

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

MONMOUTHSHIRE

PENTWYN FARM GRASSLANDS, PENALLT

Date of Notification: 1993

National Grid Reference: SO 523093

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 162
1:25,000 Sheet number: SO 50

Site Area: 7.6 ha

Description:

Pentwyn Farm Grasslands are situated on the edge of the Penallt village, 4 km south-east of Monmouth. The grasslands lie at an altitude of 120-200 m and have varying aspects (the majority of the site slopes moderately to the south but two of the fields face north and south-east respectively).

The underlying geology is Lower Red Sandstone and the soils are classified as brown earths of the Milford and Eardiston I associations.

This site supports one of the largest areas of a traditionally managed, unimproved neutral grassland in Gwent, of a community type that is declining in the British Isles.

The majority of the site supports grassland of the common knapweed-crested dog's-tail *Centaurea nigra* – *Cynosurus cristatus*, and meadow vetchling sub-community *Lathyrus pratensis*. The species composition is similar throughout the site with key indicator species, common knapweed, crested dog's-tail and red clover *Trifolium pratense* all frequent but with common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* rather patchily distributed.

The most frequent grasses are common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, red fescue *Festuca rubra* with crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* common at low cover. The site also supports one of the two largest populations of green-winged orchid *Orchis morio* in Gwent, a species which is becoming uncommon in the county, as well as nationally.

Remarks:

The site lies within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

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