

## Wildlife Site Survey Report for: Mead Dell (Wheathampstead)

<b>Site Ref:</b>	Ecosite 56/059	<b>Site size (ha):</b>	0.8ha		
<b>District:</b>	St. Albans	<b>Central Grid Ref:</b>	TL181141		
<b>Surveyors:</b>	Andrew Harris				
<b>Spp list by:</b>	AH	<b>Form by:</b>	AH	<b>Map by:</b>	AH
<b>Date of survey:</b>	31/07/2013	<b>Weather:</b>	Overcast becoming wet	<b>Duration on site:</b>	2 hours

<b>Geology:</b>	<b>Bedrock:</b>	Chalk
	<b>Superficial Deposits:</b>	Alluvium – Clay, silt, sand and gravel

<b>Original criteria:</b>	New candidate Site	<b>Habitat:</b>	Grassland
<b>Criteria met:</b>	H.2.2.b (neut. 8)		

<b>Overall General Site Description:</b>	<p>A small site with neutral grassland and some scrub on the eastern edge of Wheathampstead surrounded by amenity grasslands. The grassland is in part becoming ruderal with False Oat-Grass (<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>), Cock's-foot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>), Common Couch (<i>Elytrigia repens</i>), Hogweed (<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>), Stinging Nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>) and Creeping Thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>) but there are more species rich with Red fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>) and less of the coarser species, have in addition Black Knapweed (<i>Centaurea nigra</i>), Ladies Bedstraw (<i>Galium verum</i>), Meadow Vetchling (<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>), Ox-eye Daisy (<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>), Bird's-foot Trefoil (<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>), Cowslip (<i>Primula veris</i>), Field Scabious (<i>Scabiosa columbaria</i>) and Common Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosa</i>). There are a few Crack Willow (<i>Salix x fragilis</i>), semi-mature Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) and the margins of the site are largely scattered bushes of Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>). The site has public access.</p> <p>Wildlife Site Criteria: Neutral grassland indicators</p>
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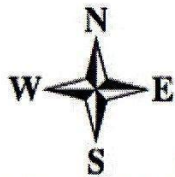
<p>Compartment 1: <b>Grassland</b></p>	<p>Margins mainly <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>, <i>Elytrigia repens</i>, <i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>, <i>Cirsium arvense</i>, <i>Galium aparine</i>, <i>Urtica dioica</i> and <i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>. Richer areas have <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> with <i>Festuca rubra</i>, <i>Centaurea nigra</i>, <i>Galium verum</i>, <i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>, <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>, <i>Daucus carota</i>, <i>Achillea millefolium</i>, <i>Lotus corniculatus</i>, <i>Knautia arvensis</i> and <i>Hypericum perforatum</i>; one patch of <i>Primula veris</i>. Mown paths are mainly <i>Lolium perenne</i>, <i>Plantago lanceolata</i>, <i>Plantago major</i> and <i>Bellis perennis</i>.</p> <p>Some scattered scrub within the grassland and Crack Willow <i>Salix x fragilis</i></p> <p>A great number of insects are attracted to flowers of <i>Artemisia</i>, <i>Centaurea</i> and <i>Cirsium</i>.</p>
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<p>Compartment 2: <b>Marginal scrub and defunct hedge</b></p>	<p>Possibly a defunct hedgerow to the south with mature Ash trees on a low bank, hedgerows if ever present are now not more than isolated Hawthorn Bushes (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) also Goat Willow (<i>Salix caprea</i>) and planted Field Maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>) and Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>)</p>
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

<b>Fauna:</b>	<b>Birds:</b>	Great Spotted Woodpecker, Swallow, Blue Tit, Song Thrush, Robin, Chaffinch, Goldfinches (flock of 8) and Greenfinch (2 calling)
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	<b>Mammals:</b>	
	<b>Invertebrates:</b>	Butterflies: Large White, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringlet, Small Skipper, also many grass moths. Red-tailed Bumblebee, Early Bumblebee Hoverfly: Marmalade Fly ( <i>Episyrphus balteatus</i> ) large numbers around Mugwort.
<b>Invasive species:</b>	Horseradish is probably not much of a problem	
<b>Current Management:</b>	Cut annually and existing paths maintained	
<b>Recommended Management:</b>		
Compartment 1	The aim is to enhance the areas with a good variety of herbs by restricting the vigour of more competitive species, while maintaining areas of coarser vegetation around the edges for invertebrates. With an annual cut the dominance of the more vigorous herbs and grasses should be reduced otherwise suggest that for a couple of years a spring cut of the central more species-rich at the end of April to restrict species such as <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> , <i>Heracleum sphondylium</i> and other ruderals and then cut all the grassland at the end of August/early September. After this returning to a single annual cut. Cuttings should be removed for this to be effective, some could be accommodated beneath the scrub. Monitor to inform future management. At present there is a good scrub/grassland balance, so maintain while preventing scrub and bramble encroachment on grassland – should be achieved by cutting.	
Compartment 2	The planted trees add to the structure and help to create a glade affect, but they may start to impact upon the good areas of grassland as their canopy increases so may need some cutting back. Retain dead wood if it does not present a safety hazard.	
<b>Surrounding landuse</b>	Mostly amenity grassland and some scrub, River Lea runs just to the north of the site. Wildlife Site 56/060 is close by but does not adjoin.	

