

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

LLOFFT-Y-BARDD MEADOWS

Date of Notification: 1997, 2003

National Grid Reference: SN 892532

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 147
1:10,000 Sheet number: SN 85 SE

Site Area: 3.9 ha

Description:

The meadows at Llofft-y-bardd are a fine example of a type of herb-rich grassland that is now rare in mid-Wales as a result of agricultural intensification.

The site consists of two enclosures with an easterly aspect, lying on the level floor and gently sloping valley side of the Afon Cnyffiad, a tributary of the Afon Cammarch. The meadows are situated 6km north of Llanwrtyd Wells, at an altitude of 235 - 245m. The land is generally free-draining, although areas on the margins of the brook have impeded drainage, with brown podzolic soils overlying Silurian shales.

Much of the site is occupied by grassland characterised by abundant red fescue *Festuca rubra*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris* and crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*. A rich variety of herbs are also present in the sward, including common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, eyebright *Euphrasia* spp. and cat's-ear *Hypochaeris radicata*. Parts of the northern field are more marshy in character, with sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus* and wood horsetail *Equisetum sylvaticum* occurring in the grassland. The southern enclosure is generally of higher floristic quality; rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and tufted vetch *Vicia cracca* occur at a higher frequency than in the northern field. A notable feature of both meadows is the abundance of great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*, which is uncommon in this type of neutral grassland in Wales.

In the southern enclosure, moister soils support a small marshy area, adding to the diversity of habitat on the site. This comprises an area of rush-pasture, dominated by sharp-flowered rush, with purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* and Yorkshire-fog. Associated species include common marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre*, marsh-marigold *Caltha palustris*, ragged-robin *Lychnis flos-coculi*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* and marsh violet *Viola palustris*. A small area of *Molinia* mire also occurs, composed of purple moor-grass, sweet vernal-grass and sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina*. Tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and marsh violet occur in abundance, with heath spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata*, devil's bit scabious, star sedge *Carex echinata*, and marsh lousewort *Pedicularis palustris*. A notable feature of this mire is the presence of the nationally uncommon whorled caraway *Carum verticillatum*.

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