COUNTY: NORTHAMPTONSHIRE      SITE NAME: BUCKNELL WOOD MEADOWS

DISTRICT: SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Local Planning Authority: South Northamptonshire District Council

National Grid Reference: SP 642 449      Area: 8.7 (ha) 21.5 (ac)
Ordnance Survey Sheet: 1:50,000: 152      1:10,000: SP 64 SW, 64 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –      Date of Last Revision: –
Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1989      Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:
This is a new site.

Description and Reasons for Notification
Bucknell Wood Meadows comprise a series of small unimproved fields which overlie seasonally water-logged soils derived from Boulder Clay. Of the several neutral grassland communities represented, the most widespread is the common knapweed/crested dog's-tail grassland type, which is now rare both within Northamptonshire and nationally.

The sward associated with the common knapweed/crested dog's-tail community is herb rich and supports a diverse range of plant species. There is considerable variation in its composition throughout the site resulting partly from local soil and drainage conditions and partly from past management practices. The grasses, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, red fescue *Festuca rubra* and cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, glaucous sedge *Carex flacca* and the herbs common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and clovers *Trifolium repens* and *T pratense* are generally abundant. Other species characteristic of this grassland type which occur occasionally include quaking-grass *Briza media*, meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, common spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, adder's tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, field wood-rush *Luzula campestris* and rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*.
Some fields are noticeably herb-dominated and contain frequent rosette-forming species such as autumn hawkbit *Leontodon autumnalis*, *L. hispidus* and cat's-ear *Hypochaeris radicata*. In other areas where more acidic conditions prevail betony *Stachy officinalis* and tormentil *Potentilla erecta* are common.

A second community type, Yorkshire-fog/tufted hair-grass coarse grassland occurs in the poorly-drained areas around drainage channels and in some of the deeper furrows. Tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, rough meadow-grass *Poa trivialis* and hard rush *Juncus inflexus* dominate the sward with ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus uliginosus* also present.

Scattered scrub, numerous anthills and the mature hedges and trees forming the boundaries of the fields provide additional habitats for wildlife.

**National Grid Reference:** SP 642 449  
**Date Notified:** 21 March 1989