

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

COED CRAIG-IAR

Date of Notification: 1985

National Grid Reference: SN 991798

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 136
1:25,000 Sheet number: SN 97 & SN 98

Site Area: 24 ha

Description:

The site is a good example of sessile oak-birch woodland with a variable quantity of hazel understorey. There are, however, a number of different acidic woodland types present, including pure high forest oak, birch-hazel, birch areas and a local development of birch-alder-willow carr. A large number of flowering plant species have been recorded. The site occupies freely draining hill slopes, flanking the Cydros Brook and extends from 275 to 320 metres (900 to 1050 feet) above sea level. It mainly faces southwest, but south-east and northern aspects are also represented. It is generally extensively grazed by sheep and there is local damage to the vegetation by trampling. Moss carpets form the typical ground-layer with the lichen, *Cladonia impexa*, being a frequent constituent on the upper slopes; elsewhere a grass layer dominated by wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa* is characteristic. Mature even-aged sessile oak is the major canopy species, but there is some variation in age representation and the woodland structure is also affected by the severe stunting of trees in exposed areas. Hazel is characteristically on the lower slopes by the stream and the birch and birch-alder-willow areas are all south of the Cydros Brook. The ground-layer on the drier slopes has a low range of flowering plant species, with such typical plants as heath bedstraw *Galium saxatile*, foxglove *Digitalis purpurea* and tormentil *Potentilla erecta*. Less acidic areas support betony *Betonica officinalis* and less frequently wood sanicle *Sanicula europaea*. Wetter areas tend to have the highest species diversity, with plants such as greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus uliginosus*, wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, and marsh violet *Viola palustris*. Marsh arrowgrass *Triglochin palustris*, an uncommon plant in Montgomery, has also been recorded from the site.

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