

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

**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION**

**POWYS**

**GWEUNYDD CEUNANT**

**Date of notification:** 2000

**National grid reference:** SJ 112116

**O.S. Maps:** 1:50,000 Sheet number: 125  
1:10,000 Sheet number: SJ 11 SW

**Site area:** 2.8 ha

**Description:**

Gweunydd Ceunant is of special interest because it supports the largest known population of the greater butterfly-orchid *Platanthera chlorantha* in Montgomeryshire. This is a plant which has declined dramatically through pasture improvement across Wales.

The site is located in central Montgomeryshire, south of the village of Pontrobert on a small ridge above the Afon Vyrnwy. It consists of two fields which lie at an altitude of between 120 and 180 metres.

The site occurs in the axial region of a NE/SW trending anticline, consisting of upper Ordovician, Ashgill sediments. These consist of blue-grey mudstones, which weather to buff and olive green-grey. The soils consist of gleys and brown earths with a humic topsoil.

The population of greater butterfly-orchid is found here within stands of dry neutral grassland. These are characterised by grass species such as red fescue *Festuca rubra* and crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* together with characteristic forbs such as common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*. In places, the sward is more acidic in nature and here plants such as betony *Stachys officinalis*, devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and tormentil *Potentilla erecta* are found.

Other locally uncommon plant species recorded include adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum* and smooth brome *Bromus racemosus*.

Along the streamside, a narrow strip of tall-herb fen vegetation has developed and here species such as meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, common valerian *Valeriana officinalis* and wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris* occur.

The fields are bordered by species-rich hedgerows and deciduous and coniferous woodland.

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