

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

CAEAU BRYN-DU

Date of Notification: 1990

National Grid Reference: SO088768 and SO092767

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 136
1:10,000 Sheet number: SO 07 NE

Site Area: 1.8 ha

Description:

This site includes the unimproved margin of a hayfield and an area of riverside land in the valley of the River Ithon near Llanbadarn Fynydd. The underlying geology comprises Silurian shales and the soils vary from freely drained acid types on the steeper banks to water-logged gleys in the valley bottom. The special interest comprises species-rich acid grassland and a mixture of fen-meadow, rush-pasture and fen vegetation, together with one of the largest populations of the locally uncommon globeflower *Trollius europaeus* known in east Wales.

The northern part of the site consists of a steep bank and other land adjacent to an improved hay-field. This bank supports neutral grassland dominated by coarse grasses, such as cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* and rough meadow-grass *Poa trivialis* with frequent great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* and a number of other species, including intermediate lady's-mantle *Alchemilla xanthochlora*, wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*, pale sedge *Carex pallescens*, pignut *Conopodium majus*, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, betony *Stachys officinalis* and wood bitter-vetch *Vicia orobus*. Below the bank lies an area of spring-fed pasture dominated by tall purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* or by meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* and sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus*. Characteristic associates here include tormentil, common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris* and common valerian *Valeriana officinalis*. Globeflower is frequent throughout this area. There is a small patch within this area dominated by purple moor-grass with frequent sharp-flowered rush. Associated species here include carnation sedge *Carex panicea*, meadow thistle *Cirsium dissectum*, heath spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata subsp. ericetorum*, wood horsetail *Equisetum sylvaticum*, greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus*, tormentil and saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*.

The southern portion of the site comprises mainly species-rich acidic grassland occupying a gentle south-east facing slope. The dominant species are sheep's-fescue *Festuca ovina* and common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, with frequent sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, heath-grass *Danthonia decumbens* and red fescue *Festuca rubra*. Associated species typical of this type of grassland include bitter-vetch *Lathyrus linifolius*, harebell, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*. Locally uncommon species such as Dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, great burnet and wood bitter-vetch are also present. Flushes and

areas of impeded drainage support a variety of wetland habitats. Where purple moor-grass is dominant the sward is generally rather grassy but meadow thistle is prominent in places, growing with quaking-grass *Briza media*, marsh valerian *Valeriana dioica*, and a variety of sedges including tawny sedge *Carex hostiana*, glaucous sedge *C.flacca* and flea sedge *C. pulicaris*. In addition, there are several small stands composed mainly of sharp-flowered rush with marsh plants such as greater bird's foot trefoil, meadowsweet, ragged-robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and lesser pond-sedge *Carex acutiformis*.

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