

Species rich hay meadows score sheet instructions 2019

Agreement ref:	
Survey undertaken by:	
Field number:	
Date of survey:	

Timing of survey

Undertake the survey before the hay is cut and once the majority of plant species are in flower; this is usually between mid June and late July. This will make identification of the plants significantly easier. Ensure you have a copy of the Agreement Map, a survey form and ID card with you. It may be helpful to have a camera with you, in case you were unable to identify some of the plants. The plant photos can be sent to your adviser for identification.

Survey Method

Using your agreement map;

- Split the transect line into 10 equal lengths to work out where to stop. Mark these on the map. It may be easier to work out how many strides there are between each stop.
- Walk along the transect line and stop 10 times.
- At each stop look at the sward within a 1m radius around you. Using the ID card and survey sheet, tick all the positive and negative plant species seen at each stop.

At the end of the survey, look over the field and make an assessment of the level of damage to the meadow from the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

1. Damage to soil and sward from machinery – severe rutting over more than 10% of the field area
2. Damage from winter feeding sites that are still clearly seen once the hay meadow have been shut up
3. Manure heaps
4. Bales of hay that have been left in situ in the field from the previous year
5. Damage to historic environment features (refer to Historic Features Map)

Damaging activities that affect the integrity of the habitat relates to poor management which should be avoided. Severe damage where over 25% of the habitat is affected will void the total meadow score and result in an overall score of 0 and no payment will be made that year.

STOPS	Species Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total species score ¹
Positive plant species (V)												
Betony	3											
Lesser/greater birds foot trefoil	3											
Bugle	3											
Burnet saxifrage	3											
Common bistort	3											
Common black knapweed	3											
Cowslip	3											
Eyebrights	2											
Fairy flax	3											
Globe flower	4											
Greater burnet	4											
Harebell	3											
Hawkbits/cats ear	2											
Lady's mantle (² sp)	4											
Marsh marigold	2											
Meadowsweet	2											
Melancholy thistle	4											
Orchids	4											
Ox eye daisy	3											
Pignut	2											
Ragged robin	3											
Red clover	2											
Ribwort plantain	2											
Salad burnet	3											
Scabious (³ sp)	3											
Sedges - short & tall	2											
Sneezewort	3											
Vetches	2											
Water avens	3											
Water mint	3											
Wood / Meadow cranesbill	4											
Yellow (hay) rattle	2											
Quaking grass	4											
Sweet vernal grass	2											
Negative plant species												
Common dock	-2											
Cow Parsley	-1											
Creeping thistle	-2											
Nettle	-2											
Ragwort	-2											
Rush	-1											
Spear thistle	-2											
Meadow score												
2. % cover of field area affected by damaging activities												
10 - 25%	-20											
5 - 10%	-10											

¹ * Total species score - multiply species score by how many stops the species was seen in

² sp – all species within the Lady's mantle family

³ sp – all species within the Scabious family

under 5%	0	
TOTAL MEADOW SCORE		

Total score matrix

Tier Total points	0 <40 points	1 40 -79 points	2 80-119 points	3 120-159 points	4 160-199 points	5 200+ points
Grant £/ha	0	112	220	285	334	371

Farmer observations:

Please add any comments regarding the management of the meadows, for example used for lambing, closed up period, hay time date, made into hay or haylage, weather conditions, rough estimate of bale numbers – up or down from previous years.

Management undertaken, for example drains maintained, rushes or weeds treated, fertiliser/muck applications, liming undertaken:

How long did it take you to do the survey?