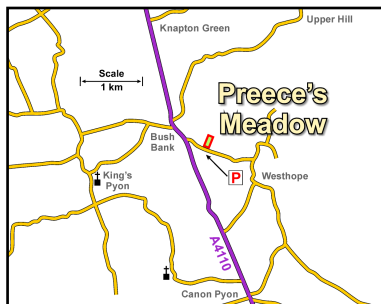


Preece's Meadow

Bush Bank SO456512 (Explorer 202)

Semi-improved grassland.



Visitor Guidelines

While the *hay* crop is growing in June/July, please keep to the edge of the fields and do not let dogs off the leash. Please keep gates closed at all times.

Description

The reserve comprises two adjacent fields, rectangular in shape, and enclosed by shrub-rich hedgerows on the northern and eastern boundaries. There are a small number of old fruit trees planted into the east field and into the hedgerow between the two fields.

The main interest in this reserve lies in the plants of the meadows. Although semi-*improved* some species typical of old *hay meadows* still survive, notably the little Adder's Tongue fern and the showy, leguminous undershrub, Dyer's Greenweed. Both are local, although widespread, in Herefordshire. The presence of Yellow Ant mounds and numbers of the day-flying Small Yellow Underwing moth are further *indicators* that this is an ancient grassland site. On warm mid-summer days numbers of the meadow butterflies, Ringlet, Meadow Brown and Gatekeeper, fly above the grasses, while three species of Bumblebee add to the entomological interest.

The old hedgerows to the north and east contain an interesting mix of species , including Blackthorn, Willow, Aspen , Field Maple, Goat Willow, Wild Cherry and Holly, as well as the usual Hawthorn, Ash, Elder and Hazel. Although some planting has occurred, the richness of species supports the idea that these hedges are ancient and may possibly have their origins in Saxon times.

Present Management

Following past practice, the Trust is managing the *meadows* to produce a traditional *hay* crop, with the cut being made after 1st. July to allow seeding and dispersal, and the crop is removed from the site. This is followed by *aftermath grazing* by sheep or cattle at an appropriate stocking level until 30th. November, after which the meadow

can rest and then slowly resume growth through the winter months. No supplementary feeding of livestock is permitted.

Acquisition Details

Bequeathed to HNT in May 2000 by Mrs. Winifred M. Preece.

General Information:

Best time to visit: Spring and summer.

Habitat: Semi-improved old neutral grassland and old hedgerows.

Size: 0.9 hectares (2.2 acres).

Specialities: Meadow Brown (6-9), Ringlet (6-8), Gatekeeper (6-8), Yellow Ant, Small Yellow Underwing moth (5-6), 3 species of Bumble-bee. Adder's Tongue Fern (5-8), Dyer's Greenweed (6-8), Ladies Bedstraw (7-9).

Parking: There is limited parking on the roadside next to the reserve.

Nearby HNT reserves: Kingsway, Stockings Meadow.