<b>TABLE 2: Grassland habitat condition assessment – for information</b>	
This is broadly based on Natural England's Common Standards Monitoring 2005 which has been used to assess the condition of the main habitats present on Sites of Special Scientific Interest.	
To help with the identification of grassland-type habitats and their condition, please use the following list of Negative Condition Indicators (species) for the typical open habitats found in Hertfordshire. They are divided in to three different ecological groups as below:	
<b>Agricultural weeds (indicating increased soil nutrient levels in previously low-nutrient swards, and high levels of disturbance)</b> These species are particularly negative from both the agricultural and ecological perspectives, and usually indicate both disturbance and increased nutrient levels.	<u>Including these herbs:</u> Creeping and Spear Thistle, Broad-leaved and Curled Dock, Common Ragwort, Nettle, Greater Plantain, Cleavers, Cow Parsley and Field Horsetail, Daisy, Common Mouse-ear, Rosebay Willowherb, Sow Thistles.
<b>Agriculturally favoured species (indicating increased eutrophication)</b> These species are positive from the agricultural perspective. Ecologically however these species represent high soil nutrient levels, but not disturbance. While a few of these species are a normal component of ecologically valuable communities, a high frequency of these species indicates negative condition.	<u>Including herbs:</u> White Clover, Creeping Buttercup; <u>Grasses:</u> Perennial Rye-grass, Yorkshire Fog, Soft Brome, Timothy, Floating Sweet-grass, Rough Meadow-grass
<b>Rank grasses, rushes and sedges</b> if very abundant, these species indicate lack of appropriate management and/or waterlogging.	Including False Oat-grass, Cock's-foot, Tufted Hair-grass, Perennial Rye-grass, large-leaved sedge species, Reed Sweet-grass








