



Hay making was a traditional way of providing winter fodder for animals through the repeated cutting of hay excluded coarse weeds whilst allowing delicate wildflowers to colonise the meadows. The hay is cut after the flowers have set seed for the next year's generation. The flower rich hay provides a nutritious fodder.

Making Hay

To maintain grasslands requires careful management usually by cutting, grazing or a mixture of both. A hay cut is one where the grass is then allowed to dry before collection. In the past animals were allowed to graze the land to fatten up on the after growth. On amenity sites, where grazing is unfeasible a further cut may be necessary to curtail the more vigorous species. Grazing can also be used to encourage diversity in the sward. The aim of management is to encourage the more delicate wildflowers over the more vigorous coarse grasses and weeds.

Looking after Grasslands



Working in Partnership to Conserve Wildlife

The Blue Butterfly Scheme is a partnership between the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and Local Authorities in Nottinghamshire.

The partnership will draw together the strengths of each organisation to develop an ongoing programme throughout the County whereby grasslands for wildlife will once again become an everyday part of the landscape of Nottinghamshire.

As a result people will hopefully become familiar with the beautiful flowers and grasses that once dominated the countryside.

If you want to know more please contact your Local Council or the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust.

Local Authority Contact Details:

This leaflet has been produced with support from:



The Blue Butterfly Scheme has three aims:

1. To manage existing wildflower areas in a sympathetic manner to ensure their long term survival. This will involve the age-old practice of haymaking that allows the flowers to set seed before cutting. In some areas animals will be used to graze pastures to help maintain the diversity of wild flower species and other wildlife.
2. To restore wildflower areas that have been neglected. With careful management we can reverse the decline and restore meadows and pasture back to their former glory. The management will include removal of invasive scrub and weeds and the introduction of a sympathetic cutting regime.
3. Create new areas of wildflower rich grassland. Using techniques developed over the last 15 years we will identify sites where the soil conditions are right. The existing grassland, made up of just a few common species, will be killed off and hay from this hay contains will germinate and within a year a new wildflower grassland will be created.

The Aim of the Blue Butterfly Scheme



The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust - Working to protect wildlife in your County

The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust is the County's largest environmental charity. We are run by local people for the benefit of local wildlife. We now have over 6000 supporters but need your support in order to continue protecting wildlife.

The Trust is also a partner in the largest voluntary organisation in the UK concerned with all aspects of wildlife protection, The Wildlife Trusts. This partnership of 47 County Trusts and Urban Wildlife Groups manages more than 2300 nature reserves and has more than 600,000 members.

For details of how you can support our work, please contact:

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Nottingham NG1 1EA.
Tel: 0115 958 8242.
Fax: 0115 9243 175.**



**Email: nottswt@cix.co.uk
www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/nottinghamshire**

Take Action

Support the work of the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

Please send me details of how I can support the work of the Wildlife Trust in my area.

Name: _____

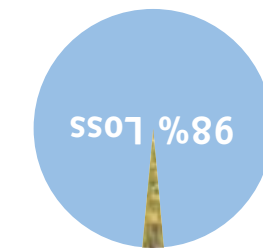
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Telephone: _____

Email: _____

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Wild flower meadows in Nottinghamshire (1937) 100%



Managed sympathetically grasslands can be composed of a diverse range of attractive wildflowers such as butterflies. Before the advent of herbicides and fertilisers flower filled meadows were a familiar sight in Nottinghamshire.

A Rare and Threatened Habitat

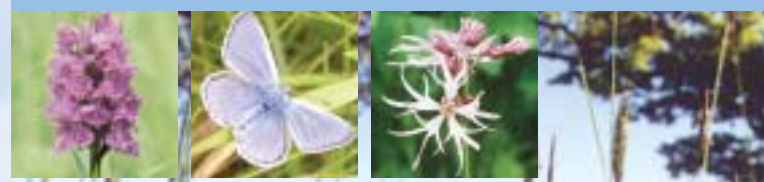
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The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust in partnership with all the local authorities in Nottinghamshire has developed the Blue Butterfly Scheme. Over the coming years we will be managing and recreating one of the most attractive habitats, filled with rare and beautiful wildflowers. The Blue Butterfly symbol will be appearing all over Nottinghamshire on grasslands that are being managed for wildlife.

