significant area with at least 0.5ha of semi-improved neutral grassland.	
Species Rarity	м	Axiophyte species including Wild Carrot - <i>Daucus carota subsp. carota</i> and Brooklime as well as the locally uncommon Purple-loosestrife - <i>Lythrum salicaria</i> and House Sparrow are also present.	
Size or Extent	м	A large area of scrub habitat in conjunction with a large area of semi-improved neutral grassland	
Naturalness	M/H	The scrub / grassland mosaic when combined with streams, spring lines and ponds has a high degree of naturalness, however this is offset by areas of previous and more recent disturbance	
Position & Connectivity	м	Connected to streamside / spring lines, ultimately running to Smestow Brook and broadleaved woodland corridor to the south and connected to the trackside vegetation of two adjacent train lines.	
Geological			
	N/A	Not assessed	
Social			
Historical & Cultural	L/M	The site appears to have been farmland since the 1840s. The southern corner of the site marks the former location of a spa well which was the meeting point of the ancient parish borders of Wolverhampton, Bushbury and Wednesfield	
Access	L	There is access from the adjacent playing field, but it is not particularly easy to locate and the presence of ponies may be off putting	
Aesthetic	L/M	The site has a semi-natural appearance; however, it is bounded by railway lines to the east and west and a traveller's site to the north and there are several signs of significant fly-tipping.	
Recorded History	L/M	The landuse of the site is recorded on maps dating back to 1847, when the field name was recorded as Spa Well Meadow and the land-use was recorded as arable. It appears the site was used for allotments in the 1940s. There has been no previous Local Site Assessment for this site.	
Value for Learning	L/M	It is adjacent to a well-used playing field and does have potential if access and other issues were enhanced	

Site Description

Approximately 2km due north of Wolverhampton city centre, Bushbury Pastures is positioned between two railway lines on its eastern and western flanks with a Gypsy & Traveller site to the north and is adjacent to the Fowler's Playing Fields to the south. There is evidence to suggest the site was used as allotments during the 1940s and there are numerous humps and hollows across the site

Dense scrub habitat at the north and south-west of the site merges into broadleaved woodland along the southern boundary with the adjacent playing fields. An area of semi-improved neutral grassland is interspersed with scattered scrub dominated by Hawthorn, at least some of which is likely to be remnant historic field boundaries. Two small ponds in the southern section of the site add to overall habitat and species diversity, as does a small brook flowing across the north of the field, bordered by tall herb, ruderal vegetation.

Current grazing management is by way of at least five ponies which appear to be continuously present. Persistent fly-grazing is likely halting the increase of dense and scattered scrub at the site although it has also given rise to poaching of the turf and an extremely short grassland sward.

Signs of fly tipping and littering are mainly confined to the northern and north-eastern areas although dumping of waste material and other more recent disturbance is apparent at the south-eastern corner.

There is a locked metal access gate at the northern boundary with the traveller's site, but the main access / egress point appears to be near the pedestrian level crossing in the south-eastern corner.

