

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Caerphilly County Borough Council	
<u>LDP Policy Ref. NH 3.149</u>	SINC name: Twyn yr Oerfel, South of Cwmfelinfach
Grid reference: ST183906	Area (hectares): 5
Survey date: 3rd May 2007	Surveyed by: Dr Peter Sturgess (Hyder Consulting Ltd.)
(UDP policy reference: C11.128)	
Summary description	
<p>A mainly north-facing slope making up part of Mynydd y Grug Common. The largest component of the vegetation comprises a mix of Bracken and acid grassland with scattered scrub. This includes several grassy tracks and areas of bare ground, probably maintained by motorcycle scrambling. The main grassy areas are the two Cairns and the land beside the access track. A small flush at the eastern end of the area is dominated by rushes, but includes a good variety of wetland plants. A second, smaller component of the SINC is a small pond surrounded by semi-improved grassland adjacent to a mature Beech tree. At the time of the survey there was no open water, but a dense mat of wetland vegetation covered the whole pond surface.</p>	
Qualifying features	
Acid grassland with at least 7 indicator species.	
Acid flush/ marshy grassland with at least 12 indicators.	
Pond with semi-natural vegetation.	
Secondary features	
Bracken.	
Potential value/ unconfirmed features	
The pond is likely to support amphibians and dragonflies.	
The acid grassland and Bracken area is likely to support reptiles.	
Current management (including problems and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement)	
<p>Sheep heavily graze the area. Motorcyclists also use this area, although the erosion damage from this activity does not appear to be at levels that would adversely affect the nature conservation value of the SINC. In some areas it appears to be limiting the extent of Bracken encroachment, which is beneficial for biodiversity. However, in some areas the Bracken is very dense and is restricting the extent of the acid grassland vegetation. It does not appear to have been burned recently and constitutes a potential fire problem. Some form of Bracken control should be implemented to enhance the site for biodiversity. The pond in the eastern field is currently heavily vegetated and has no open water. It would benefit from local vegetation clearance/dredging. Ideally, a third of the pond should be cleared every year for 3 years, rather than removing all of the vegetation at once.</p>	
Access/ community use	
The main slope is within an area of public open access and is crossed by several public footpaths. There is no formal public access to the pond.	

Additional information

Several of the adjacent fields, particularly to the south, appear to have potential to support waxcap fungi.

Species list (Dominant species, SINC Criteria, RDB or other notable indicator species)

(LBAP species shown in **bold**, species confirmed by 2007 survey in *italics*)

Acid grassland / Bracken vegetation: *Rumex acetosella*, *Galium saxatile*, *Conopodium majus*, *Trifolium repens*, *Pilosella officinarum*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Urtica dioica*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Festuca ovina*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Nardus stricta*, *Agrostis capillaris*, *Poa annua*, *Carex pilulifera*, *Luzula campestris*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Dicranum scoparium*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Polytrichum piliferum*.

Tree and shrub species: *Calluna vulgaris*, *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Ulex gallii*, *Betula pendula*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Quercus petraea*

Acid flush/ marshy grassland species: *Cirsium palustre*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Galium palustre*, *Potentilla erecta*, *Narthecium ossifragum*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Ranunculus omiophyllus*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Viola palustris*, *Wahlenbergia hederacea*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Glyceria fluitans*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Carex viridula*, *Carex panicea*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Polytrichum commune*, *Sphagnum papillosum*, *Sphagnum quinquefarium*.

