

ECOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CUMBRIA

HANDBOOK OF FIELD METHODS

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## HANDBOOK OF FIELD METHODS

### Preface

The purpose of this handbook is to inform you of the background to this summer's survey, to explain its purpose, and to give a detailed account of the methods involved in the survey.

### Introduction

Cumbria is over 7,000 sq. km. in extent having been reborn on 1 April 1974 by the amalgamation of the old counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, the Furness area of Lancashire and the north western extremity of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Its centre consists of the Lake District National Park, covering approximately a third of the County. Existing Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are the Arnside/Silverdale area on the southern boundary, and the Solway Coast. The North Pennines area, consisting of the Cross Fell Escarpment overlooking the Eden Valley, is a proposed AONB.

The topography, geology, climate and land use throughout the County is diverse enabling it to be subdivided into reasonably uniform areas on physical grounds. These areas are not coincident with the administrative boundaries which subdivide the County into six district council areas. The centre is dominated by the high, rocky fells of the Lake District with their steep slopes on Borrowdale Volcanic Rocks. The other highland area is the North Pennines on Carboniferous limestone, with a much flatter moorland top. The Eden Valley runs NNE between these two areas from Appleby to Carlisle and is predominantly a dairy farming region. The sub-coastal fringes of the County cover a large area to the north, whilst the coast proper can be sub-divided into coastal and estuarine areas, such as Morecambe Bay, the Solway Firth and the Duddon Estuary.

### Background to the survey

One of the functions of the County Council is to produce a Structure Plan for the County setting out policies for future land use.

