

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT ANNACRAMPH MEADOWS,
CO ARMAGH. ARTICLE 24 OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION AND AMENITY LANDS (NORTHERN
IRELAND) ORDER 1985.

The Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland (the Department), having consulted the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside and being satisfied that the area delineated by the solid black line on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of its species-rich grassland and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the "Annacramph Meadows Area of Special Scientific Interest".

The site consists of two small, freely-draining fields on the Carboniferous limestone of County Armagh. Plant species present are typical of low-fertility mesotrophic grassland, with a range of grass and herb species, such as Red Fescue Festuca rubra, Crested Dogtail Cynosurus cristatus, Bents Agrostis spp., Knapweed Centaurea nigra and Bird's foot - trefoil Lotus corniculatus. Some species more typical of calcareous soils are also common eg Quaking Grass Briza media and Glaucous Sedge Carex flacca. Species-rich grassland such as this on relatively dry sites is now extremely rare in Northern Ireland.

The fields are also notable for the presence of a number of scarce plant species, generally confined to unimproved grassland - Yellow Oat-grass Trisetum flavescens, Adderstongue OphioGLOSSUM vulgatum and, of particular note, Cowslip Primula veris. The site contains the largest, and probably the only surviving, colony of this species in County Armagh. The hybrid between Cowslip and Primrose Primula vulgaris is also present.

Hedges and hedge-banks in the area are particularly rich in species and contain a number of woodland species, including Early Dog-violet Viola reichenbachiana and Goldilocks Buttercup Ranunculus auricomus.

SCHEDULE

The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the species-rich grassland of the area:

1. Any change in the present annual pattern and intensity of grazing, including any change in the type of livestock grazed.
2. Any change in the annual pattern of application of manure.
3. The application of slurry or artificial fertilizer.
4. The application of any chemicals for control of weeds, insects or diseases.
5. Any change in the established method and frequency of mowing.
6. Any hedge or scrub removal and infilling of ditches.
7. Any change in the maintenance of hedges and hedgerows.
8. Field drainage or field boundary drainage.

9. Any tree planting.
10. The dumping or storing of any matter.
11. Cultivation.
12. Complete or partial reseeding.
13. Construction of roads, tracks or buildings.
14. Use of vehicles or machinery likely to damage the vegetation.

Sealed with the Official Seal of
The Department of the Environment for
Northern Ireland on 24 June, 1991



ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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