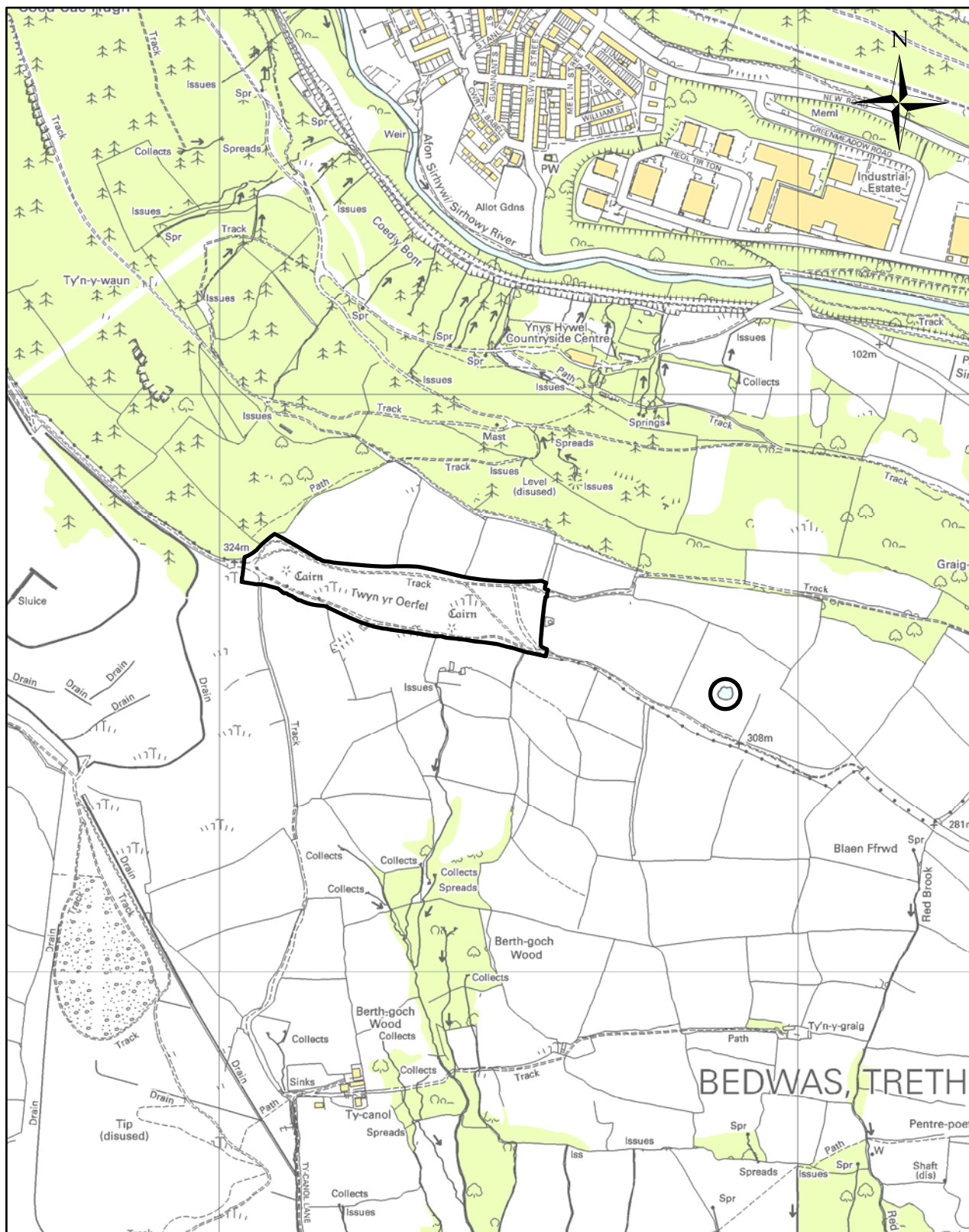
Vegetation associated with the pond: *Fagus sylvatica*, *Stellaria alsine*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Agrostis stolonifera*, *Eleocharis palustris*, *Juncus effusus*, *Juncus acutiflorus*, *Drepanocladus cf. fluitans*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*.

Fauna observations: **Common Frog**, **Skylark**, **Yellowhammer**, **Peregrine** (flying over), *Meadow Pipit*, *Wheatear*, *Stonechat*, *Cuckoo*, *Willow Warbler*, *Cuckoo*, *Mistle Thrush*, *Great Tit*, *Chaffinch*, *Green-veined White Butterfly*, *Small Tortoiseshell Butterfly*.

Additional species noted from desk study: **Badger**, *Scutellaria minor* (in marshy area), *Lythrum portula* (in pond).

Caerphilly County Borough Council
 Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
 LDP Policy Ref: NH 3.149 (SINC 128)
 Twyn yr Oerfel, South of Cwmfelinfach 5 Ha

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 Gall hyn arwain at erlyniad neu achos sifil. Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, 100025372, 2008.