

PROPOSED LWS CITATION

Site Name: Oreham Common
Site Ref: H17
District: Horsham
Parish: Henfield
Grid Ref: TQ 223140
Size (ha): 5.6
Date: 1992; 25 June 2017
Surveyors: Marion Finch (1992); Jacqueline Thompson (2017)

SUMMARY

The site is a registered common, located close to Henfield. It consists of herb-rich damp grassland with areas of tall-herb wetland vegetation and two ponds. There are areas of dense scrub and some deciduous woodland. The habitat supports a number of less common birds such as Nightingales and Turtle Doves.

SITE NOTES

The grassland is most diverse to the south of the road where it comprises a mosaic of species rich grassland and wetland vegetation. Stands of Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* with Hemlock Water-dropwort *Oenanthe crocata* are interrupted by damp grassland with a range of species including Common Knapweed *Centaurea nigra* Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre*, Meadow Vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, Hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, Greater Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus Pedunculatus*, Hoary Ragwort *Senecio erucifolius* and the less common Pepper Saxifrage *Silaum silaus* and Meadow-rue *Thalictrum flavum*. The grassland on the north side of the road is heavily dominated by Tall Fescue *Schedonorus arundinaceus* with occasional Tufted Hair-grass *Deschampsia caespitosa* and *Juncus acutiflorus* Sharp-flowered Rush with areas where herbaceous species reach local prominence.

The ponds support a limited range of vegetation including emergent and fringing Bulrush *Typha latifolia*, Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus* and Branched Bur-reed *Sparganium erectum* and aquatics such as Curled Pondweed *Potamogeton crispus* and *Nymphaea alba* White Water-lily. The woodland is dominated by Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur* with a field layer supporting Bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*. Areas of dense scrub dominated by Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* are along the woodland edges where light levels are higher and encroaching into the grassland.

The mosaic of habitats with a rich variety of plants support a good number of butterflies with fifteen species recorded recently including the Purple Hairstreak *Neozephyrus*

Quercus and Brown Argus *Aricia agestis*. Five species of damselfly and dragonfly were recorded during the survey.