



Wildlife Friendly Addingham

The fields between the A65 and Crossbank Road

As you walk across these fields you will see little sign of wildflowers, bees and butterflies. In the fields grazed by sheep the grass is kept low and any wildflowers in the sward are nibbled before they have a chance to flower.

Traditional hay making for winter feed has been replaced by silage production. Pasture is reseeded with fast growing, vigorous varieties such as rye grass, and spread with slurry and fertilizer to make the grass grow faster for an early cut and higher yield.



Current farming practice focusing on grass production for grazing and silage leads to enrichment of the soil with nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphate, so wildflowers and fine meadow grasses which do better in less rich soil are outcompeted. In a traditional hay meadow management regime, grazing animals were not brought on until after the hay was made, giving wildflowers a chance to flower and set seed.

Over the last 75 years 97% of Pennine wildflower meadows have been lost to development and changes in farming practice; as a consequence insect and pollinator populations have crashed dramatically too, which in turn has meant declining farmland bird populations.