



**Bedfordshire  
Cambridgeshire  
Northamptonshire**



# Hartwell Pocket Park

## Potential Wildlife Site (PWS)

2019 Survey Report

Grid Reference: SP 783 505

Size: 0.31 ha

Site: S1562

This survey is part of a joint project between The Wildlife Trust BCN (WTBCN) and South Northamptonshire Council (SNC)

## Hartwell Pocket Park

### Site Assessment

A small pocket park with a mixture of scrub, trees, grassland and planted areas including a fruiting thicket and butterfly bank. Although 10 neutral grassland indicators were recorded many of these were in two planted beds. A good site for local wildlife but does not qualify as a Wildlife Site and has been retained as a Potential Wildlife Site.

### Site Description



**Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* within the wildflower beds**

Towards the top end of the park is a thick fruiting thicket with a variety of fruiting shrubs and trees including field-rose *Rosa arvensis*, guelder-rose *Viburnum opulus* and wild cherry *Prunus avium*. A strip of rough grassland remains around the edge of the fruiting thicket and includes occasional lesser stitchwort *Stellaria graminea*. A thick hawthorn *Crataegus*

*monogyna* hedge acts as a boundary between the park and the cemetery.

The central meadow area in the park, which is used for recreation, contains lush grassland with a variety of species including frequent cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* and perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*. Herbs are scattered through this grassland and include frequent hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium* and white clover *Trifolium repens* with very occasional red clover *Trifolium pratense* and meadow crane's-bill *Geranium pratense*.

The wildflower beds have established well, despite the dry summer, with common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*,

common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and selfheal *Prunella vulgaris* all present. Common sorrel and ribwort plantain are dominant species in two of the beds.

The area around the willow tee-pee and circle of stumps is also rough grassland containing frequent cock's-foot, false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* and Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*. Docks and hogweed are also present alongside very occasional meadow crane's-bill. This area has a good structure for insects; lots of hoverflies and meadow brown *Maniola jurtina* were seen.

The north-west section of the park is the most species rich. It has occasional common sorrel, lady's bedstraw, common knapweed and meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis* among taller grasses and occasional yellow oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens*.

The edges of the site contain a good variety of tree and shrub species including ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and maple along with blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* and field maple *Acer campestre* and a rough grassland fringe.

There is a compost heap and common nettle *Urtica dioica* in a sunny area providing good insect habitat. A mixture of bramble and field-rose in the northwest corner hosts a lot of insects too.

In the north-east corner there is a small woodland copse with cherry, dogwood, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* and field maple. There is also a nice hedgerow with dogwood, hawthorn and wayfaring-tree *Viburnum lantana*.



**Lady's bedstraw *Galium verum* alongside taller grasses**



Grassland area with copse behind

There is also a bee and butterfly bank which offers a good habitat for its namesake species as well as other invertebrates. Beside this is an area dominated by cleavers *Galium aparine* and common nettle.

### Interesting species

Neutral grassland plants of interest are: common knapweed, lady's bedstraw, meadow crane's-bill, meadow barley, meadow vetchling, oxeye daisy, common bird's-foot-trefoil, common sorrel, lesser stitchwort and yellow oat-grass.

Other plants of interest are: field maple, common bent, hazel, meadowsweet, red campion and wayfaring-tree.



Insect activity was also present with ringlet and meadow brown butterflies being identified.

Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina* butterfly

### Habitat

Although Hartwell Pocket Park does not qualify as a Local Wildlife Site, it is a valuable habitat for wildlife within the local area and the site will be kept on our records as a Potential Wildlife Site.

### Management Recommendations

It is difficult to advise on management from only one site visit and without observing how it has developed into its current state.

As the fruiting thicket/orchard area is fairly dark and dense underneath coppicing or thinning could provide a lighter 'edge' habitat, however, allowing it to continue to grow naturally would continue to provide a dense thicket. Both habitats are useful to wildlife, the dense thicket for birds and lighter areas for plants and invertebrates. Which one to go for is more of a practical decision.

It will be difficult to revert the central meadow area to a wildflower meadow whilst meeting the other aims of the pocket park. As it is not a particularly diverse grassland, maintaining the current management is probably the best course of action to keep the area as a shorter grassland which is enjoyed by local residents.

Maintenance for the wildflower beds should include cutting the area once the plants have flowered and set seed. Thinning out of more dominant species would also be useful if the balance of species does not even out over time. Docks and thistles should be weeded out before they set seed. Creating more wildflower beds could also be considered, as they appear to have been successful.

The north-west corner of rough grassland has the best species diversity and potential to be a meadow area. We would recommend that it is cut and cleared in early summer (around July) to reduce the dominance of grass species and allow more herb species, such as meadow vetchling, knapweed, sorrel and lady's bedstraw, to develop.

