



MILL MEADOWS

MILL MEADOWS LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

The name Mill Meadows appears to originate from the two windmills that were located on the western edge of the reserve. One was demolished in the 1890's and the other collapsed after gales in 1928.

There are 17 fields at Mill Meadows and some have names used since the 1600's. In the 17th Century, property transactions used field and tenant's names. When Ordnance Survey maps became available in the late 19th Century, this practice stopped. The Society have retained field names to retain this important tradition.



Veteran Trees

Many Veteran Trees are found here particularly in hedgerows. The field boundaries are virtually unchanged since the late 1600's. Until the 1970's Mill Meadows was mainly managed by gentleman farmers.



OAK TREE



Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

3 fields totalling 17 acres (7 hectares) were designated a SSSI in 1999 because it is one of the finest ancient meadow systems in Essex. The fields have been mainly undisturbed by ploughing or artificial fertilisation for centuries creating the ideal conditions for a wonderful diversity of flowers and fungi.



ORCHID



WAXCAP



Wildlife

The range of habitats supports a wide variety of wildlife. The shrubs and trees are well used by birds and foraging bats. The ponds and boggy areas are good for frogs and grass snakes. The meadows have wildflowers, butterflies and other insects.



COMMON LIZARD



Former Site of Greens Farmhouse

The remains of Greens Farmhouse, demolished in the 1970's, is located on the ridge. There had probably been some sort of dwelling there in 1706. The last tenants (the Watts) used the land for grazing horses for their haulage business.



Grazing Management

The priority habitat on the reserve is the grassland. To maintain the pasture land the reserve is grazed by a small herd of Red Poll cattle. The cattle are gentle and usually found together in one field. The short grass they create enables the wild flowers to flourish.



RED POLL CATTLE



Scale:

100 metres

Key:

- Mill Meadows Trail
- Other paths
- Hedgelines
- Roads
- Field boundaries
- i Information Tag
- Historic site
- Former site of windmill
- Entrance
- Footbridge
- Scrub
- Woodland
- Boggy area
- Pond

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