

Ecological Report – Ticehurst Green Space T7 (part) (TQ695301)

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Site Description:

- Approximately 0.8 acres of open grassland with marginal scrub and tree vegetation.
- Bordered by residential houses on three sides and an agricultural field on the east border.
- North facing aspect with a gentle to steep gradient.
- Poorly-drained clay soil with many areas saturated to capacity.
- Encompasses a small pond on the south border; currently used by hybrid-mallard ducks.
- The site is situated within the Wealden AONB and has a public footpath transecting it.

Introduction and methodology:

To determine the type of grassland habitat at this site, five randomly selected 0.5m areas were subject to a ground-flora survey (01/05/2018). The relative abundance of identified species was then used to attribute a habitat type according to Defra's National Vegetation Classification (NVC), the nationally recognised system used to categorise habitats. Only vascular plants were surveyed; aquatic flora, bryophytes, lichens and fungi were not included. Two further visits were made (07/05/2018 and 14/05/2018), during warm and sunny conditions, to observe which fauna was present.

Quadrat results:

Species	Abundance (% cover)
Holcus lanatus	70
Agrostis stolonifera	20
Ranunculus repens	5
<i>Bare ground</i>	5

Species	Abundance (% cover)
Holcus lanatus	85
Ranunculus repens	10
Cardamine pratensis	5

Species	Abundance (% cover)
Ranunculus repens	60
Holcus lanatus	20
Carex nigra	10
<i>Bare ground</i>	10

Species	Abundance (% cover)
Ranunculus repens	50
Rumex obtusifolius	25
Agrostis stolonifera	10
Festuca rubra	10
Pilosella officinarum	5

Species	Abundance (% cover)
Holcus lanatus	75
Carex nigra	15
Agrostis stolonifera	5
Ranunculus repens	5

Other flora noted within the boundary:

Fraxinus excelsior	Alnus glutinosa	Rubus fruticosus
Urtica dioica	Plantago major	Juncus effusus
Bellis perennis	Deschampsia cespitosa	Crataegus monogyna
Quercus robar	Lolium perenne	Rosa canina (R)
Type	Species	Notes
Bird	Wren	Male holding territory.
Bird	Dunnock	Feeding in boundary scrub.
Bird	Woodpigeon	Breeding pair.
Bird	Domestic Mallard-hybrid	Small group living on pond.
Bird	Yellowhammer	Heard singing in adjacent field.
Amphibian	Common Toad	
Lepidoptera	Orange-tip	
Lepidoptera	Speckled Wood	
Diptera	Yellow Dung-fly	
Diptera	Syrphus sp.	
Diptera	Eristalis tenax	
Diptera	Tipula sp.	
Hymenoptera	Bombus sp.	
Hymenoptera	Andrena sp.	
Coleoptera	Oedemera nobilis	

Conclusion:

The floral species present, and their relative abundance, would suggest this is an MG9/MG10 mesotrophic grassland (Defra NVC classification). The dominant species noted in the 0.5m quadrat samples was *Holcus lanatus* and *Ranunculus repens* but other species that are consistent with MG9/MG10 grasslands, such as *Deschampsia cespitosa*, were also present. These poorly-drained grasslands, typically used for pasture, are common across the British Isles and are considered relatively low in biodiversity value. No protected or notable species were observed during this survey.

While the ecological composition indicate the site is of low conservation concern, the ground-flora suggests that the ground is often water-logged which is would be expected due to the run-off from the residential houses and body of water along the northern border (the highest point). Therefore, the value of this green space is likely to be utilitarian in the role of ecosystem services. A Tier 2 screening, to assess the hydrological dynamic, would be advisable should a development be proposed for the site in the future.