### Species List

Scientific Name	Common Name	Abundance	Indicator
<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	Ringlet	Y	

<i>Maniola jurina</i>	Meadow Brown	Y	
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple	O	AnW
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway Maple	O	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	F	
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent	LF	a
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Meadow Foxtail	O	
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat-grass	F	
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	Mugwort	O	
<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Lords-and-Ladies	O	
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	O	
<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	Hedge Bindweed	LF	
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	Shepherd's-purse	LF	
<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	Hornbeam	O	
<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Sweet Chestnut	O	
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common Knapweed	LF	n, c
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Common Mouse-ear	LF	
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	O	
<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Dogwood	O	
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	F	AnW
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	F	
<i>Cydonia oblonga</i>	Quince	R	
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	Crested Dog's-tail	O	
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot	F	
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Great Willowherb	LF	
<i>Festuca gigantea</i>	Giant Fescue	LF	
<i>Festuca pratensis</i>	Meadow Fescue	O	
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue	O	
<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>	Meadowsweet	LF	f
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash	F	
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	LF	
<i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's Bedstraw	LF	n, a, c
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill	O	
<i>Geranium pratense</i>	Meadow Crane's-bill	O	n
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb-Robert	O	

<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood Avens	O	
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	F	
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed	F	
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog	F	
<i>Hordeum secalinum</i>	Meadow Barley	O	n
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	O	
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow Vetchling	LF	n
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye Daisy	LF	n, c
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass	F	
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil	LF	c, n, a
<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	Crab Apple	O	
<i>Phleum pratense</i>	Timothy	O	
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	O	
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Rough Meadow-grass	F	
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Selfheal	O	
<i>Prunus</i>	Prunus species	O	
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Wild Cherry	O	
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn	F	
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup	O	
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	LF	
<i>Rosa arvensis</i>	Field-rose	O	
<i>Rosa canina</i>	Dog-rose	O	
<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	Bramble	F	
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common Sorrel	LF	n
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock	O	
<i>Salix</i>	Salix	LF	
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	O	
<i>Silene dioica</i>	Red Champion	O	a
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Prickly Sow-thistle	O	
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Hedge Woundwort	O	
<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	Lesser Stitchwort	O	n
<i>Tamus communis</i>	Black Bryony	LF	
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	O	
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	F	

Trisetum flavescens	Yellow Oat-grass	O	n
Ulmus glabra	Wych Elm	O	
Urtica dioica	Common Nettle	LF	
Veronica serpyllifolia	Thyme-leaved Speedwell	O	
Viburnum lantana	Wayfaring-tree	O	AnW
Viburnum opulus	Guelder-rose	O	

AnW – Ancient woodland indicator

A (a) – Strong (standard) acid grassland indicator

C (c) – Strong (standard) calcareous grassland indicator

N (n) – Strong (standard) neutral grassland indicator

F (f) – Strong (standard) fen, swamp and marsh indicator

D-Dominant, A-Abundant, F-Frequent, O-Occasional, R-Rare  
(Y-Present, L-Locally) \* - Present across multiple areas

***For further advice on managing this site or for additional information on Local Wildlife Sites see [www.wildlifebcn.org/wildlife-sites-northamptonshire](http://www.wildlifebcn.org/wildlife-sites-northamptonshire) or contact Matt Johnson.***



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### ***LWS Funding Opportunities***

***Countryside Stewardship;*** Environmental Stewardship funding for farmers, woodland owners, foresters and land managers to make environmental improvements to their land.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-get-paid-for-environmental-land-management>

***Catchment Sensitive Farming;*** training, advice and grant support for farmers and land managers to reduce water and air pollution from agriculture. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/catchment-sensitive-farming-reduce-agricultural-water-pollution>

***Nene*** – Peter Brown, 07342 080983, [peter.brown@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:peter.brown@naturalengland.org.uk)

***Ouse*** – Simon Bateman, 07768 873942,

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***Cherwell*** – Jonathan Newman, 07768 842655,

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***HS2 Woodland Fund;*** funding to create native woodland or restore plantations on ancient woodland sites within 25 miles of the HS2 route.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hs2-woodland-fund>

***Farming for the Future;*** working with farmers and landowners in the Nene Valley from Northampton to Peterborough to help restore and create meadow and wetland habitats as well as undertake vital infrastructural improvements to tackle diffuse pollution & aid water quality.

<https://www.wildlifebcn.org/farming-future>

***Woodland Trust tree planting;*** trees, grants and funding schemes from 30 trees to 300,000, plus expert advisers who can help you put the right trees in the right place to achieve your goals. <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/>