

**CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

CAE PENMAES

Date of Notification: 1992

National Grid Reference: SO122333

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 161
1:25,000 Sheet number: SO03/13

Site Area: 6.3 ha

Description:

The site consists of a single field with a north-easterly aspect, situated at an altitude of 190m in the village of Llanfilo, near Talgarth. The semi-natural vegetation is influenced by the loamy soils derived from the underlying Old Red Sandstone. Cae Penmaes supports an excellent example of the common knapweed - crested dog's-tail *Centaurea Nigra* - *Cynosurus Cristatus* mesotrophic grassland community, characteristic of grazed, traditionally managed hay meadows. This grassland community, which typically supports a rich assemblage of meadow plants, has become scarce as a result of agricultural improvement, and this sizeable example at Penmaes is one of very few known to survive in Brecknock.

The sward is dominated by grasses such as sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum Odoratum* and crested dog's-tail, with frequent red fescue *Festuca Rubra*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus Lanatus* and cock's-foot *Dactylis Glomerata*. The most frequent herbs are common knapweed, red clover *Trifolium Pratense*, meadow buttercup *Ranunculus Acris*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus Corniculatus* and ribwort plantain *Plantago Lanceolata*. Other characteristic associates such as autumn hawkbit *Leontodon Autumnnalis*, rough hawkbit *Leontodon Hispidus*, oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum Vulgare*, yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus Minor*, great burnet *Sanguisorba Officinalis*, common sorrel *Rumex Acetosa*, tufted vetch *Vicia Cracca* and cat's-ear *Hypochoeris Radicata* also occur. Where drainage is impeded, on gleyed soils, areas of meadowsweet *Filipendula Ulmaria* are present.

The site, though situated on some of the lowest ground in Brecknock, supports several species which are usually more typical of upland hay meadows, such as pignut *Conopodium Majus* and the scarce globeflower *Trollius Europaeus*.