Habitats					
Phase 1 Name	Broadleaved woodland – semi-natural	Phase 1 Code	A1.1.1		
Sycamore – Acer pseu locally frequent. Within	west corner and along the southern boundary of the site, Willow – Sali doplatanus, Ash – Fraxinus excelsior, Silver Birch – Betula pendula ar the understorey, species include Dogwood – Cornus sp., Hawthorn – sh saplings. The habitat may be of value to invertebrate and bird speci	nd Poplar – Populus s Crataegus monogyna	pecies at least		
Phase 1 Name	Scrub – dense / continuous & scattered	Phase 1 Code	A2.1 & A2.2		
boundary. Elsewhere t	scrub is most noticeable to the west and south-west of the site but a b here is scattered scrub throughout. Mostly Hawthorn, some of the line nant field boundaries (TN003). The habitat may be of value to inverted	es crossing Bushbury	Pastures may		
Phase 1 Name	Grassland – semi-improved neutral grassland	Phase 1 Code	B2.1		
capillaris, Yorkshire For Festuca rubra, Commo pratense and Creeping Cinquefoil are locally al Heavily grazed by poni	A key component of the site, the semi-improved neutral grassland is characterised by species such as Common Bent – Agrostis capillaris, Yorkshire Fog – Holcus lanatus, Yarrow – Achillea millefolium, Ribwort Plantain – Plantago lanceolata, Red Fescue – Festuca rubra, Common Knapweed, Cocksfoot – Dactylis glomerata, Black Medick – Medicago lupulina, Red Clover – Trifolium pratense and Creeping Cinquefoil – Potentilla reptans, all of which are frequent within the sward. Red Fescue and Creeping Cinquefoil are locally abundant. Heavily grazed by ponies throughout the year, much of the neutral grassland is interspersed with Hawthorn scrub, with patches of				
locally frequent. The to	<i>ium arvense</i> , being occasional to locally abundant and the Garden Lup pography is one of a series of hummocks and depressions which toge and habitat diversity. The habitat may be of value to invertebrate and	ether with numerous a			
Phase 1 Name	Marsh / marshy grassland	Phase 1 Code	В5		
where Creeping Buttere	he site are two small, discrete areas of marshy grassland surrounding to cup – <i>Ranunculus repens</i> and Brooklime are frequent and a range of s I Buttercup, Marsh Foxtail, Water Plantain and Toad Rush. The habita	pecies typical of wette	er habitats occur,		
Phase 1 Name	Other tall herb & fern – tall ruderal	Phase 1 Code	C3.1		
habitat here is characte arvense. Horse Radish Buddleia davidii, Canac	he north-western boundary and along the margin of the dense scrub herised by Common Nettle – <i>Urtica dioica</i> , Bramble – <i>Rubus fruticosus a</i> in - <i>Armoracia rusticana</i> is frequent and Fennel – <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> lo dian Goldenrod – <i>Solidago canadensis</i> , Red Dead-Nettle - <i>Lamium pu</i> sent. The habitat may be of value to invertebrate and bird species.	agg. and Creeping Th ocally frequent with Bu	istle – <i>Cirsium</i> utterfly Bush –		
Phase 1 Name	Standing water – eutrophic	Phase 1 Code	G1.1		
associated with the adj	Two small ponds (TN004 and TN005) are situated towards the southern boundary of the site. Most of the species diversity here is associated with the adjacent marshy grassland, however Common Duckweed is frequent and Water Plantain is locally frequent within the standing water habitat itself. The habitat may be of value to invertebrate and amphibian species, but is unlikely to support water voles or otter.				
Phase 1 Name	Running Water	Phase 1 Code	G2		
A small brook flows through the site at the northern end (TN002) with Brooklime being the most ubiquitous of species here. A small stand of Purple-loosestrife adds to the diversity of its margins. At TN005, a very small issue flows south from a pond to meet the ditch flowing along the boundary with Fowler's Playing Fields to the south. Apparently clear and good quality water flowing over a gravelly substrate may well provide suitable substrate for a range of aquatic invertebrates, but is unlikely to support water voles or otter.					
Notes					

Habitats of Note [2]						
Phase 1 Name	Phase 1 Code	EHD	NERC	LBAP	Rarity	Year
N/A						

Notes			

Species of Note [2]							
Flora							
Species	Statutory	NERC	LBAP	RDL	Rarity	Axiophyte	Year
Daucus carota subsp. carota - Wild Carrot					F	Y	2022
Lythrum salicaria - Purple-loosestrife					U		2022
Veronica beccabunga - Brooklime					F	Y	2022

