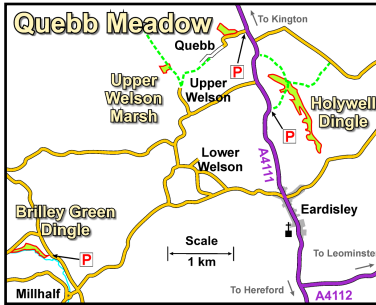


# Quebb Corner Meadow

Eardisley SO302520 (Explorer 201)

SSSI

Unimproved neutral grassland.



## Visitor Guidelines

Entrance to the reserve is not restricted, but while the hay crop is growing in June and July or stock grazing, please keep to the edge of the meadow and also keep dogs under control. Some areas may be quite wet even in summer and waterproof footwear is advised. Please also keep the field entrance gate closed.

## Description

The field was formerly a part of the Nieuport estate, bought by Herefordshire County Council after WWI to settle returning soldiers onto small holdings. Since the time of the Tithe map at least, it has formed an outlying part of nearby Queest Moor Farm, the name Quebb being thought to mean a marsh. The Tithe map describes the then cultivation state as "arable", but for many years now, the field has been managed as a *hay meadow* with *aftermath grazing* and without the use of herbicides or artificial fertilisers. This past history, together with relatively fertile neutral soils derived from the underlying Old Red Sandstone rocks, has produced an exceptionally varied herb-rich sward for such a small field.

The drier areas of the *meadow* are characterised by Crested Dog's-tail grass with large amounts of Common Knapweed, while species typical of old *meadows* include Cowslip, Quaking Grass, Devil's Bit Scabious, Betony, Meadow Vetchling, Pignut and Ox-eye Daisy. Two scarcer species present are Pale Sedge and Greater Butterfly Orchid. In the northern and western parts there are marshy areas from which the *meadow* takes its name. In these wetter soils grow Marsh Marigold, Common Spotted Orchid, Ragged Robin, Ladies Smock and the uncommon Marsh Arrowgrass. Large old hedgerows surround the *meadow* on all sides and these typically contain a good mixture of shrubby species, including Hazel, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Bramble and Wild Rose. These, together with a remnant woodland flora below of Bluebell, Dog's Mercury and Wild Daffodils, suggest the hedges may have an *assart* origin. Brambles form thickets in places, particularly along the northern boundary and west end, and these are favoured breeding places for warblers like Whitethroat and Garden Warbler in summer. A belt of Alder trees is found along the southern edge of the field between the stream and the lane. Clear, unpolluted streams

border the meadow on three of its sides and numerous caddis and stonefly larvae are found here, together with mayfly nymphs and other aquatic invertebrates characteristic of oxygen-rich waters. Brooklime and Water Mint grow in the wet soils beside the streams.

### **Present Management**

The **meadow** is currently managed as a traditional **hay meadow**, with the **hay** being cut in July after plants have seeded. This is followed by **aftermath grazing** by sheep/cattle until the autumn. Every third year the grassland is grazed as **pasture**.

### **Acquisition Details**

Freehold purchased in 1989 with generous grant aid from English Nature and the Michael Marks Charitable Trust. The reserve is designated as a **SSSI**.

### **General Information:**

**Best time to visit:** Early spring to late summer.

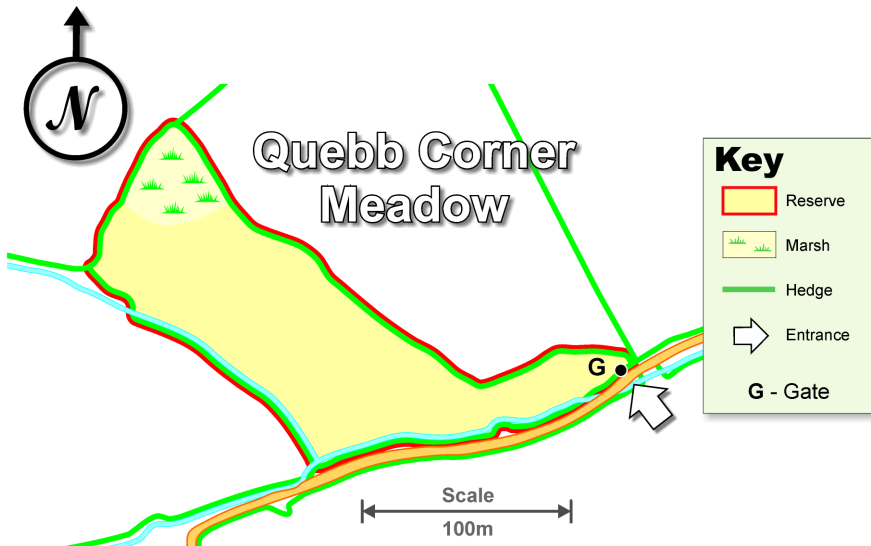
**Habitat:** **Unimproved** neutral grassland.

**Size:** 1.5 hectares (3.7 acres).

**Specialities:** Yellowhammer, Whitethroat (4-7), Garden Warbler (5-7). Meadow butterflies, Mayfly and Stonefly larvae. Pale Sedge (5-6), Greater Butterfly Orchid (6-7), Meadow Vetchling (5-8), Pignut (5-7), Cowslip (4-5), Ragged Robin (5-8), Marsh Marigold (3-8), Marsh Arrowgrass, Wild Daffodil (3-4).

**Parking:** Park in the lay-by at the main road junction. There is room for two cars.

**Nearby reserves:** Brilley Green Dingle, Holywell Dingle, Upper Welson Marsh.



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