17/07/2013

District Boundary  
  
 HCC Wildlife Site  




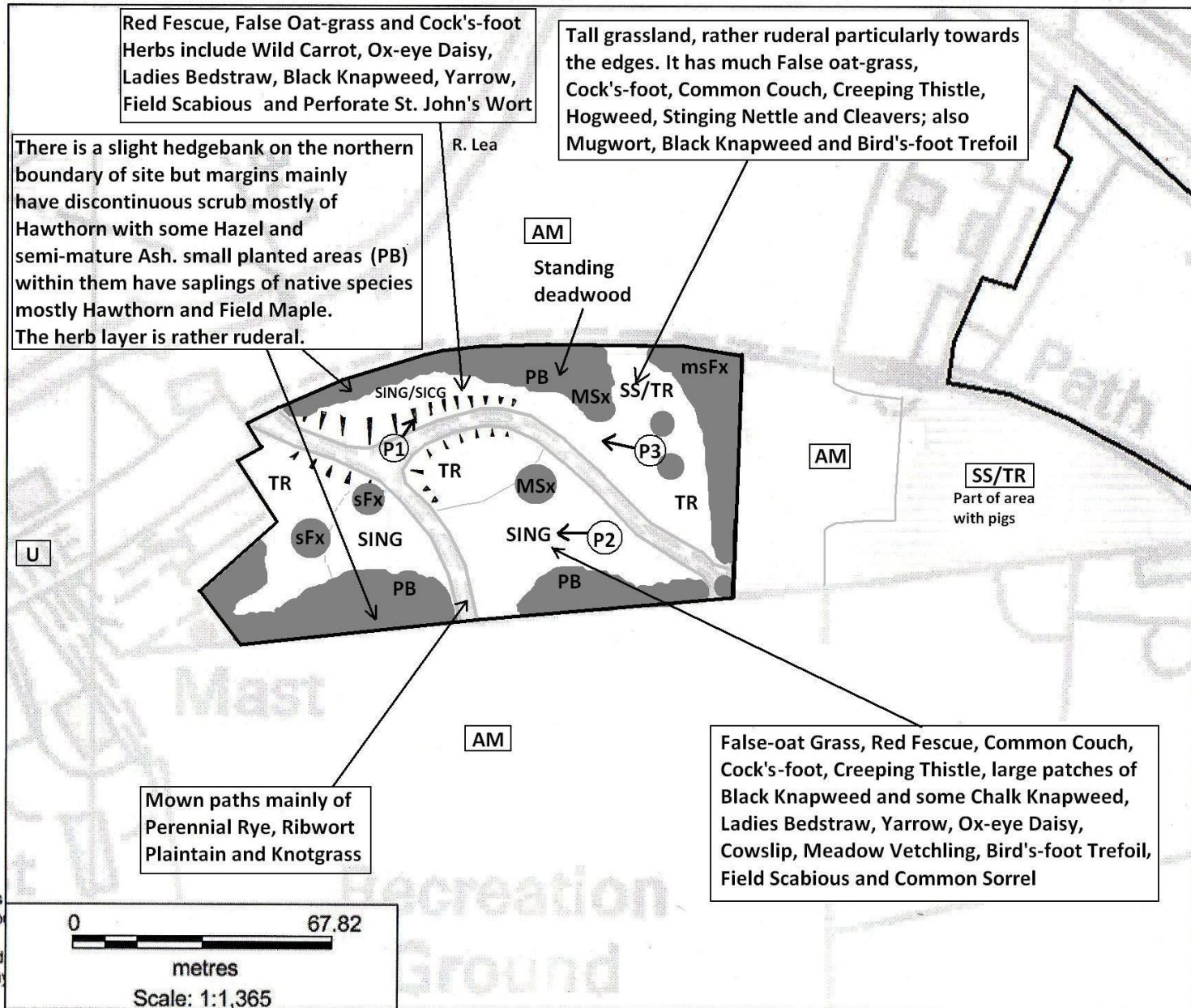
LEGEND


-  Scrub and hedgerow:
-  MSx Mature Crack Willow
-  msFx Multi-stemmed Ash
-  sFx Semi-mature/young Ash
-  PB Planted trees

Surveyor Name: Andrew Harris













Survey Date: 31/07/2013



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

 **WS boundary** (NB use a red line to denote anywhere boundary changes should be made)

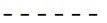







WOODLAND  
&  
SCRUB

-  BW Semi-natural broadleaved woodland
-  PB Plantation broadleaved woodland
-  PC Plantation coniferous woodland
-  MW Mixed woodland
-  DS Dense-continuous scrub
-  SS Scattered scrub (NB: notate grassland type beneath)
-  SB Broadleaved Parkland/scattered trees (NB: notate grassland type beneath)
-  SC Coniferous Parkland/scattered trees (NB: notate grassland type beneath)
-  SM Mixed Parkland/scattered trees (NB: notate grassland type beneath)
-  FB Broadleaved recently felled woodland
-  FC Coniferous recently felled woodland
-  FM Mixed recently felled woodland





-  CBW Coppiced broadleaved woodland
-  RCBW Relict coppiced broadleaved woodland

GRASSLAND



-  UAG Unimproved acid grassland
-  SIAG Semi-improved acid grassland
-  UCG Unimproved calcareous grassland
-  SICG Semi-improved calcareous grassland
-  UNG Unimproved neutral grassland
-  SING Semi-improved neutral grassland
-  I Improved grassland
-  MG Marsh/marshy grassland
-  PSIG Species-poor semi-improved grassland

-  Path
-  Track/lane/road
-  Hedgerow
-  Ditch
-  Bank
-  Feature (annotate)
-  Stream
-  Fence






Tall herb and fen

-  CB Continuous bracken
-  SB Scattered bracken (NB: notate grassland type beneath)
-  TR Tall ruderal vegetation
-  NR Non-ruderal vegetation (fen, e.g. reed/sweetgrass dominant stands)

WATER

-  SW Standing water
-  RW Running water

CULTIVATED

-  A Arable land
-  AM Amenity grassland /  U Urban
-  ESP Ephemeral/short (e.g. herbal pioneer communities/weedy species)
-  IS Perennial introduced shrub (eg snowberry, rhododendron, laurel, cotoneaster, bamboo etc)