Notes

Fauna							
Species	Statutory	NERC	LBAP	RDL	Concern	Rarity	Year
Passer domesticus (House Sparrow)		Y			BRed	VC	2022
The following Operation of Nederlands have been seen and		6 41					
The following Species of Note have been recorder Coenonympha pamphilus - Small Heath	a within Soum c	of the asses	ssment site				
		Y		RLGB. Lr(NT)		U	1989
Bufo bufo - Common Toad	WCA5/9.5 a	Y	Y			F	2009
Lissotriton vulgaris - Smooth Newt	WCA5/9.5 a		Y			F	2009
Rana temporaria - Common Frog	WCA5/9.5 a		Y			F	2009
Triturus cristatus - Great Crested Newt	HabRegs2, WCA5/9.4 b, WCA5/9.5 a	Y				U	1985
Anguilla anguilla - European Eel		Y					1989
Anthus pratensis - Meadow Pipit					BAmb	С	1987
Apus apus – Swift					BAmb	С	1989
Chroicocephalus ridibundus - Black-headed Gull					BAmb	С	1989
Columba oenas - Stock Dove					BAmb	F	1989
Delichon urbicum - House Martin					BAmb	F	1989
Emberiza schoeniclus - Reed Bunting		Y			BAmb	С	1989
Falco tinnunculus – Kestrel			Y		BAmb	С	1989
Linaria cannabina – Linnet					BRed	С	1989
Motacilla flava - Yellow Wagtail					BRed	U	1989
Phylloscopus trochilus - Willow Warbler					BAmb	С	1989
Poecile montana - Willow Tit					BRed	F	1989
Prunella modularis – Dunnock					BAmb	VC	1989
Sturnus vulgaris – Starling					BRed	VC	1989
Turdus philomelos - Song Thrush			Y		BRed	С	1989
Turdus viscivorus - Mistle Thrush					BRed	С	1989

	1			1		
Arvicola amphibius - European Water Vole	WCA5/9.4					
	.a,	Y			с	2002
	WCA5/9.4	-				
	b					
Lutra lutra - European Otter	HabRegs2,					
	WCA5/9.4					
	b,	Y			F	2018
	WCA5/9.5					
	a					
Pipistrellus pipistrellus - Common	HabRegs2,					
Pipistrelle	WCA5/9.4					
	b,		Y		с	2009
	WCA5/9.5					
	a					
Pipistrellus pygmaeus - Soprano Pipistrelle	HabRegs2,					
	WCA5/9.4					
	b,	Y	Y		F	2009
	WCA5/9.5					
	а					

Site/Habitat Suitability for Other Species of Note (not recorded during the survey)

Description/Notes	The two shallow ponds noted during the survey look highly suitable as breeding habitat for common frog. Areas of rubble and bare earth may well be used by basking reptiles as well as having potential for a range of invertebrates.
	Dense and scattered scrub could well benefit a range of passage and migrant bird species.

Invasive	Invasive Species [3]					
Species		Location	Abundance (DAFOR)	Year Recorded		
Fallopia	japonica (Japanese Knotweed)	SJ 91829 00336	R	2022		
Notes Two patches recorded on the western boundary close to the western railway line and within dense scrub habitat						

Geology		
Bedrock: Chester Formation – Sandstone and Conglomerate interbedded. Solid/Drift Formation		
	Superficial Deposit: Till, Devensian – Diamicton.	
	Bedrock: Sedimentary bedrock formed between 250 and 247.1 million years ago.	
Description	Superficial deposits: Sedimentary superficial deposit formed 116 to 11.8 thousand years ago during Quaternary period.	
Features of Value		
1		
2		

Soils

Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils.

Public Access & Site Usage			
Land Use	Fly-grazing		
Access Level	Unrestricted		
Access Type(s)	Open Access		

Comparison with Previous Survey(s) Results

No records of previous surveys.

Apparently, the site was used as allotments during the 1940s and this may be a factor in the presence of Garden Lupin which is locally frequent within the grassland across the site.

Summary of Assessment

Bushbury Pastures PSI includes a significant area of unimproved neutral grassland which is of at least local importance. The quality of the grassland habitat is affected by apparently persistent grazing of ponies resulting in areas of poaching and an extremely short

turf sward. Conversely the presence of fly-grazing is preventing further encroachment of scattered and dense scrub habitat which together with tall herb / ruderal vegetation pose a risk to the long-term integrity of the grassland.

A topography of hummocks and hollows indicate long term upheaval and disturbance which continues with signs of fly-tipping and the dumping of waste materials – whether authorised or unauthorised. The suite of habitats which includes areas of running water and standing water together with marshy grassland as well as significant scrub and woodland components and a relatively high level of ecological connectivity towards the south-west are all features that indicate Bushbury Pastures qualify as a SLINC.

