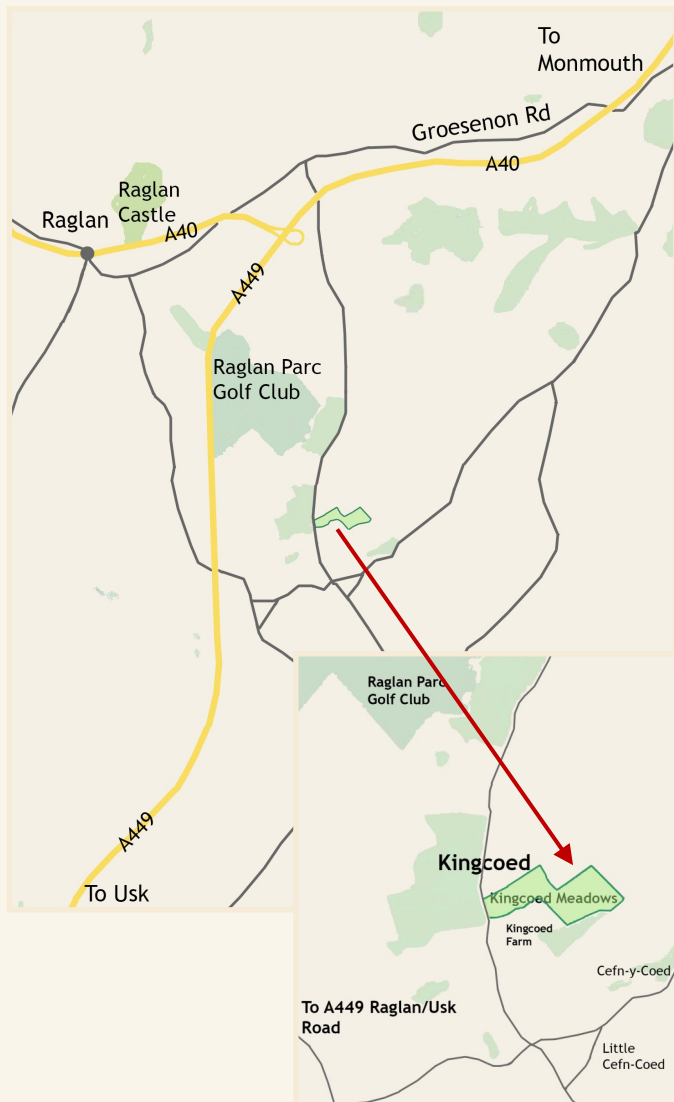


FINDING KINGCOED MEADOWS

OS Grid Ref SO427057. From the Mitchell Troy-Raglan road, turn south near the tractor yard (SO426085) before the road reaches the Raglan by-pass. Follow this minor road over the dual carriageway, up a hill past two woods on the right. The meadows are on the left as you enter Kingcoed opposite the second wood. Satnav users can use post code NP15 1DS. Park on the verge but please do not block the entrance to the private driveway to Kingcoed Farmhouse next to the meadow gates.



MMG is grateful to Biffa Awards for a substantial grant towards the purchase of the meadows and production of a display board; a number of other Trusts very kindly provided welcome funding: The Alan Evans Memorial Trust, The Banister Charitable Trust, the Foyle Foundation, Gwent Wildlife Trust, Habitataid, Ricardo Crawley Trust, New Grove Trust and Waterloo Foundation. Many members and well-wishers also gave very generously to the appeal to buy the meadows. Bee-friendly Monmouthshire and Raglan Community Council have kindly helped sponsor the leaflet and display boards.

SUPPORTED BY



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Cover photograph, Gemma Wood; Adder's-tongue Fern, Elsa Wood; Mating Common Blue, Ray Armstrong; Common Spotted-orchid, Malcolm Schuyt; Small Copper and Six-spot Burnet on Knapweed: Ray Armstrong
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Kingcoed Meadows

Traditional hay meadows in the heart of Monmouthshire

A beautiful reserve demonstrating how sympathetic management can restore species-rich grassland and dramatically increase its biodiversity



These two lovely hay meadows were bought by Monmouthshire Meadows Group in 2016 following an appeal for funds through members, friends and charitable trusts. They will be managed in perpetuity for their meadow wildlife – plants, spiders and insects, small mammals and birds.



The best time to enjoy the fields is late May through to mid-July when the flowers are at their best and when bees, butterflies and grasshoppers are most active. Birds are then breeding in the hedges.

Please keep as far as possible to the paths and edges of the fields so that the hay crop is not flattened.



Previous owners, Rachel & Tudor Morgan, restored the fields over a 13 year period from a monoculture of Yorkshire Fog grass to a diversity of flowers through an annual hay cut followed by after-math grazing by sheep in the winter months. The hay is

cut quite late so that flowers have time to set seeds and the grazing helps remove excess nutrients. Wild-flowers prefer an impoverished soil as they cannot compete with grasses where land is fertilised.

Many 'new' plants have appeared, the showiest being a host of Common Spotted Orchids and Southern Marsh Orchids. Finer meadow grasses such as Red Fescue, Common Bent, Rough Meadow Grass and Crested Dog's-tail have now largely replaced the Yorkshire Fog whilst colourful meadow flowers such as Common Cat's-ear and Rough Hawkbit, both relatives of the Dandelion, the low-growing Bird's-foot Trefoil, Meadow Vetchling, various vetches and Red Clover, Yellow Rattle and Common Knapweed are all to be found. Bird's-foot Trefoil or Bacon and Eggs so



named because of the red flower buds and open yellow flowers is an important food-plant for Common Blue butterflies; the meadow grasses are favoured by Meadow Brown and Ringlet butterflies. Look out too for the beautiful black and white chequered Marbled Whites. On the purple Common Knapweed flowers you may be lucky to see the strikingly coloured Six-spot Burnet Moths or Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet Moths as well as Large, Small and perhaps Essex Skippers.

The flora of the fields will be monitored so that new species can be documented. In woodland within half a kilometre of the fields there is a population of the white-flowered Greater Butterfly Orchids. It is hoped that in time these may find the Kingcoed Meadows to their liking.

Springs in the lower field create wetland habitat for a variety of rushes and sedges. Southern Marsh Orchids abound in the moister areas where the diminutive Adder's-tongue Fern was also found in 2014.

Hedges, small copses and scattered trees fringe the fields and provide additional habitat for small mammals and for nesting birds. Listen out in June for the rattling song of Lesser Whitethroat or the scratchy song of Common Whitethroat.

