

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

GWEUNYDD DWFNANT

<u>Date of Notification:</u>	1985
<u>National Grid Reference:</u>	SO 030603
<u>O.S. Maps:</u>	1:50,000 Sheet number: 147 1:25,000 Sheet number: SO 06
<u>Site Area:</u>	7.5 ha

Description:

This site is an excellent example of diverse herb-rich pasture on acid-neutral soils and is noted for the occurrence of several uncommon species, including lesser butterfly-orchid *Platanthera bifolia*. It occupies gently sloping ground on which there are shallow undulations. It is moderately free-draining and there are dry banks, patches of bracken and woodland edge which provide additional habitats. The sward is generally herb-rich, and although some species are fairly widespread there is a zonation between the hummocks and the hollows.

The grassland is generally dominated by bents *Agrostis/Fescue*, with abundant sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* locally frequent. Elsewhere, heath-grass *Sieglingia decumbens* and purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* are also well represented. Quaking-grass *Briza media* is widespread, but local, and mat-grass *Nardus stricta* is also present. The two uncommon plants, moonwort *Botrychium lunaria* and adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum* occur. Sedges are locally abundant in the hollows, with glaucous sedge *Carex flacca*, common yellow-sedge *C. demissa*, common sedge *C. nigra* and pale sedge *C. pallescens* all well represented. Lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica* and lesser skullcap *Scutellaria minor* occur occasionally and great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* is locally frequent. Meadow thistle *Cirsium dissectum* occurs locally.

The drier rises are characterised by the abundance of devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* which is widespread throughout the site, including the hollows. However, species characteristic of drier conditions are present, including burnet-saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga*, sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica*, bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*. Of particular interest is the good representation of both petty whin *Genista anglica* and dyer's greenweed *G. tinctoria*, the latter being locally abundant in the western pasture. Heath spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata* is scattered

throughout the site, whilst the lesser butterfly-orchid has been recorded in large numbers over a large area of the western pasture.

The eastern pasture is generally more variable in the composition and development of its herb flora and is rather more base-rich in character, as indicated by the frequent presence of fairy flax *Linum catharticum*. Adder's-tongue is locally abundant and both common spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and broad-leaved helleborine *Epipactis helleborine* have been recorded.

The site's sheltered position, its diversity of herb species and the presence of trees and scrub probably contributes to the diversity of common butterfly species recorded from these pastures.

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