Recommendations (including further survey & site management/enhancement)			
1	Advise control of Japanese Knotweed which appears limited on the site currently		
2	Whilst pony grazing can be beneficial in maintaining the semi-improved neutral grassland on site, a more planned grazing management regime would be ideal		
3	Management of the scattered scrub would benefit the neutral grassland		

Data Sources

	Source	Date
Species and Habitat Data Source(s)	EcoRecord Data Search 2022	09/2022
Geological Data Source(s)	Soils: Cranfield Soil & Agrifood Institute - Soilscapes soil types viewer - National Soil Resources Institute. Cranfield University (landis.org.uk) Geology: British Geological Survey (BGS) - BGS Geology Viewer (BETA)	09/2022
Historic Data Sources(s)	Email communications between Wolverhampton City Council and The Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust (BBWT). Tithe Map (Bushbury, 1843) Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Dataset	09/2022
Assessment Author and Organisation	Julian Jones / Julian Jones Ecology Services on behalf of BBWT. Edited by Alexander Lane and Andrew Slater of BBWT.	17/10/2022

[1] Definitions of Local Sites in B&BC (SINCs & SLINCs) and Potential Sites of Importance (PSIs)

In Birmingham and the Black Country Local Wildlife and Geological Sites encompass what are termed Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs). This two-tier system aims to ensure that all sites of substantive local nature conservation and geological value are selected by assessing sites in both a sub-regional (i.e. Birmingham and the Black Country) and metropolitan borough or city context (either Birmingham, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall or Wolverhampton). The two designations are defined as:

- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) Sites of substantive nature conservation value in the context of Birmingham and the Black Country.
- Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) Sites of substantive nature conservation value in the context of a metropolitan borough.

Potential Sites of Importance (**PSIs**) have not yet been assessed against the Local Wildlife and Geological Sites selection criteria but may potentially support species of note, areas of important semi-natural habitat or valuable geological features. PSIs are identified primarily through the use of aerial photography, but also through reference to old maps, existing records and local knowledge. Commonly these sites will not have been subject to the survey work necessary to undertake a Local Wildlife and Geological Sites assessment.

[2] Habitats/Species of Note Tables - Attribute Definitions

STATUTORY (PROTECTED) - EHD = EU Habitats Directive (plus where relevant the Annexe II or IV) | WCA S1 = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 1 (birds protected at all times) | WCA S5 = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 5 (animals with various levels of protection) | WCA S8 = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 5 (animals with various levels of protection) | WCA S8 = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 5 (animals with various levels of protection) | WCA S8 = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 5 (animals with various levels of protection) | WCA S8 = Wildlife & Countryside Act Schedule 8 (higher and lower plants with various levels of protection) | PBA = Protection of Badgers Act 1992 | HabRegs2 = The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2010 (Schedule 2) | HabRegs4 = The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2010 (Schedule 4).

NERC - Y = Habitats/Species included on the current list of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006 or amended).

LBAP – **Y** = Habitats/Species included on the latest B&BC LBAP list of Priority Habitats/Species.

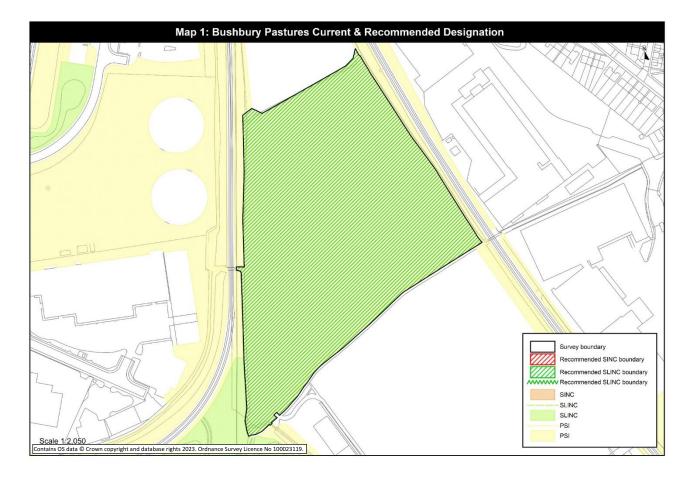
RDL - Species included on Global IUCN & British Red Data Lists:BRed = Bird Population Status - red | BAmb = Bird Population Status - amber | RLGB.EN= IUCN (2001) - Endangered | RLGB.VU= IUCN (2001) - Vulnerable | RDBGB.R = IUCN (pre 1994) - Rare | RLGB.Lr(NT) = IUCN (2001) - Lowerrisk - near threatened | RDBGB.IK = RDB - Insufficient known | RLGB.DD = IUCN (2001) - Data Deficient

