

PROPOSED LWS CITATION

Site Name: Henfield Common
Site Ref: H03
District: Horsham
Parish: Henfield
Grid Ref: TQ 220156
Size (ha): 13.6
Date: 1992; 23 June 2017
Surveyors: Marion Finch (1992); Jacqueline Thompson (2017)

SUMMARY

The site is a registered common, one of three commons around Henfield. It encompasses a mosaic of neutral and acid grassland, species rich rush pasture, marshy grassland, reedbed and woodland. It supports a number of uncommon plant species such as Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, Bog Pimpernel *Anagallis tenella*, Marsh Lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica* and Lesser Skullcap *Scutellaria minor*.

SITE NOTES

The woodland which encloses the common on two sides is secondary, having developed since the last war, and is dominated by Oak *Quercus robur*, birch and some Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* growing over scattered Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Hazel *Corylus avellana* and Holly *Ilex aquifolium*. Openings from storm damage have filled with tall birch scrub. The field layer is sparse, though one damp clearing has blankets of sphagnum moss and Lesser Scullcap.

A mosaic of neutral and acid grassland occupies a large area with species rich pockets with grasses such as Wavy Hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*, Mat-grass *Nardus stricta*, Heath-grass *Danthonia decumbens*, Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and Sheep's Fescue *Festuca ovina* and herbaceous species including Common Knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis*, Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre* and Yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus minor*.

The reedbed is dominated by Common Reed *Phragmites australis*, with Common Reedmace *Typha latifolia* and Hemp-agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*. Willow scrub is establishing throughout the vegetation.

An small area of species rich rush pasture is most uncommon in lowland Britain with species such as Marsh Pennywort, Bog Pimpernel, Common Yellow Sedge *Carex demissa* and a beautiful scattering of Southern Marsh-orchids *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*. Willow scrub is encroaching on the wetland areas.

South of Brighton Road is a mosaic of grass-dominated rough grassland with small areas that are more species rich, though with mostly widespread species such as Greater Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus*, Common Sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and Smooth Tare *Vicia tetrasperma*. There is a scatter of Common Spotted-orchids *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and several Southern Marsh-orchids *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*.