## Species List:

Scientific Name	Common Name	WS inds (*a/n/c/w/f) & neg inds (-)	Comp1	Comp2
			DAFOR	DAFOR
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Maple, Field*			R
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow		R	
<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	Ground Elder		R	
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Mustard, Garlic		R	R
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Parsley, Cow	- c/n/w		R
<i>Arctium lappa</i>	Burdock, Greater			+
<i>Armoracia rusticana</i>	Horse-radish		+	
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	Oat-grass, False	- a/c/n/w	F	
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	Mugwort		R	
<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Lords-and-Ladies		+	
<i>Ballota nigra</i>	Horehound, Black		+	
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy	- a/c	R	
<i>Bryonia dioica</i>	Bryony, White			R
<i>Centaurea debeauxii</i>	Knapweed, Chalk~	(c/n)	+	
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Knapweed, Black/Com'n~	c/n	O	
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Mouse-ear, Common	- a	R	
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Thistle, Creeping	- a/c/n/w	O	
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Thistle, Spear	- a/c/n/w		+
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Bindweed, Field		O	
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	*		R
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn		R	F
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Hawk's-beard, Smooth		R	
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Carrot, Wild		R	
<i>Elytrigia repens</i>	Couch, Common		R	
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Willowherb, Great		R	
<i>Festuca rubra agg.</i>	Fescue, Red (family)		R	
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash			O
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	- c/n	R	R
<i>Galium verum</i>	Bedstraw, Lady's	c/n	R	
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cranesbill, Cut-leaved		+	
<i>Geranium molle</i>	Cranesbill, Dove's-foot		R	
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog	- a/c/n/w	R	
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	Barley, Wall			R
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	St John's-wort, Perforate		R	
<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Scabious, Field	c/n	R	
<i>Lamium album</i>	Dead Nettle, White		+	
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Vetchling, Meadow	n	R	
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Daisy, Oxeye	c/n	R	
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Rye-grass, Perennial	- a/c/n/w	R	
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's-foot-trefoil, Com'n	c/n	R	
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Mallow, Common		+	
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Medick, Black		+	

Scientific Name	Common Name	WS inds (*a/n/c/w/f) & neg inds (-)	Comp1	Comp2
			DAFOR	DAFOR
<i>Phleum bertolonii</i>	Catstail, Smaller		R	
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Plantain, Ribwort		R	
<i>Plantago major</i>	Plantain, Greater	- a/c/n	R	
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Meadow-grass, Smooth		R	
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Meadow-grass, Rough	- w	R	
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Cinquefoil, Creeping		R	
<i>Primula veris</i>	Cowslip	c/n	R	
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Cherry, Wild*			+
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Buttercup, Creeping	- w	R	
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble		R	
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Sorrel, Common	n	+	
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Dock, Curled	- c/n/w	+	
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Dock, Broad-leaved	- c/n/w	+	
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Willow, Goat		R	
<i>Salix x fragilis</i>	Willow, Crack		R	O
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder			R
<i>Schedonorus arundinaceus</i>	Fescue, Tall		+	
<i>Silene latifolia</i>	Campion, White		+	
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Sow-thistle, Prickly		+	
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Woundwort, Hedge			R
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	Dandelion family		+	
<i>Tragopogon pratensis</i>	Goat's-beard		+	
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	Clover, White	- a/c/n/w	R	
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Nettle, Stinging	- a/c/n/w	O	A
<i>Veronica filiformis</i>	Speedwell, Slender		R	
<i>Vicia sativa</i> subsp. <i>nigra</i>	Vetch, Common		+	
*=planted/introduced/escape	<b>per compartment totals:</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>16</b>

Total species (all comp.s)		total indicators					
68		9					
Comp1	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
		0	8	0	6	0	0
Comp2	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
All Compartments:	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
	1	8	0	6	0	0	8
Thresholds:	AWI	Neut	Acid	Calc	Wet	Fen	c/a/n/w
	min size (ha)	1	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
	min indicators	10	8	5	8	5	5
Criteria met		Met					

**DAFOR Scale:**

D	Dominant	>75% cover
A	Abundant	51-75% cover
F	Frequent	26-50% cover
O	Occasional	11-25% cover
R	Rare	<11% cover, >=5 individual plants
+	Very Rare	<5 individual plants

**Photos:**



P1



P2



P3