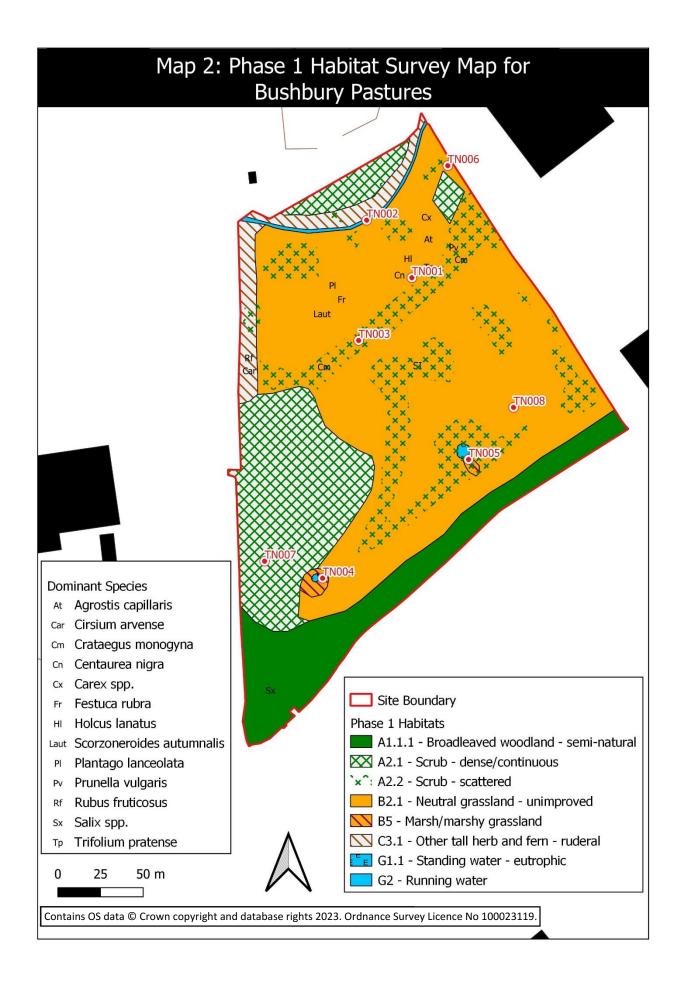
RARITY (HABITATS) - BIRMINGHAM & BLACK COUNTRY - Y = Habitats included on the B&BC list of locally rare habitats (administered by EcoRecord). **RARITY (FLORA SPECIES) - BIRMINGHAM & BLACK COUNTRY** - (based on data held and managed by EcoRecord): VR = Very Rare - a species present in less than 1.0% of 1Km squares, tetrads, or 5Km squares in B&BC | R = Rare - a species present in 1.0% - 4.3% of 1Km squares, tetrads, or 5Km squares in B&BC | U = Uncommon - a species present in 4.3% - 12% of 1Km squares, tetrads or 5Km squares in B&BC | NRR = no recent B&BC records. **AXIOPHYTE - BBCF_Ax** = included on the Birmingham & the Black Country list of axiophytes (administered by EcoRecord).

YEAR - The most recent year the species has been recorded.

[3] Species listed on Schedule 9 part 1 (animals) and part 2 (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended - this lists animals which may not be released or allowed to escape into the wild and plants which may not be planted or otherwise caused to grow in the wild.

