

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

**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION**

**POWYS**

**BREIDDEN HILL**

<b><u>Date of Notification:</u></b>	1953, 1987
<b><u>National Grid Reference:</u></b>	SJ294145
<b><u>O.S. Maps:</u></b>	1:50,000 Sheet number: 126 1:25,000 Sheet number: SJ 21 & SJ31
<b><u>Site Area:</u></b>	90.3 ha

**Description:**

The site forms part of the Breidden Hills Ordovician outlier and is of outstanding importance for its uncommon plants. The presence of intruded igneous rocks, particularly dolerite, in this geologically complex site has led to a remarkable mixture of both lime-loving and acid-loving plants.

The steeper cliffs, particularly in the southern and western parts, support some of the notable plant communities. Summer drought has kept the spread of woody species in check, thereby permitting the survival of species of poor competitive ability, now rare in Britain. These include rock cinquefoil *Potentilla rupestris*, bloody crane's-bill *Geranium sanguineum*, spiked speedwell *Veronica spicata*, rock stonecrop *Sedum forsteranum*, the hawkweed, *Pilosella peleteranum* and the whitebeams, *Sorbus anglica* and *S. leptophylla*.

Low outcrops and screes of igneous rocks support a notable and characteristic lower plant flora, with many species of mosses and lichens. The community which they form, called the *Lecanoretum sordidae* Hil., is a scarce type confined to the hard igneous rocks of the Welsh Borderland. Around Rodney's Pillar and along the summit ridge there is a grazed grassland on shallow soils. This supports a number of spring flowering ephemeral plants, including shepherd's cress *Teesdalia nudicaulis*, common whitlowgrass *Erophila verna* and wall speedwell *Veronica arvensis*.

Stabilised screes have become partly covered by scrub and trees, some of planted origin, and now support a diverse woodland ground flora. The fauna of the site has yet to be recorded in any detail, but research elsewhere suggests that the habitats represented here can support important assemblage of species.

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