

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

**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION**

**POWYS**

**GWEUNYDD CRYCHELL**

<b><u>Date of Notification:</u></b>	1988
<b><u>National Grid Reference:</u></b>	SO 081741
<b><u>O.S. Maps:</u></b>	1:50,000 Sheet number: 136 or 147 1:25,000 Sheet number: SO 07
<b><u>Site Area:</u></b>	9.8 ha

**Description:**

The site is an excellent example of a range of marshy grassland and mire plant communities, and other vegetation types, which are managed as rough pasture. It consists of two discreet areas linked by the Crychell Brook; they comprise an area of sloping west-facing wet pasture and a very varied peatland area made up of a dissected plateau with a number of roughly circular depressions of various sizes. The site displays a number of nationally recognised grass and mire vegetation types, with intermediate mosaics which, together with the presence of streams and small areas of woodland, all add diversity to the site.

The most notable plant community of the northern part of the site is the nationally uncommon purple moor-grass-meadow thistle (*Molinia caerulea* - *Cirsium dissectum*) fen-meadow, which occurs on the eastern flushed slopes. Characteristically for this vegetation type, the purple moor-grass is close-grazed, and other grasses are well represented, together with a variety of sedges and herbs. Grasses include mat-grass *Nardus stricta*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, sheep's-fescue *Festuca ovina* and quaking-grass *Briza media*. The vegetation is unusual in the occurrence of species regarded as characteristic of different sub-communities, such as fen bedstraw *Galium uliginosum* and marsh valerian *Valeriana dioica*, together with lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica*. The low-lying rush-dominated pasture is a very wet example of the type in which jointed rushes *Juncus articulatus/acutiflorus* occur with a range of herbs, including greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus uliginosus*, white sedge *Carex curta* and common sedge *C. nigra*. Interspersed with the rush pasture are areas of purple moor-grass-tormentil *Molinia caerulea-Potentilla erecta* mire which characteristically has few associates.

The southern part of the site is an extremely complex mosaic of acidic and purple moor-grass dominated grassland, in which mire and wet heath communities occur interspersed in the circular depressions and in streamside flushes. The dry grassland has upland

affinities. It is dominated by sheep's-fescue and wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*, with frequent tormentil, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and bitter-vetch *Lathyrus montanus*. Anthills are frequent and support a more heathy vegetation, often dominated by close-cropped heather *Calluna vulgaris*. The moor-grass communities vary from wet to dry and may be either associated with frequent bog-moss *Sphagnum* sp. and cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix* or be more grassy with dominant sheep's-fescue and sweet vernal-grass. Wet heath (deer-grass *Scirpus caespitosus* – cross-leaved heath) occurs as fragments on wet banks and on the edges of the low-lying depressions characteristic of the site. Petty whin *Genista anglica* occurs throughout these three community types and is particularly abundant in the acid grasslands.

Two small areas support dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, and saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria* also occurs. The lowest areas of impeded drainage support miniature basin mire communities with bog-moss lawns and frequent common cottongrass *Eriophorum angustifolium*. Round-leaved sundew *Drosera rotundifolia* is well represented.

The three principal watercourses traversing the southern area are associated with a range of other vegetation types – an acidic mire type with carnation sedge *Carex panicea*, a species-poor rush pasture and a base-enriched sedge community with affinities to the fen-meadow community type. Marsh valerian is well represented in the different flush communities.

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