Report Maps





Target Notes

Target Note Ref.	Target Note Description
TN001	Unimproved neutral grassland interspersed with scattered hawthorn and other scrub
TN002	A small brook which likely flows into or is part of the River Smestow
TN003	Scattered Hawthorn scrub and a likely remnant of a historic field boundary
TN004	Small pond and area of marshy grassland
TN005	Small pond and area of marshy grassland with an issue flowing towards Fowler's Playing Fields and the River Smestow
TN006	Area of fly-tipping
TN007	Japanese Knotweed at NGR SJ 91829 00336
TN008	Recently dumped soil / spoil

Site Photographs



Photo 1: Semi-improved neutral grassland interspersed with scattered and dense scrub is a feature of the site.



Photo 2: North-east corner showing grassland with scattered scrub, spring-line and evidence of flytipping



Photo 3: Dense scrub merging into broadleaved woodland in the south-west of the site



Photo 4: Pond and marshy grassland near the southern boundary (TN005)

Species Records

Scientific Name	Common Name
Acer pseudoplatanus	Sycamore
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow
Agrostis capillaris	Common Bent
Agrostis stolonifera	Creeping Bent
Alisma plantago-aquatica	Water-plantain
Alopecurus geniculatus	Marsh Foxtail
Alopecurus pratensis	Meadow Foxtail
Arctium minus/nemorosum	flowering plant
Armoracia rusticana	Horse-radish
Arrhenatherum elatius	False Oat-grass
Artemisia vulgaris	Mugwort
Aster novi-belgii agg.	flowering plant
Bellis perennis	Daisy
Betula pendula	Silver Birch
Betula pubescens	Downy Birch
Calystegia silvatica	Large Bindweed
Carex hirta	Hairy Sedge
Centaurea nigra sens. lat.	
(=nigra/debauxii)	Common Knapweed
Cerastium fontanum	Common Mouse-ear
Chenopodium album	Fat-hen

Cirsium arvense Cirsium vulgare Cornus Crataegus monogyna Dactylis glomerata Daucus carota subsp. carota Dipsacus fullonum Epilobium hirsutum Epilobium montanum Epilobium parviflorum Equisetum arvense Festuca rubra subsp. rubra Foeniculum vulgare Fraxinus excelsior Geranium molle Holcus lanatus Hypericum perforatum Hypochaeris radicata Jacobaea vulgaris Lamium album Lamium purpureum Lemna minor Lolium perenne Lupinus polyphyllus agg. Lycopus europaeus Lythrum salicaria Medicago lupulina Persicaria maculosa Plantago lanceolata Plantago major Populus Potentilla anserina Potentilla reptans Prunella vulgaris Ranunculus acris Ranunculus repens Ranunculus sceleratus Rubus fruticosus agg. Rumex crispus Rumex obtusifolius Sagina procumbens Salix caprea Salix euxina x alba = S. x fragilis Sambucus nigra Scorzoneroides autumnalis Tanacetum vulgare Taraxacum officinale agg. Trifolium pratense Urtica dioica Veronica beccabunga Veronica chamaedrys

Creeping Thistle Spear Thistle flowering plant Hawthorn Cock's-foot Wild Carrot Wild Teasel Great Willowherb **Broad-leaved Willowherb** Hoary Willowherb **Field Horsetail** flowering plant Fennel Ash Dove's-foot Crane's-bill Yorkshire-fog Perforate St John's-wort Cat's-ear **Common Ragwort** White Dead-nettle Red Dead-nettle **Common Duckweed** Perennial Rye-grass flowering plant Gypsywort Purple-loosestrife **Black Medick** Redshank **Ribwort Plantain Greater Plantain** Poplar Silverweed **Creeping Cinquefoil** Selfheal Meadow Buttercup **Creeping Buttercup Celery-leaved Buttercup** Bramble **Curled Dock Broad-leaved Dock Procumbent Pearlwort** Goat Willow Hybrid Crack-willow Elder Autumn Hawkbit Tansy Dandelion **Red Clover Common Nettle** Brooklime Germander Speedwell

FAUNA

Whole SiteScientific NameCommon NamePararge aegeria tircisSpeckled WoodPieris rapaeSmall WhiteButeo buteoBuzzardCarduelis carduelisGoldfinchPasser domesticusHouse SparrowSciurus carolinensisEastern Grey Squirrel