

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

**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION**

**POWYS**

**GWAUN EFAIL WIG**

<b><u>Date of Notification:</u></b>	1999
<b><u>National Grid Reference:</u></b>	SJ 094111
<b><u>O.S. Maps:</u></b>	1:50,000 Sheet number: 125 1:10,000 Sheet number: SJ 01 SE
<b><u>Site Area:</u></b>	3.9 ha

**Description:**

Gwaun Efail Wig is of special interest for its mosaic of wet and dry grassland and swamp plant communities. The site is located between the village of Pontrobert and the town of Llanfair Caereinion and comprises a single meadow which lies at 150 metres.

The underlying bedrock belongs to the 'Ashgill' upper Ordovician group which consists of massive mudstones. The soils are gleyed with a humic topsoil and are characterised by impeded drainage.

A mosaic of habitats is represented including areas of rush pasture dominated mainly by sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus*, but occasionally by soft-rush *Juncus effusus*. Associated plants include common marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre*, ragged-robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, lesser spearwort *Ranunculus flammula* and devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*. In places, the sward is rich in sedges including oval sedge *Carex ovalis*, star sedge *Carex echinata*, carnation sedge *Carex panicea* and the uncommon bladder-sedge *Carex vesicaria*.

The rush pasture grades into purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* mire which is mainly grassy in character and in places shows evidence of base enrichment. Here, plants such as quaking-grass *Briza media*, flea sedge *Carex pulicaris*, tawny sedge *Carex hostiana*, marsh valerian *Valeriana dioica* and the mosses *Calliergon cuspidatum* and *Climacium dendroides* are present in the sward. There are other areas where the purple moor-grass is accompanied by tall herbs such as wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris*.

Drier areas of grassland exist within the mosaic. In places tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* is prominent but elsewhere the sward is dominated by fescues *Festuca spp.*, and bents (*Agrostis spp.*). Associated plants here include tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica* and heath spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata*.

Former ditches now support diverse stands of marsh vegetation including plants such as marsh marigold *Caltha palustris*, water mint *Mentha aquatica* and the uncommon lesser pond-sedge *Carex acutiformis*.

The meadow is used by passage snipe *Gallinago gallinago* and curlew *Numenius arquata*. The meadow also provides cover and forage for brown hare *Lepus capensis*.

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