Welcome to the Blue Butterfly Scheme

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust



Blue Butterfly

SCHEME



The Blue Butterfly Scheme for Grasslands in Nottinghamshire



One of the key elements which determines the type of grassland which grows in an area is the underlying geology, as this affects the soil and therefore the plants which are adapted to it.

Grasslands in Nottinghamshire can be placed in three broad categories - **CALCAREOUS, NEUTRAL or ACID**. Each type has its own unique features and requires different management techniques to ensure its survival.

In partnership with Local Authorities across the County, The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust is working to protect the what remains of our ancient meadows and to improve other areas of grassland for wildlife.

CALCAREOUS GRASSLANDS

In Nottinghamshire these can be found predominantly on exposed areas of magnesian limestone along the western edge of the County. They are very diverse, containing a beautiful array of rare and colourful flowers. Orchids are a speciality of this grassland with fragrant, pyramidal, spotted, early & southern marsh, bee and fly orchids all being found.

Other colourful specialities include the large rayed pink flowers of the greater knapweed, and the blue soldier buttons of the small scabious contrast with the unusual straw coloured flowers of the carline thistle, or the yellow woolly heads of kidney vetch and froth of lady's bedstraw. A number of herbs can be found including salad burnet, wild thyme, marjoram and basil. Rarities include the yellow rock rose.

ACID GRASSLANDS

Found in areas of sandy soils the acid grasslands are typical of Sherwood Forest and the coverlands of Eastern Nottinghamshire. Although not as rich in species as the other two grasslands, acid grasslands are no less attractive. This in part is due to the dominant grasses being some of the most beautiful that are frequently grown in gardens such as the wavy-hair grass and the brown bent.

These fine grasses and their delicate panicles that move with the slightest breeze create an ethereal shimmering carpet from late summer onwards. Tormentil, heath bedstraw and milkwort add colour to these areas as do the patches of heath that encroach.

Small Copper

The larva of this small attractive butterfly lives on species of dock, especially sorrel, a familiar plant of meadows.

Common Knapweed

The purple thistle like heads of common knapweed are an important nectar source for the butterflies and moths that thrive in wildflower meadows. Its seeds attract goldfinches.

Hay Rattle

Hay rattle, as its name suggests, is closely associated with meadows. The plant derives a portion of its nutrients from the grasses surrounding it by tapping into their root systems. After flowering in June it produces large seeds encased in papery sacks which 'rattle', when ripe. This ripening coincides with when the hay is ready; hence when the seeds rattle the hay is right for the scythe.

NEUTRAL GRASSLANDS

These grasslands tend to be found on the heavier clays or alluvial soils of the southern and eastern parts of the County. These heavier soils are good for agriculture and many of these grasslands were cut for hay. Traditionally managed hay meadows contained a wealth of colourful wildflowers.

Many flowers can be found in these meadows including the mauve heads of field scabious, the purple flowers of hard heads or the red drum stick like greater burnet. Umbellifers or keks are well represented with the diminutive pignut, or yellow flowering pepper saxifrage and wild parsnip or the white flowers of the greater-burnet saxifrage. In wetter areas marsh marigolds, meadow rue, dropwort, ragged robin and a host of sedges can be found.

Common Blue Butterfly

The common blue butterfly has been chosen as the symbol of the scheme because its fortunes are closely linked to wildflower rich grasslands. Although still widely distributed across the UK, its population has declined and is now confined to the remnant patches of flower rich grassland.

The adult feeds on the abundant nectar of the flowers in these grasslands, whilst the caterpillar feeds on the birds-foot trefoil or 'eggs and bacon'. Common blue butterfly will again become a familiar sight on warm sunny days in summer, dancing over the wildflower meadows the scheme will create and manage.

